

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, January 21, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

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

Absent: Joseph Hunnicutt

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

The invocation was given by Fred Ramey and was followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Police Chief James Lane.

Mayor Mays amended the agenda to add an item to add 6.1 to consider a Resolution of Support for the Virginia Relay Center.

26023

Upon a motion by Councilman Roop, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the January 7, 2014 meeting as presented.

26024

There was no response to the Mayor's call for visitors.

26025

Mr. Ramey advised City Council that he had received a call earlier today indicating that the Wise County Board of Supervisors was considering a Resolution of Support for the AT&T Virginia Relay Center. The resolution asks our state legislators to take the necessary action to ensure that the Virginia Relay Center remain in the City of Norton. Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Caruso, Fawbush, Roop, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Hunnicutt, Council moved to adopt Resolution of Support for the Virginia Relay Center. (Insert)

26026

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Roop, 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.

26027

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

During this discussion, Councilman Hunnicutt joined Council in the Closed Session.

26028

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

26029

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 Roop, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Caruso, Hunnicutt, Fawbush, Roop,

26030

Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert)

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Building Code Board of Appeals for a five year term which will expire on January 17, 2019.

Councilman Fawbush nominated James Boggs to be reappointed to this Board.

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

Mayor Mays declared James Boggs reappointed to the Building Code Board of Appeals for a five year term which will expire on January 17, 2019.

26031

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Norton Redevelopment and Housing Authority for a four year term which will expire on January 28, 2018.

Councilman Roop nominated Roger Sloce to be reappointed to this Authority.

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

Mayor Mays declared Roger Sloce reappointed to the Norton Redevelopment and Housing Authority for a four year term which will expire on January 17, 2018.

26032

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Department of Social Services Advisory Board for a four year term which will expire on January 28, 2018.

Councilman Caruso nominated Frank Gravely to be appointed to this Board.

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

Mayor Mays declared Frank Gravely appointed to the Department of Social Services Advisory Board for a four year term which will expire on January 28, 2018.

26033

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Highway Safety Commission to fill four positions, for four two (2) year terms, which will expire on January 31, 2016.

Councilman Fawbush nominated James Lane, Frank Gravely, J. T. Caruso, and Bobby Cassell to be reappointed to this Board.

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

Mayor Mays declared James Lane, Frank Gravely, J. T. Caruso, and Bobby Cassell reappointed to the Highway Safety Commission for a four year term which will expire on January 31, 2018.

26034

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Southwest Virginia Emergency Medical Service Council, for a one year term which will expire on January 31, 2015.

Councilman Caruso nominated Todd Lagow to be reappointed to this Council.

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

Mayor Mays declared Todd Lagow reappointed to the Southwest Virginia Emergency Medical Service Council for a one year term which will expire on January 31, 2015.

26035

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

He had been contacted by Dr. Comer earlier today who indicated that no school board members were going to be able to attend the joint work session that was planned for this evening. It was his understanding that their desire is to hopefully reschedule this meeting at a later date.

He had handed out the latest Retail Sales Report for Council's review.

As per the request of City Council, he added the Lonesome Pine Regional Library and Airport Commission to the list of funded agencies and forwarded a letter requesting information to be considered during the upcoming budget process.

The Norton Police Department had worked with the City's Emergency Services Director Todd Lagow and applied for and received a grant to install AEDs in some of our police vehicles.

Councilman Caruso and he had attended the Southwest Regional Legislative Reception which was held in Richmond last week. They attended multiple meetings and he indicated that the trip was worthwhile.

26036

He advised Council of a very bad traffic accident last week on Route 23 which resulted with a fatality and advised of the City personnel who assisted with this tragic event. He showed Council a photograph of the scene, in which a physician who was stopped in traffic by the accident came to the scene to give aid as did our Police Chief Lane, Vice Police Chief Baird, Investigator McConnell, a representative of the Norton Rescue Squad, and Tim Couch, a member of the City's T&D Department, who is also a volunteer firefighter. He expressed his appreciation to our public safety departments that are always serving our community and to these employees for their efforts in assisting with this accident located outside the corporate limits.

In comments from Council, Councilman Caruso stated that:

The trip to Richmond was very productive; however he had been in hopes of finding some assistance and there was none there. If there is to be an economic recovery, it will have to come from ourselves. There are some funds designated for the Coalfield Expressway and work will begin soon.

The cities will not have to pay for secondary road improvements and hopefully an Economic Summit will be conducted in our area to seek out the problems we are experiencing.

26037

He was impressed and heartened with the Tourism Department. With the filming of "Big Stone Gap" in the county, they were advised there are additional movies interested in being filmed here.

In essence, he stated he was not impressed with what will transpire in the next 12-24 months for the area with regard to assistance from the State government on our economic issues and there was no good information given on the coal industry.

Councilman Hunnicutt advised he was held up at the Court House which caused him to be late for tonight's meeting.

26038

Councilman Fawbush stated he had been looking forward to the meeting with the school Board tonight. As an elected public servant, Council members have a duty to fulfill obligations to the public and do the best job that they can. He expressed hopes that, in the near future, the School Board and Council can get together and discuss the issues that they will be facing.

26039

Councilman Caruso stated he agreed and hopes that this meeting will be held in the very near future.

26040

In comments from Councilman Roop, he stated:

He was deeply saddened and somewhat embarrassed that the School Board would send an e-mail stating they would not be in attendance without an explanation. He advised Mr. Ramey had spent a great deal of time working up a PowerPoint presentation to be shown tonight. School employees were not advised that the School Board would not be here and some employees are in attendance.

In his opinion, Councilman Roop advised if the School Board continued putting off the meeting with Council on their upcoming budget, he feels Council should only budget the required local effort until they agree to meet.

During some additional comments, Councilman Roop advised that the City has cut their budget in all areas and only given employees a raise two out of the past five years. The swimming pool has been closed and all kinds of programs and projects have been cut. Having been a very vocal proponent for the Norton City Schools, as well as an employee, Councilman Roop further stated that, in his opinion, there is a lot of waste and excess in the School Division and he is in hopes that they will admit this and meet the City half-way. Stating that this is not about any specific individual(s), it's more about the school system's approach to personnel expenditures.

26041

Councilman Roop then stated he had been hopeful that the school system would change their priorities and tighten their belts. In his opinion, both the City and the school system must equally make sacrifices if each is to survive as an independent school division and City.

Mayor Mays advised he had been concerned about Shelly Fawbush's recent illness; however was glad to hear that the Vice Mayor's wife had received some good news this evening.

26042

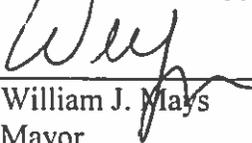
Vice Mayor Fawbush thanked Mayor Mays.

Councilman Roop expressed his regrets to the employees of the Norton City Schools who were in attendance at tonight's meeting that they had not been advised that the School Board would not be participating in the joint work session.

26043

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
William J. Maays  
Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_, Acting Clerk

