

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, November 20, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

Present: William Mays, Joseph Fawbush, and Terry Roop

Absent: Mark Caruso, Joseph Hunnicutt, and Bill Bradshaw, City Attorney

Also Present: Fred L. Ramey, Jr., City Manager

The invocation was given by Rev. Ken Taylor followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Police Chief James C. Lane.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the October 16, 2012 meeting as presented. 25595

During the Mayor's call for visitors, Mr. Robert Leonard, Jr., 531 Oak Street, spoke to Council regarding a cat problem in the Craig and Oak Street areas of the City. He advised that the Animal Warden had been working with them on this problem; however it doesn't seem to be working.

At the Mayor's request, Police Chief Lane advised the City does have an ordinance regarding cats. He advised the City can set traps and will see what else can be done to help eliminate this problem. 25596

Councilman Roop advised this was one of the first ordinances adopted when he came on Council as there were no regulations as to cats prior to that time. He further advised that owners must buy tags and must vaccinate cats and dogs.

Mr. Shaun Dean, Wrestling Coach at J. I. Burton High School, spoke briefly to Council asking for financial assistance for his team. With the financial situation being what it is, the School Board didn't fund them this year. Currently, they are participating in three fundraisers as they did last year when they raised over \$3,000. With Mr. Dean at tonight's meeting were three members of his team. One is a three time state championship winner, another is a two time regional champion, and the third is a newcomer on the team. 25597

Mr. Ramey gave Mr. Dean a form that needs to be filled out and returned to him. Mayor Mays advised this will be discussed at the next Council meeting.

Mr. Danny Holt, 1728 Main Avenue, spoke on behalf of himself and the residents of Main Avenue thanking Council for the paving of their street. They were very appreciative of this having been done. 25598

Mayor Mays changed the agenda to recognize Dr. Scott Hamilton, President of Mountain Empire Community College. Presenting Council with a flyer, Dr. Hamilton gave Council his semi-annual update on activities at the college, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. 25599

Mayor Mays thanked Dr. Hamilton for his presentation and expressed Council's appreciation for the good job being done at MECC. Dr. Hamilton, in turn, thanked Council for their continued support and their time tonight.

The City Manager advised Council that, as of November 15th, we had a combined total in our reservoirs of 86.0 million gallons and all water purchases have ceased at this time. At our previous meeting, we had a total capacity of 67.2 million gallons and were purchasing an estimated 250,000 gallons per day from the Wise County PSA.

Mr. Ramey advised that the Upper Dam Project, effective yesterday, is "substantially complete" and we can start utilization of it again. We still need the approval from the State which will be forthcoming and two letters from the engineers. Advising Council that he anticipates no issues regarding this project, he then presented Council with a Power Point presentation showing the progress and completion of this project. He stated that there is a need for 4' or 5' safety fencing in key areas, a need to purchase some equipment, and there are funds left to cover these items. They will be working on this for a period of six months or so.

Councilman Roop had gone with the City Manager over the week-end and toured this project. Mr. Ramey also advised he would be happy to take any other member of Council to view it if they wished to do so.

Councilman Roop stated this had been a massive project and he complimented the contractor and the City Administration and staff for doing such a superb job.

Mr. Ramey gave Council an update on the Phase III of the Norton Water System Improvements. He advised that Council, in February, authorized the City Administration to apply for a grant from the Virginia Department of Health Water Programs. The grant offer received was a 55% loan in the amount of \$483,695 at 2.5% interest for 30 years with \$395,750 as principal forgiveness for a total amount of \$879,445. Council had asked Mr. Ramey to contact the Virginia Department of Health Water Programs to see if the City could secure a better offer. Mr. Ramey did so and has been advised that the offer originally made stands as is. He advised Council that the City Administration feels that if there is a need to cut one of the three projects, this should be the one to postpone and that funding could be sought for it at a future date. This project covers the area of parts of the central business district, some residential areas, and Virginia Avenue.

Following a lengthy discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council authorized the City Manager to move forward with the Virginia Department of Health Water Program's grant in the total amount of \$879,445 as stipulated above.

Council was given an update on the Lower Dam Engineering Repair Funding by Mr. Ramey. This dam, which was built in 1929, is in need of some work as described by Mr. David Dawson of Thompson and Litton in May of this year. He recognized four areas of work that should be done. City Council authorized the City Administration to apply for two grants from the Department of Conservation and Recreation covering two of these four areas. The City did receive awards for the two areas for which they applied; however the total amount granted was \$8,500 rather than the \$13,400 requested for the repair of the leaking lift joints and up to 300 linear feet of additional crack repair and

\$8,500 out of the \$53,250 requested for the purpose of a Stability Evaluation Testing on the lower dam.

Also he applied for and received \$15,000 from Lenowisco for technical assistance for engineering purposed on this project.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation needs to be notified if we will accept these grant funds and he is asking Council to allow him to further explore the possibility of decreasing the scope of the project and only do the most critical work needed and to apply for additional funding from the Department of Conservation and Recreation or from other sources.

It was the consensus of Council for Mr. Ramey to proceed on this project and accept the funds from the Department of Conservation and Recreation and look for additional funding.

Council had been presented with A Resolution seeking to apply for a grant from the Virginia Department of Transportation Revenue Sharing Program in the amount of \$375,000 to be used toward the Safe Routes to School Project. The City has matching funding for this amount set aside and the DMME has committed three million dollars to this project.

25603

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Roop, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by the following roll call vote: YES – Fawbush, Roop, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Caruso, Hunnicutt, Council moved to adopt a Resolution Seeking to apply for a grant from the Virginia Department of Transportation Revenue Sharing Program in the amount of \$375,000 to be used toward the Safe Routes to School Project. (Insert)

Mr. Ramey presented a brief PowerPoint presentation to Council regarding a new municipal sign for the Coalfield Parking Lot which had been discussed previously,. During these previous discussions, Council decided to delay purchasing a new sign due to the cost. Due to public request of having a sign that would show the time and temperature, he has done some inquiring from local civic organizations. Both the Lions and Kiwanis Clubs have expressed an interest in supporting such a sign in the amount of up to \$5,000 each. Also, the Norton Industrial Development Authority has also expressed an interest of allocating up to \$5,000 for this sign.

25604

Following a brief discussion, it was the consensus of Council for the City Manager to proceed with the cost and design of a new sign and bring this information back to Council at a future meeting.

Mr. Ramey stated he was very optimistic and very appreciative of the local civic clubs.

In their packets, Council had a request from the Commissioner of the Revenue for a 2012 personal property tax that was erroneously assessed to Kathleen Stump in the amount of \$26.25.

25605

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council authorized a refund for erroneously assessed 2012 personal property taxes to Kathleen Stump in the amount of \$26.25.

Council had presented to them a transfer in the amount of \$265,000 to the Norton City Schools, a check to Summers Taylor in the amount of \$322,419.26, a check to the Wise County Treasurer in the amount of \$227,281.86, and a check to the Norton Industrial Development Authority in the amount of \$122,004.25 for approval.

2560

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve the one transfer and checks as listed above. Insert (Councilman Roop's Disclosure Statement)

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

25607

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

Upon a motion by Councilman Roop, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to back in open meeting.

25608

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

25609

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Southwest VASAP Board for a three year term which will expire on December 1, 2015.

Councilman Roop nominated James C. Lane 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.

25610

Mayor Mays declared James C. Lane reappointed to the Southwest Virginia VASAP Board for a three year term which will expire on December 1, 2015.

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

He had just received a message via his Blackberry that Councilman Hunnicutt had discovered a flat tire on his car prior to tonight's meeting.

The City Attorney was out of town visiting for the Thanksgiving holidays.

Closings have been held on the VPSA bond issues for the Norton City Schools and Phase II Water Project. He expressed thanks to the Mayor for coming from St. Paul on his lunch hour to participate in these closings.

25611

Also, an organizational meeting will have to be held prior to the first meeting in January.

The City tree lighting will be held on Sunday, December 2nd, at 5:00 at the Farmers Market Building Parking Lot followed by the parade at 6:00 p.m.

City offices will close at Noon on Wednesday, November 21st, and remain closed until Monday, November 26th.

He presented each member present a copy of the Heart of Appalachia Packet.

He presented each member of Council with a home-made Christmas ornament made by the City's Park and Recreation Director, Michele Knox. These ornaments depicted a scene within the City of Norton. Mr. Ramey advised Ms. Knox did an excellent job making these ornaments.

Mr. Ramey expressed his appreciation to City Council and wished all a very happy Thanksgiving holiday.

In comments from Council, Mr. Roop advised that school personnel will meet with a team of contractors interested in doing the projects at the high school. The first priority is a HVAC System. Once that project is completed, they will be able to see what other projects can be done. City Council will be kept well informed.

25612

He expressed thanks to Ms. Knox for the Christmas ornament.

Councilman Fawbush expressed his best wishes to Council and employees for a happy Thanksgiving holiday.

25613

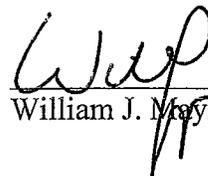
Mayor Mays advised that New Year's Day falls on our regular meeting day. He would like to move the organizational meeting and the regular City Council meeting to January 8, 2013. The organization meeting will be held at 5:30 followed by the regular meeting at 6:00. The City Manager will confirm the availability of the Council Chambers and advise the press of this change of date.

25613

The Mayor asked Mr. Ramey to place the evaluation of City Manager on the next agenda to be discussed during Closed Meeting.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William J. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Clerk