

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, May 1, 2012 in the Municipal Council Chambers at 6:00 p.m. with Mayor William Mays presiding.

Present: Mark Caruso, Joseph Hunnicutt, William Mays, Joseph Fawbush and Terry Roop

Also Present: Fred L. Ramey, Jr., City Manager and Bill Bradshaw, City Attorney

The invocation was given by Rev. John Ellington and was followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Police Chief James C. Lane.

Upon a motion by Councilman Roop, seconded by Councilman Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the April 17, 2012 meeting as presented.

25381

During the audience for visitors, Barbara Dominguez, Century Trailer Court, Lot 16, spoke briefly to Council advising that her son had been attacked in April at the City Park on 11th and Pine Streets and she would like to see cameras installed in that park.

Melissa Begley, 5720 Back Valley Road, Big Stone Gap, advised Council that a wish list for J. I. Burton High School will be presented to them on needed repairs and some replacement items. She advised that she believes that she is speaking for the majority of people in this community in saying that it is not necessary to have a 2.5 million dollar facelift at J. I. Burton. She stated they wish to remain an independent school system and not consolidate. Working together and committing to the basic principles of a quality education while at the same time committing to this City makes it a winning situation.

25382

Roy Roberts, 402 Craig Street, spoke to Council expressing a few problems he has. These are: Why would the City sell the most valuable piece of property in the City to the Wise County Board of Supervisors for an under appraised price? Why locate a school within a mile of another high school? Why turn down free materials (roofing for Burton High School), have City employees install it, and only have to pay \$25,000 for labor for the supervision of installation? He asked that the City look for reasons not to consolidate rather than to consolidate and his final comments were that the City needed to be more active and not reactive. A plan needs to be developed and presented to Wise County.

Mayor Mays asked a few questions about the incident in the park. Mr. Ramey advised he was not aware of this incident.

Police Chief Lane advised that additional foot patrol and drive-bys are being done and he was aware of a second incident that had occurred there.

Councilman Roop advised he would like to see more foot patrols in this area.

A public hearing was held to consider financial encumbrances for the year ended June 30, 2011 in the amount of \$505,569 for the General Operating Fund.

Mr. Ramey advised Council had been given a list of these encumbrances in their packets.

Mayor Mays opened the public hearing.

There being no public comment, Mayor Mays closed the public hearing.

25383

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve the encumbrances for the year ended June 30, 2011 in the amount of \$505,569 for the General Operating Fund as presented.

Dr. Comer, Superintendent of the Norton City Schools, was present to discuss with Council the need of a new roof at J. I. Burton High School.

He advised that the School Board, at their April 10th meeting, voted to take the donated roofing materials and to pay the labor charges to replace the entire roof. This roof should have a twenty year warranty if properly installed and maintained. At their meeting held April 30th, they declared this an emergency repair and advised that labor will run approximately \$125,000 to \$150,000. Installation will probably be by a local contractor.

After a discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Dr. Comer is to proceed on the roof as long as there will not be a mold problem caused by leaving the existing roof on the building. (Insert – Councilman Roop’s Disclosure Form)

Mr. Ramey advised he will continue to look for funding options.

At this time, Mayor Mays asked Council if they could proceed with the other School Board items on the agenda and then come back and pick up Item 7-B. It was the consensus of Council to do so.

Dr. Comer thanked Council for allowing him to speak on all items at one time.

Council had a request from the Norton City Schools to discuss surplus funds from the previous fiscal year of 2010-2011.

Dr. Comer advised this amount was \$106,432.

Following a discussion, Dr. Comer advised these funds could be kept by the City and used for the roof project or the funds could be used in terms of meeting our required total affect on this year’s budget.

It was the consensus of Council that both the City and School Board should include the \$106,432 in their 2012-2013 budgets.

Council had a request by the Norton City Schools for an additional appropriation of new revenue for the 2011-2012 fiscal year due to increased enrollment.

Dr. Comer advised that enrollment is up by 33 students and this additional appropriation is in the amount of \$119,836. He then presented Council, by a PowerPoint presentation, a brief synopsis on state revenues.

Following a brief discussion, it was the consensus of Council to authorize the City Manager to advertise a public hearing to appropriate additional revenue in the amount of \$119,836 to the Norton City Schools for 2011-2012 fiscal year. This public hearing will be held on June 5, 2012.

At this time, Dr. Comer introduced Ron McCall, Chairman of the Norton City School Board, who spoke briefly with Council.

Mr. McCall advised that they hope to approve their budget on the 14th of May and be at the May 15th meeting to present it to City Council. He further advised they will present to Council a Capital Improvement Project List at this meeting. He presented this

25384

25385

25386

list to Council tonight and said they would be back to discuss and explain it as some of the figures are old.

During this discussion, Councilman Caruso stated, in his opinion, there is a possibility that the County may pull out of the land agreement with NIDA and there could be an influx rather than a reduction of students.

Councilman Fawbush thanked Mr. McCall for the CIP budget.

Mr. McCall advised that a Five Year Operational Plan would be forthcoming.

Included in Council's packet was a copy of the Second Service Agreement with the C-N-W Authority. Mr. Ramey advised this is the same agreement that was in the last packet. There have been no updates and nothing has been received from the Virginia Resources Authority. The only action is that there was some discussion on participants' comments. Hopefully, there will be more information before the next Council meeting.

25387

Council had a copy of an Agreement Between the Commonwealth of Virginia and the City of Norton on the Park Avenue High Wall Construction.

Mr. Ramey advised this project will run from the Dairy Queen Intersection to the entrance of Norton Elementary School. Due to a problem with slope issues, DMME was called in on this project and, several years ago, installed a wooden wall to protect pedestrians.

25388

Mr. Ramey also advised Council that the Norton City School System and the Norton Redevelopment and Housing Authority have both transferred property that will be used in this project to the City. There is one area that is privately owned; however he feels that this will not be a problem.

This third agreement with DMME has them allocating two million dollars for construction related items.

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to authorize the City Manager to enter into this agreement with the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy based upon the approval of the City Attorney and City Manager of the Agreement.

Council had been given a copy of a Resolution Supporting the Southwest Regional Recreation Authority's Application for VCEDA Project Funding.

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Roop, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Caruso, Hunnicutt, Fawbush, Roop, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Supporting the Southwest Regional Recreation Authority's Application for VCEDA Project Funding. (Insert)

25389

In their packets, Council had copies of three checks for approval. These checks are as follows: One to Boring Contractors in the amount of \$254,423.49 for the Guest River Interceptor Replacement – Phase III, Pay Application No. 3; one to Little B Enterprises, Inc. in the amount of \$140,804.49 for the Benges Branch Sewer Replacement – Phase II, Pay Application No. 2; and one to Carter Machinery Company in the amount of \$154,955.02 covering statement dated March 31, 2012 for two pieces of equipment.

25390

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve the three checks as listed above.

Upon a motion by Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to go into closed meeting to discuss personnel as per Section No. 2.2-3711 (A) (1) of the Code of Virginia, as amended.

25391

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

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

25392

Mayor Mays declared Council back in open meeting.

The Clerk 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 Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Caruso, Hunnicutt, Fawbush, Roop, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert)

25393

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations of a citizen representative to the Youth Services Board for a four year term which will expire on May 2, 2016.

Councilman Roop nominated Alex Rickman to this Board.

25394

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved that the nominations cease.

Mayor Mays declared Alex Rickman appointed to the Youth Services Board as a citizen representative for a four year term which will expire on May 2, 2016.

Mayor Mays opened the floor for an appointment to the Community Services Board for a two year term which will expire on May 1, 2014.

Councilman Caruso nominated Sarah Davis to be reappointed to this Board.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved that the nominations cease.

25395

Mayor Mays declared Sarah Davis reappointed to the Community Services Board for a two year term which will expire on May 1, 2014.

Mayor Mays opened the floor for an appointment to the Norton Industrial Development Authority for a four year term which will expire on May 10, 2016.

Councilman Fawbush nominated Byron Cantrell to be reappointed to this Authority.

25396

Upon a motion by Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved that the nominations cease.

Mayor Mays declared Byron Cantrell reappointed to the Norton Industrial Development Authority for a four year term which will expire on May 10, 2016.

In comments from the City Manager, Mr. Ramey advised:

The City has had sightings of bears at multiple locations and one was trapped at the Norton Community Center. To keep our citizens informed, a video is being shown on Channel 51 regarding black bears and a brochure can be downloaded from our website.

VDOT has advised that they will close a section of Business 23 at West Norton School, just outside the City limits, probably in June. He will keep Council updated.

There has been a "slow drawdown" of water at the reservoir in anticipation of the contractor beginning the last phases of the project.

At the next council meeting, a duly advertised public hearing will be held on the proposed real estate tax rate increase due to reassessment; the School Board will present their budget; David Rose of Davenport & Company, will be here to anticipate and discuss debt service both short term and long term; David Dawson of Thompson and Litton will be here to discuss grant application for both the upper and lower dam improvements; and the City's budget work session will be held following the regular meeting.

25397

On May 5th a Hazardous Household Waste Collection Day will be held from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm at the Magic Mart Parking Lot and May 15th is the due date for real estate taxes.

There were no comments from the City Attorney.

25398

In comments from the City Council, Councilman Roop stated:

He congratulated Mr. Ramey for a great start as the City Manager and stated he really liked and appreciated the weekly City Manager's report he is furnishing Council.

He would like to express thanks to VDOT and the City Administration for the extra lane put in the Hawthorne Drive area.

On the issue of schools, he stated that teachers are stressed wondering if the issue of consolidation is really over. He further stated that citizens are worried due to the talks of our community being in dire economic straits. Everyone needs to have closure and we must move forward. There is still a market for small schools, but there must be a will to compete and the school system can't continue to tread water and go under.

25399

Councilman Caruso agreed with Councilman Roop.

25400

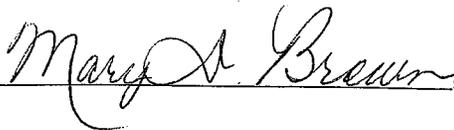
There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William J. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:


_____, Clerk