

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, May 2, 2017, at 6:00 p.m., in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

Present: William Mays, Robert Fultz, Jr., Dee Belcher, Mark Caruso, and Joseph Fawbush

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

Prior to the invocation, Mayor Mays asked for a moment of silence in memory of Dr. Joseph C. "Papa Joe" Smiddy, the first chancellor of the University of Virginia's College at Wise. The invocation was then given by the City Manager and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Police Chief James Lane.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by the following vote: YES – Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSTAIN – Caruso, ABSENT – None, Council moved to moved to adopt the minutes of the April 18, 2017, meeting as presented.

26298

During the Mayor's Call for Visitors, Mr. Adam Wells, the New Economy Program Manager of Appalachian Voices, spoke briefly to Council regarding an upcoming Southwest Virginia Solar Fair, which is scheduled for 5 - 7 p.m., Tuesday, May 9, 2017, at the University of Virginia's College at Wise football stadium. He said the fair was an educational event and is also a launch date for the "Solarize Wise" residential solarization program which makes it easier and more affordable for homeowners, businesses, and farmers to install solar power sources on their property. Mr. Wells said he would be signing up homeowners for the Solarize Wise program throughout the summer and installation of the solar systems would begin in the fall.

26299

Mayor Mays thanked Mr. Wells for the solar fair information.

A public hearing was held to solicit input on the 2017-2018 Norton City Schools Budget which totals \$8,797,038. The proposed school budget includes the Operational Fund in the amount of \$8,130,184, of which, \$2,468,348 is locally appropriated funds; the Textbook Fund in the amount of \$191,424, of which \$23,523 is locally appropriated funds; the Early Retirement Plan Fund in the amount of \$147,400; and the Food Services Fund of \$328,030.

Ms. Gina Wohlford, Superintendent of Norton City Schools, presented Council with a PowerPoint presentation on the school system's proposed 2017-2018 budget. She advised that the budget is based on a projected enrollment of 750 students and that the governor's budget had negatively impacted school funding due to enrollment loss and an expenditure increase to the Virginia Retirement System. Ms. Wohlford said the school system is asking Council for approximately \$90,000 above the Local Required Effort (LRE) for a total local appropriation of \$2,491,871.

There being no questions of Ms. Wohlford, Mayor Mays thanked her for the budget presentation.

262300

At this time, Mr. Ramey noted the school system's new Supervisor of Finance Jacqueline Brooke was in attendance.

Mayor Mays opened the public hearing.

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

After Ms. Wohlford answered a question from Councilman Fultz, Mayor Mays noted the school's budget would be considered at the next regularly scheduled Council meeting, set for May 16th.

Mr. Ramey said Norton resident and business owner Bryan Lewis approached him over a year ago with an idea to foster entrepreneurship, especially at the college level. Mr. Ramey said their discussions led him to introduce Mr. Lewis to Shannon Blevins, Associate Vice Chancellor for Economic Development and Engagement at the University of Virginia's College at Wise (UVA-Wise). As a result of those meetings, Bryan Lewis and his brother William Lewis who both own Norton based G2K Games, sponsored the first annual G2K Games Innovation Competition at UVA-Wise on March 31st. The winners of the technology-based business competition, Tara Greear and McKenna Blevins of Reach More Marketing, were in attendance and present their winning business plan concept to Council.

Prior to the presentation, Mr. Bryan Lewis thanked Council for recognizing the competition winners and stated that he personally wanted to give back to the community by inspiring entrepreneurship. He said he has lived in Norton for 27 years and wanted to be a positive influence on young people and to encourage UVA-Wise to cultivate this type of program. 262301

Council thanked Mr. Lewis for the holding the competition.

Tara Greear and McKenna Blevins presented their winning plan for Reach More Marketing and explained upon graduating from UVA-Wise this spring, they plan to open their marketing company in October. They will utilize the \$6,000 award from the G2K Games Innovation Competition, the free office space provided by the Norton Industrial Development Authority at the Hotel Norton Business Incubator, and the \$1,000 of legal services provided by Julia McAfee to launch their company.

After receiving praise from Council members, Mayor Mays congratulated Ms. Greear and Ms. Blevins on their achievement, honoring them with applause.

Council had been presented with a request for a Special Use Permit to allow for special events in Veterans Park and for the installation of a 200 square foot ground deck in Veterans Park near Zest Catering's entrance for private parties, dinner club meetings, cooking classes and other events held by Zest Catering.

Mr. Ramey, via a PowerPoint presentation, indicated Mr. Shawn Campbell desired to install a ground deck for events near his primary entrance located in Veterans' Park. He explained Mr. Campbell is proposing building the ground deck in the park beside the column at his entrance, and it would extend and wrap around the decorative lamp and existing tree.

Mr. Shawn Campbell shared with Council that he is excited about the future of Zest Catering and with the growth of the business. He said upon starting his business in Norton he knew he wanted an eat-in kitchen with an industrial feel and he wanted to have a "pop-up" restaurant. He said "pop-up" restaurants are popular in larger cities and he wants to 262302

introduce them to our area. He explained a “pop-up” restaurant is just what the name denotes and it is a one night event. He handed out a sample menu of a pop-up restaurant and said tickets would be sold. The purpose of the “pop-up” restaurant is to introduce new cuisine that you cannot get in our area without having to drive two to three hours. He stated Veterans Park would be closed to through traffic for approximately three hours and he would purchase mobile tables and chairs. Mr. Campbell said he thinks the events would be an asset to Veterans’ Park and that the park is currently underutilized. He noted that seven different states have been represented at the cooking classes he has hosted and the classes have been very successful. He said the states that were represented were people who were in the area due to work and they were looking for something to do. Mr. Campbell believes installing the deck for outside events and introducing the “pop-up” restaurant to the City could bring life to downtown Norton.

Mr. Ramey said he and Mr. Campbell have worked through all the possible problems and that the shared entrances in Veterans’ Park between WXAM Radio Station and Zest Catering have been worked out. Mr. Ramey said as part of the agreement, Mr. Campbell will need to provide the City with a Certificate of Liability Insurance naming the City as the additional insured.

Mayor Mays asked the City Attorney for his opinion on Zest Catering’s requests.

Mr. Bradshaw stated he had no issues with the Special Use Permit or the request to install a ground deck in Veterans’ Park.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to authorize City Administration to prepare a Special Use Permit to allow Zest Catering to hold special events in Veterans’ Park and to allow the installation of a ground deck in Veterans’ Park near Zest Catering’s primary entrance.

Mr. Dylan Reilly, University of Maryland Landscape Architectural Master’s Student, presented a PowerPoint presentation of his Master’s Thesis on the Proposed Norton Riverwalk.

Mr. Reilly thanked Council for the opportunity to come back and present the outcome on the community engagement process and to present the design of the proposed project. He provided Council with an overview of his research, shared his proposed design of the Norton Riverwalk, and informed Council he recently learned of potential federal funding for the project. He said part of the package he will submit to the City will include preliminary grading plans at a five percent slope that he created for the proposed site. Mr. Reilly stated his goals for the riverwalk were to improve citizen connectivity, improve the quality of life for residents, attract visitors to the City, and to communicate and celebrate Norton’s coal history. He noted he had won two awards on the presentation of his Master’s Thesis on the Proposed Norton Riverwalk - the American Society of Landscape Architecture Student Honor Award and the Local Landscape Architecture Foundation University Olmsted Scholar. He said he looks forward to working with the City to obtain grant funding for the proposed Norton Riverwalk and he thanked everyone who participated in the project and Council for the opportunity to work in the community.

At this time, Mr. Ramey recognized Adam Wells and Matt Hepler, of Appalachian Voices, thanking them for making the project possible by providing assistance to Mr.

Reilly. Mr. Ramey further stated he is confident that the level of work Mr. Reilly has provided the City will assist in grant funding being obtained to develop the project.

Council members thanked Mr. Reilly for his work on the Proposed Norton Riverwalk and congratulated him on the awards he received for the project.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilman Caruso, 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.

262304

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

The City Attorney left at this time.

262305

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

262306

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.

262307

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert)

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Norton Industrial Development Authority for a four-year term to expire on May 10, 2021.

Councilman Fawbush nominated Charles Graham and Glenn Teasley to be reappointed to the Norton Industrial Development Authority for a four-year term to expire on May 10, 2021.

262308

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

Mayor Mays declared Charles Graham and Glenn Teasley reappointed to the Norton Industrial Development Authority for a four-year term to expire on May 10, 2021.

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

During The Great American Cleanup on Saturday, April 29th, 45 volunteers picked up 68 bags of trash throughout the City.

The Water Treatment Plant received a Gold Award for Excellence in Waterworks Operation for 2016 operations.

262309

The Wise County/City of Norton Chamber of Commerce will host the Business Appreciation Awards luncheon sponsored by the Norton Industrial Development Authority and the Wise County Industrial Development Authority, at 11:30 a.m., Thursday, May 18th, in the Mountain Empire Community College Goodloe Center.

In comments from Council:

Councilman Caruso thanked City Administration and the City's Public Works Department for promptly completing several clean-up work orders he submitted. 262310

Councilman Fultz stated he is encouraged by the launching of new businesses in the City, but he wants to encourage more entrepreneurship in the City of Norton because there are opportunities for people to provide more goods and services in the City. 262311

The John I. Burton Baccalaureate service is at 3:00 p.m., Sunday, May 7th, in the Freedom of Worship Church's City Center.

Councilwoman Belcher had no comments. 262312

Councilman Fawbush said he thought it would be a good idea to have a "pop-up" store similar to the "pop-up" restaurant Mr. Campbell described tonight where individuals could sell make-up, jewelry, clothing, etc. The property owner renting the space would have low overhead and great income potential. 262313

Mayor Mays had no comments. 262314

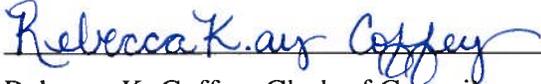
There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting adjourned.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Rebecca K. Coffey, Clerk of Council