

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, May 16, 2017, at 6:00 p.m., in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

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

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

The invocation was then given by Minister Jim Wells 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, Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the May 2 , 2017, meeting as presented.

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During the Mayor's Call for Visitors, Ms. Amy Bond, Director of the Lonesome Pine Regional Library, came forward and thanked Council for their support of the library system and spoke briefly about upcoming library activities and funding for Fiscal Year 2017-2018. She said during tough economic times people use the library more to search for jobs on the library's computer system and to provide cost-free activities for their children. Ms. Bond said funding on all levels is being cut and she asked Council to provide continued funding for the library so the library staff may offer the same level of services to citizens.

Citizens, Peggy Calhoun, Kiersta Calhoun, Ginnie Stokes, Beth Thacker, and Lynn Smith, spoke on behalf of Lonesome Pine Regional Library stating how important the library is to the local community and the many services the library provides to the citizens of Norton. They each explained the various programs they take advantage of at the library and the equipment they utilize to assist them in their jobs. They asked Council to continue to support the library because the programs and services offered by the library are vital to the community.

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Mr. Ramey said prior to the Council meeting he received a call from Lann Malesky, the City's representative on the Library Board, and that Mr. Malesky asked Mr. Ramey to share with Council that he could not be at the Council meeting due to an illness and he apologized for his absence. He also asked Mr. Ramey to inform Council that he is requesting level funding for the Lonesome Pine Regional Library this budget year.

Ms. Marybeth Adkins, Executive Director of Family Crisis Support Services, Inc., Advocate Center (FCSS) (also known as The Hope House), via a PowerPoint presentation, gave an overview of the programs and services provided by the agency. She noted the agency provides Domestic Violence Services, Emergency Shelter, Sexual Assault Program, Violent Crimes Against Women Services, emergency food and clothing, and financial assistance to the poor. Family Crisis Support Services, Inc., provides services to Wise County, City of Norton, Lee County, Dickenson County, and Scott County. Ms.

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Adkins advised which programs were utilized by clients in 2016, including children, and the number assisted in each program. She then explained that Family Crisis Support Services, Inc., in 2015, took over the services provided by The Advocate Center due to the illness of the founders. She advised the name of The Advocate Center was left in place out of respect for these founders, Sister Beth Jaspers and Sister Margaret Mary Flynn. Ms. Adkins explained Family Crisis Support Services, Inc., provides assistance to Norton Social Services clients with unrestricted funds FCSS receives. She stated in 2016 the agency was able to provide City of Norton and Wise County residents \$26,638 in assistance for utilities, food, and medication. Ms. Adkins said the agency appreciates any funding provided by the City and she hopes Council will consider them when deliberating the FY 2017-2018 budget.

Councilman Fultz thanked Ms. Adkins for the services Family Crisis Support Services, Inc., provides to area residents.

On behalf of Council, Mayor Mays thanked Ms. Adkins for the information about her agency and the presentation.

Ms. Glenda Collins, Executive Director of the Lonesome Pine Office on Youth, presented Council with a PowerPoint presentation on the programs the agency provides the LENOWISCO District. She said the City joined the Lonesome Pine Office on Youth in 1989 by a Resolution of Norton City Council. She noted the agency has provided Delinquency Prevention and Youth Development programs for the area for 37 years. During this time Lonesome Pine Office on Youth has conducted over 1,500 public education programs based on problems identified in the agency's Needs Assessment Plan. The agency currently offers Professional Parent Services, Mentor Program, Family Liaison Services, Strengthening Families Program, Nurturing Parenting, Kids in Divorce and Separation Program, Parenting Wisely, and Court Appointed Special Advocate. She explained that most of the programs charge a fee for any expenses related to delivering the service, but the fee does not cover any program administration costs. She advised Lonesome Pine Office on Youth works with Norton City Schools, Norton Social Services, Norton Parks and Recreation, mental health agencies, and the Wise County/City of Norton Virginia Department of Health to provide needed services to adults and children. Ms. Collins stated since 2004 the Lonesome Pine Office on Youth has not received state funding to assist with the problems that face the local area. She asked Council not to reduce funding to the Lonesome Pine Office on Youth for FY 2017-2018, and she requested Council to reinstate last year's budget cut of \$1,050.

Mayor Mays thanked Ms. Collins for her presentation.

The City Manager advised that Council had held a public hearing on the Norton City Schools Proposed 2017-2018 Budget at their last meeting. He further advised that Council had been provided with an updated Norton City School's budget and Ms. Gina Wohlford, Superintendent of Norton City Schools, was present and would like to comment on the school's proposed budget totaling \$8,797,038, with a local share of \$2,491,871.

Superintendent Wohlford advised that it had been brought to School Administration's attention that there was award duplication in the line item budget under Title I Director Allocation. She noted this revenue duplication had been reallocated to Dual Enrollment Fees to offset the shortfall in that category and that this error did not change the total

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budget amount previously presented to Council. Also at the May 2nd Council meeting, she stated that the Norton City School's Proposed FY 2017-2018 budget included a request of \$90,000 above the City's Required Local Effort (RLE), but the actual budget request is \$136,000 above the RLE. At the conclusion of her comments, she thanked Council for consideration of Norton City School's Proposed 2017-2018 Budget and she offered to answer questions from Council members.

Following Ms. Wohlford answering several questions from Council members and, upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to adopt the 2017-2018 budget for Norton City Schools in the amount of \$8,797,038 which will provide Operational Funding 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.

The City Manager discussed the City's FY 2017-2018 Budget in depth, via a PowerPoint presentation, presenting projected revenues and expenditures and how the decline in revenue and the increase in debt and expenditures have impacted the budget. Mr. Ramey said the recommended budget included no revenue enhancements or money to balance the budget. The Enterprise Fund includes a twenty-five cent increase in the base water rate and represents an increase of \$19,797 for a total of \$3,135,250. The Norton Social Services Fund totals \$1,040,743 and is an increase in the overall budget, but no increase in local funding. The City's Proposed General Operating Fund Budget is \$9,617,576 which is a decrease of a \$38,287. The budget includes one capital improvement project which is the lease of a garbage truck. Over the past several budgets, the City has reduced staff and numerous capital projects. The Proposed FY 2017-2018 budget includes further reductions and modifications to balance the budget. Mr. Ramey advised this course is not sustainable as projects and maintenance issues will need to be addressed. He said he is asking Council's authorization to advertise a public hearing on the Proposed Fiscal 2017-2018 Budget and Budget Amendments.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to authorize the City Manager to advertise a public hearing on the 2017-2018 Budget and Budget Amendments.

Mr. Ramey advised City Administration is recommending applying for a grant to fund the school resource officer position at John I. Burton High School and Norton Elementary and Middle School. If the grant application is unsuccessful, the position would be funded by the City paying 30 percent of the cost for the position and Norton City Schools paying 70 percent. Mr. Ramey said he is asking Council's authorization to apply for a School Resource Officer Grant.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to authorize the City Manager to apply for a School Resource Officer Grant.

The City Manager advised the School Resource Officer Grant requires a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Norton City Schools and the Norton Police Department.

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The MOU details the responsibilities for both parties and includes minor changes from last year. Police Chief James Lane has reviewed the MOU and approves of the document.

The City Attorney stated he had reviewed the MOU between the school system and the Police Department and he approves the MOU as written.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to authorize the City Manager and the Police Chief to sign the Memorandum of Understanding between the Norton Police Department and Norton City Schools.

The City Manager said City Administration has been working with Coeburn-Norton-Wise Regional Wastewater Treatment Authority (CNW) for a couple years to accept the Deed of Transfer on the Josephine Pump Station known as the Old Josephine Sewer Treatment Plant property. The City has been operating the pump station, but is just now obtaining ownership due to requested language changes in the deed.

Mr. Bradshaw advised the deed has been exhaustively reviewed and the City is receiving all of the rights-of-way and easements that have been obtained over the years as well as shadow property which include the pipes, concrete, lines, and valves. The City Attorney said ownership of the Josephine Pump Station property has to be conveyed to the City and accepted and he has to approve as to form, which he has done and will record the deed.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to accept the Deed of Transfer on the Josephine Pump Station property from the Coeburn-Norton-Wise Regional Wastewater Treatment Authority.

Council had one Transfer to confirm. The transfer was to the Norton City Schools, dated April 26, 2017, in the amount of \$150,000 to cover April 2017 payroll expenditures.

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to confirm the transfer to Norton City Schools, as stated above.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, 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.

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

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

Mayor Mays declared Council back in open meeting.

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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.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fultz, 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 C-N-W Regional Wastewater Treatment Authority for a four-year term to expire on May 15, 2021.

Councilman Fawbush nominated Robert Fultz, Jr., to be appointed to the C-N-W Regional Wastewater Authority for a four-year term to expire on May 15, 2021.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following vote: YES – Caruso, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSTAIN – Fultz, ABSENT – None, Council moved that the nominations cease.

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Mayor Mays declared Robert Fultz, Jr., appointed to the C-N-W Regional Wastewater Treatment Authority for a four-year term to expire on May 15, 2021.

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations of a student representative to the Wise County/City of Norton Youth Services Board to fill an unexpired term to July 1, 2018.

Councilman Fultz nominated Makayla Martinez, a John I. Burton High School student to be appointed to the Wise County/City of Norton Youth Services Board for a one-year term to expire on July 1, 2018.

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

Mayor Mays declared Makayla Martinez appointed to fill an unexpired term as a student representative to the Wise County/City of Norton Youth Services Board for a one-year term to expire on July 1, 2018.

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

Earlier this evening he received a text from Jenay Tate, Editor and Publisher of The Coalfield Progress, stating News Editor Jeff Lester's mother had passed away Monday evening. She wanted to apologize for not having another staff member present to report tonight's meeting but she had prior commitments and no one else was available to attend the meeting.

The two grant applications to the Virginia Department of Health for water line replacements in the Josephine and Clear Creek areas have been approved. The City will receive \$114,459 for the Josephine project and \$102,990 for the Clear Creek project. Mr. Ramey will need the consensus of City Council to accept these grant monies.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to authorize City Administration to accept the grant funds from the Virginia Department of Health for the total amount of \$217,449 for the water line replacement projects in the Josephine and Clear Creek areas.

He placed at each member's desk a copy of the latest monthly Retail Sales Tax Report. Mountain Empire Community College (MECC) has hired Dr. Kris Westover from Patrick Henry Community College in Martinsville as the next MECC President.

Mr. Ramey advised the Wise County/City of Norton Business Appreciation Luncheon is scheduled for 11:30 a.m., Thursday, May 18th, in the Goodloe Building at Mountain

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Empire Community College. He asked Council members to advise him if they cannot attend.

Flyers of the Norton Parks and Recreation Department summer classes and activities have been provided at each member's desk.

Mr. Bradshaw advised he had completed the land purchase in connection with the Norton Industrial Development Authority (NIDA) property and he has filed a quiet title action to remove a small ownership issue that may or may not arise in the future. This lawsuit will take awhile to complete because the connected parties are deceased. He will publish Certificates of Publication and will have a Special Commissioner's hearing, but these items are all procedural.

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In comments from Council:

Councilwoman Belcher had no comments.

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Councilman Fultz thanked and commended the City Manager, Director of Finance, and their team for the FY 2017-2018 budget. He said reviewing sales tax numbers reported for the year, the City's revenue is down nine out of eleven months and, if this trend continues the City will end the year down \$75,000 in revenue. The City's budget has decreased for the past two years and considering the school system's budget, it is being funded the Required Local Effort with an additional \$125,000 above the RLE with less students. Due to the decrease in revenue it becomes a tough decision for Council to determine how to best serve the citizens of Norton. When considering all these items, Councilman Fultz thanked City Administration for making the budget work and for their advice even though at times Council decides on another course.

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Councilman Caruso asked Mr. Ramey if he had received any notification regarding the downtown revitalization grant.

Mr. Ramey said notification is usually received in July.

Councilman Caruso said the Planning Commission has reviewed the Comprehensive Plan for two years and Council has not received any recommendations. He asked Mr. Ramey if he had received any communication from the Planning Commission.

Mr. Ramey advised he had not received anything from the Planning Commission but the Comprehensive Plan should be a formal document that is funded by Council with the hiring of a professional planning team to craft the plan.

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Councilman Caruso advised he will be asking the Planning Commission about the Comprehensive Plan update every two weeks to encourage the update along.

Councilman Caruso said there are 30 empty storefronts from Walmart to CVS Pharmacy and that everyone needs to be working to fill those spaces with businesses.

At this time, Councilman Fultz advised he would not be able to attend the next Council meeting on June 6th.

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Councilman Fawbush thanked the City Manager, Director of Finance, and Finance Office Staff for preparing the City's budget. He said in tonight's budget presentation that

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he realizes the City's debt is increasing, but Council needs to consider that inflation has peaked and has impacted the City's budget as well. The City has absorbed these costs while keeping the same level of services for its citizens and maintained the total budget to practically the same amount each year. The City needs to begin moving forward on projects that have been delayed due to the downturn in the economy and to the prioritization of other items ahead of needed projects throughout the City.

He said Shayne Fields is doing an excellent job developing trails in the Flag Rock Recreation Area and the City is receiving recognition on the East Coast as having great biking trails.

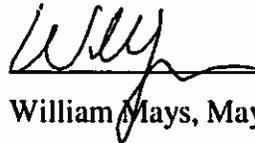
He invited Council to participate in the Norton Elementary and Middle School Field Day activities on Friday, May 19, 2017.

Mayor Mays commented he appreciated the presentations and they were very informative. He suggested that the presentations be made prior to Council beginning the budget process in February.

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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