

The regular meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, November 20, 2007 at 7:30 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor Robert Raines presiding.

Present: Jack Wallace, Robert Raines, William Mays, and Joseph Fawbush

Absent: Joseph Hunnicutt

Also Present: E. W. Ward, City Manager and Bill Bradshaw, City Attorney

The invocation was given by the City Manager and was followed by the pledge of allegiance which was led by Police Captain James C. Lane.

Upon a motion by Jack Wallace, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the October 30, 2007 meeting as presented.

21759

During the Mayor's call for visitors, Assistant Police Chief Dennis Brummette spoke briefly to Council. Mr. Brummette advised Council that, due to health problems, he will be retiring December 1, 2007 after being employed with the City for 29 years.

Mr. Brummette stated that he appreciated everything City Council had done, not only for him, but for all City employees.

21760

Mayor Raines advised Mr. Brummette that the City appreciates so much what he had done for the Council, the Police Department, and the citizens of Norton and that Council wishes him the very best in his retirement.

The City Manager presented Council with an update on the City's water reserves. As of November 9, 2007, the City had a total volume of 45.8 million gallons. Since the challenge given to the citizens at the last meeting to continue conservation, there was another decrease in water usage of 2.2% in 22 days. The City had also experienced two leaks during that time. Mr. Ward extended appreciation to the citizens for continuing to conserve water; however, the City is still experiencing problems due to the lack of rainfall.

21761

Mayor Raines extended appreciation to Tommy Roberts, Superintendent of the Water Plant, and his employees for the monitoring they are doing during this water shortage.

Mr. Ward advised that the City is running slides on Channel 51 (the City's Access Channel) urging the conservation of water. He further advised that due to the current level, he does not feel the City needs to declare an emergency. Should an emergency need to be declared, a Special Meeting will be called.

Mr. Steve Childers was present at tonight's meeting and gave Council an update on the John I. Burton High School Locker Room Project.

He advised that he had first come to City Council on November 19, 2006 and as of May of this year, there is now a state of the art locker room there. A total of \$225,000 had been raised from January to May of 2007. The School Board contributed the money to complete the girls' locker room and Council members were invited to tour each of these facilities.

He then passed out to Council members a timeline for the Ricky M. Harris Complex and discussed with them Phase II which covers the team room, weight room, training room, HVAC, and miscellaneous costs. The quotation received on this was \$163,200.00.

Mr. Childers asked Council's consideration of a \$25,000 donation to go toward this project. This will match a \$25,000 donation given by the School Board. With this total of \$50,000 going toward this Phase II, they will then go to the general public to get donations for the remainder of the funds.

Also present at tonight's meeting was Ron McCall, Chairman of the City of Norton School Board. Vice Mayor Mays asked the status of the Stadium Project at J. I. Burton. Mr. McCall stated that only one bid had been received for a cost of 1.7 million dollars, which was more than anticipated. This bid was rejected and the School Board plans to make repairs to the stadium to improve the life of it and to make it safer. Mr. McCall was asked by Councilman Fawbush for information regarding the amount of money spent on studies and architects on this project. Mr. McCall advised that he would bring this information back to Council.

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to appropriate \$25,000 to match funds from the School Board for the building of a Team Room for the Ricky M. Harris Complex at J. I. Burton High School with said funds to come from Unappropriated Reserves.

Mayor Raines expressed Council's appreciation to Mr. Childers for his leadership role on this project.

Mr. Ward advised that he had solicited proposals for the interim financing for the Norton Elementary School Project which is under design. This interim financing is not to exceed \$7,500,000. The three proposals received were opened on November 15th. They were from SunTrust, Wachovia, and First Bank and Trust. Copies of these proposals were given to Council in their packets. Copies were also forwarded to the City Attorney and to Bond Counsel, Webster Day, for review. The interest rates on the proposals run from 3.22% to 4.05%.

Mr. Ward advised that tonight he is seeking authorization from Council to negotiate an agreement on the interim financing with a financial institution that best suits the City's needs on this. Also, he will need to schedule a public hearing for the second meeting in December to issue this interim financing.

Upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council authorized the City Manager to continue negotiations with the financing institutions for the 7.5 million dollar interim financing for the Norton Elementary School Project.

Upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous vote, Council authorized the City Administration to advertise a public hearing for the second meeting in December on the proposed bond issuance.

The City Manager gave an update on the sale of the City's three lots in the Laurel Trails Subdivision.

Mr. Ward advised that the City was at the point where the lots can be sold. Appraisals have been made and excerpts from these appraisals were included in Council's packets. Lot #47 was appraised at \$24,000. Lot #42 was appraised for \$20,000 and Lot #10 was appraised at \$17,000. These appraisals can be used as a base line in the selling of these lots. Any offers made on these three lots will be brought to City Council for approval.

Mayor Raines advised that this project was used as a model at the Virginia Municipal League Conference wherein the City worked with a private land owner and the securing of grants for use on this project. Currently there are 14 houses under roof and an additional 9 lots sold.

21764

Councilman Fawbush commended the City Manager and Jeff Shupe for the work done on this project.

Mayor Raines commended the City Administration and Councilman Fawbush for their work on this project.

There was a request from the City Treasurer in Council's packets for a refund of 2007 Personal Property Taxes that were erroneously assessed in the amount of \$80.89 to Mr. Timothy Drake.

21765

Upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to refund \$80.89 to Mr. Timothy Drake for 2007 Personal Property Tax that was erroneously assessed.

Council had a copy of a check made payable to the Norton City Schools for \$290,000 for approval.

Upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve a check in the amount of \$290,000 made payable to the Norton City Schools.

21766

Upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to go into closed meeting to discuss personnel as per Section 2.2-3711(A) (1) of the Code of Virginia, as amended and to discuss the acquisition of real property as per Section 2.2-3711(A) (3) of the Code of Virginia, as amended.

21767

Mayor Raines declared Council in closed meeting.

Upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to go back into open meeting.

21768

Mayor Raines declared Council back in open meeting.

The Clerk then polled each member of Council as to the certification of closed meeting with each answering yes. The Clerk then read A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. Upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by William Mays, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Wallace, Raines, Mays, and Fawbush, NO – None, ABSENT – Hunnicutt, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert)

21769

Mayor Raines opened the floor for nominations to the Appalachian Juvenile Commission for a two year term which will expire on November 30, 2009.

William Mays nominated Donna Hutchinson to be reappointed to this Commission.

Upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved that the nominations cease.

Mayor Raines declared Donna Hutchinson reappointed to the Appalachian Juvenile Commission for a two year term which will expire on November 30, 2009.

Mayor Raines opened the floor for a nomination to the Virginia's Heritage Music Trail: The Crooked Road for a term which will expire on November 30, 2010.

Joseph Fawbush nominated Nancy Jones as a Board of Director member to this organization.

Upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved that the nominations cease.

Mayor Raines declared Nancy Jones appointed as a Board of Director Member to Virginia's Heritage Music Trail: The Crooked Road for a term which will expire on November 30, 2010.

At this time, Mayor Raines appointed Fred Ramey as the government representative to the Virginia's Heritage Music Trail: The Crooked Road for a term which will expire on November 30, 2010.

In comments from the City Manager, Mr. Ward advised that:

The Green Thumb Garden Club will have a "Decking the Cannon" event prior to the City Council Meeting on December 18th at 7:00 p.m.

The City is applying for some grant money for public safety equipment through Rural Development. These will be 75% grants. The City is seeking these grants to purchase two new vehicles for the Fire Chief and the Assistant Fire Chief.

It was the consensus of Council for the City Administration to continue working on these grants.

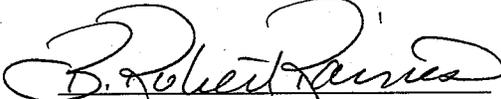
The City Offices will be closed on Thursday and Friday, October 22nd and 23rd for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Mayor Raines advised that the annual Christmas Parade will be held on Sunday, December 2nd at 6:00 with the tree lighting at 5:00. Norton Community Hospital will provide hot chocolate.

Mr. Ward advised that the City's Social Services Department will have hot chocolate and cider in front of their offices.

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA


B. Robert Raines, Mayor

ATTEST:


Clerk