

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, February 16, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

Present: Mark Caruso, William Mays, Joseph Fawbush and Dee Belcher

Absent: Robert Fultz, Jr.

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

The invocation was given by the Reverend Freddie Powers and was followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Police Chief James Lane.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following vote: YES – Caruso, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Fultz, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the February 2, 2016 meeting as presented.

25804

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

25805

Ms. Bonnie Elosser, Executive Director of the Pro-Art Association, was present to give Council an update on their activities. Prior to her presentation, she handed out their 2016-2017 Programs and tickets to The United States Air Force Band Airmen of Note scheduled for Wednesday, March 2, 2016.

She then advised that Pro-Art was in their 39th season and gave a brief summary of upcoming programs this spring. She also mentioned that the Wise Jams program that meets at the Community Center is continuing to do well. She reminded Council the program teaches students how to play various instruments and about their mountain heritage. Some of the students were able to perform at the Country Cabin and a story about the students produced by a television station in Prestonsburg, Kentucky is currently airing on YouTube.

25806

She further stated that the City has been a wonderful partner with Pro-Art for many years and the one source of funding for the Virginia Commission for the Arts that has not been cut is the Local Government Challenge Grant. She is proud to advise that Pro-Art receives more Local Government Challenge funds than any arts organization in the state. This reflects well on area localities and demonstrates your support for the arts. She advised Council the grant is very important to Pro-Art and asked Council to consider the application for a Local Government Challenge Grant Application which will be matched by the State.

Mayor Mays thanked Ms. Elosser for her presentation tonight.

Council was presented with information to consider a 2016-2017 Local Government Challenge Grant Application in the amount of \$5,000 which, if awarded will go to the Pro-Art Association and will be matched dollar for dollar by the state. The deadline for submitting this application is April 1, 2016.

25807

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Caruso, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Fultz, Council moved to authorize the City Manager to apply for a Local Government Challenge Grant in the amount of up to \$5,000 to be matched by the State with said funds going to the Pro-Art Association.

Mr. Ramey, via a PowerPoint presentation, gave Council an update on the finances of the Norton Rescue Squad. The \$25,000 Council appropriated in FY16 has been dispensed and the Rescue Squad Board has done a good job in reducing operating and salary expenses. City Administration's goal is to maintain emergency services within the City so Management is recommending to Council to appropriate up to \$12,000 operating under the current Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the Norton Rescue Squad. This appropriation will allow for the Rescue Squad Board to further evaluate service models to provide service to the City.

Councilman Caruso, who is on the Norton Rescue Squad Board, gave Council an update on the Norton Rescue Squad since the creation of the Board. He advised the revenue stream received from bingo and other sources has decreased. The operational component of the squad is good and his recommendation is to support the Norton Rescue Squad until further analysis is completed. A new billing company has been hired and more information will be available within the next couple months allowing for a budget to be created.

25808

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Fultz, Council moved to appropriate up to \$12,000 from Unappropriated Reserves for the Norton Rescue Squad.

An update on the Proposed 2016 Norton Business Challenge was presented to Council by Mr. Ramey, via a PowerPoint presentation.

Mr. Ramey explained Councilman Fultz had approached him last fall and asked about the possibility of the City offering a local business challenge. Mr. Ramey contacted People, Inc., who has managed all of the past regional business challenges and they have advised they will work with the City to develop a Norton Business Challenge. The Norton Industrial Development Authority (NIDA) is funding the Norton Business Challenge. People, Inc. will manage the program and a committee will oversee the Challenge. The committee is comprised of NIDA Chairman Byron Cantrell, Councilman Fultz, and the City Manager Fred Ramey. Under the Challenge a business must locate in the City within 12 months and it can be a new business or an existing business that is creating new jobs or is changing their business model by adding new services. The participants must submit a business plan and will compete for up to \$15,000. To be considered for funding, potential winners must attend all classes developed by People, Inc., for the Norton Business Challenge. City Administration is going to start promoting the Norton Business Challenge immediately through social media and by an article in The Coalfield Progress.

25809

In their packets Council was given an updated Tentative Budget Calendar for the FY17 fiscal budget.

25810

Mr. Ramey stated at the last Council meeting the School Board had requested a budget work session with Council. This joint Work Session has been scheduled for March 15th. However, Dr. Perrigan contacted him last week to request an additional meeting with City Council. Mr. Ramey advised the School Board would like to discuss their existing budget and receive input from City Council prior to the March 15th work session. Mr. Ramey advised that March 1st is the next available date to schedule an additional work session with the School Board if Council approves.

Mayor Mays advised that work sessions can become very lengthy and he would like to schedule the work session with the School Board on another date besides the regularly scheduled meeting date of City Council on March 1st.

After a brief discussion, Council decided upon March 8th to schedule the additional requested work session with the School Board, pending approval with Councilman Fultz's schedule.

In their packets, Council had one check to be confirmed. The check was to W-L Construction & Paving, Inc., dated October 16, 2015 in the amount of \$188,355.31 to cover paving in the Dorchester area.

25811

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to confirm the check to W-L Construction & Paving, Inc., as stated above.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Fultz, 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 for discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publically held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (3) of the Code of Virginia, as amended and as discussion concerning a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcements has been made of the business or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the community per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (5).

25812

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following vote: YES – Caruso, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Fultz, Council moved to go back into open meeting.

25813

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

25814

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Building Code Board of Appeals for a five (5) year term to expire on February 18, 2021.

Councilman Caruso nominated Andy Belcher to be reappointed to the Building Code Board of Appeals.

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

25815

Mayor Mays declared Andy Belcher reappointed to the Building Code Board of Appeals for a five (5) year term to expire on February 18, 2021.

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

The Request for Proposals (RFP) for a City Line of Credit issued by Davenport & Company is due back on Tuesday, March 1, 2016. A copy of the RFP has been provided at your desk.

25816

A copy of the latest monthly sales tax report was placed at Council's desks.

In comments from the City Attorney, Mr. Bradshaw advised that he appeared before the Wise County Circuit Court judge on two different items for the City. He presented petitions to the Circuit Court for appointment of the members of the Board of Equalization and the petition was signed. He also stated a final order was entered for one of the City's tax sales.

25817

In comments from Council:

Councilman Caruso asked the City Manager if he would contact the Clinch Ranger District to see if someone would come to the next City Council meeting to explain the Public Comment Form received from the Forest Service.

Mr. Ramey advised he would contact the Forest Service to see if someone would come to the next meeting to explain their plans.

Councilman Caruso advised the Proposed ATV bill by Delegate Moorefield has been tabled. He would like for the City's ATV ordinance to be placed back on Council's agenda for discussion.

He is continuing to work on the downtown banner project.

Councilman Caruso asked the City Manager if he had spoken with Neil Walker regarding the potential horse park.

Mr. Ramey advised he had received a call from Beth Walker. She advised they are having difficulty receiving some information. She advised when they have all the information they will come back to Council to discuss the park and ride concept.

25818

Councilman Caruso stated he would like for Council to schedule a series of economic development workshops with the Norton Industrial Development Authority and the Tourism Committee.

Councilman Caruso asked about the status of the Board Appointment Letter.

Mr. Ramey advised it was his understanding that Council was going to discuss the Board Appointment Letter at the Capital Improvement Project Meeting on February 27th.

Councilman Caruso advised he thought he had requested the Board Appointment Letter be placed on Council's agenda for tonight's meeting but they could discuss it at the February 27th meeting.

Councilman Caruso stated he thought that City Council and the School Board need to have joint quarterly meetings. Noting he had attended several School Board meetings, he said there appears to be a lot of confusion on the School Board due to board members making assumptions about Council's position.

He stated he believes the City needs a vision and a plan to move the City forward for the next five to ten years.

Councilwoman Belcher advised she is interested in attending the class the Wise County Sheriff's Office is offering on Synthetic Narcotics Education and Community Awareness.

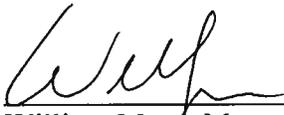
25819

Councilman Fawbush stated the Commonwealth of Virginia flag displayed in Council Chambers reads "Sic Semper Tyrannis" which means "death to tyrants." The recent executive order issued by the Governor for the revocation of reciprocity of concealed carry permits issued by other states is not the democratic process. He wants to remind elected officials on both local and state levels that they have been elected to govern on behalf of the people.

25820

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Clerk of Council