

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, October 17, 2017, at 6:00 p.m., in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

Present: William Mays, Joseph Fawbush, and Delores Belcher

Absent: Mark Caruso and Robert Fultz, Jr.

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

The invocation was given by Pastor Ken Taylor and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Police Chief James Lane.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following vote: YES – Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Caruso and Fultz, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the September 19, 2017, meeting as presented.

262472

There was no response to the Mayor's Call for Visitors.

The City Manager said Rick Watts and Treavor Calhoun, event organizers of the Woodbooger Geo-Trail held on September 9, 2017 throughout Norton and Flag Rock Recreation Area, were present to provide an update on the event.

Mr. Rick Watts, co-organizer of the Woodbooger Geo-Trail, said 11 different states were represented and participants were very complimentary of the event. He provided statistics on meals, gas, and lodging purchased as a direct result of the geocache event. Mr. Watts stated a "meet and greet" was held at The Wood Booger Grill on Friday before the geocache and that the Woodbooger Geo-Trail was well attended. He said many of the participants said they would return next year, the event was well organized, and the caches were built solid. Mr. Watts said the caches will remain in place for one year for visitors to search for treasurers which will result in additional dollars being spent in the area. Mr. Watts said the event would not have been a success without Co-Organizer Treavor Calhoun and the assistance of Peggy Calhoun.

262473

Mr. Ramey then shared a painting of Flag Rock with Council that Mr. Watts donated to the City. Mr. Ramey told members that Mr. Watts's son painted the picture and also painted two additional pictures were given away to geocache participants.

Mayor Mays thanked Mr. Watts, Treavor Calhoun, and Peggy Calhoun for organizing the event and their work on the event.

Councilman Fawbush commended the organizers for raising money to hold the event and for attaining volunteers to assist with all the activities.

Mr. Ramey told Council the Cloudsplitter 100 Ultra Trail Race, the High Knob Hellbender 10K, and the Woodbooger Festival held on Saturday, October 7th were huge successes and organizers received positive comments about the events. He noted the culmination of these three events resulted in what is being called "Super Saturday" in the City of Norton.

262474

Mr. Ramey stated the Cloudsplitter 100 Ultra Trail Race was a 40 hour event and had participants from 23 states, Washington, D.C., and Canada. He said over 140 runners participated in the event with 14 area runners participating in the trail running event. Mr. Ramey said the organizers received positive comments about the event and runners were very appreciative of the people and the beauty of the area.

Mr. Ramey said he invited Katie Dunn, the organizer for the High Knob Hellbender 10K, to provide an update on that race.

Ms. Dunn said she was extremely pleased with the outcome of the event and that the race had the strongest turnout since its inception in 2014. She also said a new course record was set and that the race served as a United States of America Track & Field (USATF) Virginia Mountain Running Championship event this year. Ms. Dunn said 81 runners participated in the event and she thanked city employees and emergency personnel for their assistance with the race.

Mayor Mays thanked Ms. Dunn for her update.

Mr. Ramey said the Woodbooger Festival kick off was on Friday at the Flag Rock Recreation Area and Vice Mayor Fawbush could provide an update on this year's festival.

Vice Mayor Fawbush said the Fourth Annual Woodbooger Festival began on Friday with the showing of *Harry and the Henderson's* at Flag Rock Recreation Area and ended on Saturday evening with several guided Woodbooger searches, marshmallow roasts, games, karaoke, and food. Approximately 500 people visited the park and everyone seemed to enjoy the festival. Numerous clubs and organizations volunteered to help with the event and he commended city employees who worked through the weekend to make all three events successful

Mayor Mays thanked city employees and agencies that collaborated to make the races and festival successful.

Included in Council packets was a proposed Ordinance to Create a Regional Industrial Facilities Authority. Mr. Ramey said Council has discussed working together with other counties on economic development in the area and previously adopted a resolution to support this effort. As a result of the resolution of support, administration from the counties of Lee, Scott, Wise, and Dickenson and the City of Norton came together and determined that a Regional Industrial Facilities Authority, which is authorized in the State Code, would need to be created to govern the collective work of the localities. Mr. Bradshaw has reviewed and approved the ordinance as written and Mr. Ramey requested authorization to advertise a public hearing on the proposed ordinance.

262475

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to authorize the City Manager to advertise a public hearing on the proposed Ordinance to Create a Regional Industrial Facilities Authority.

Council also received in their packets A Resolution Requesting that the General Assembly Restore Regional Jail Per Diems to 2009 Levels or Increase the Per Diems Paid to the Localities for Housed Inmates.

Mr. Ramey told Council that jail costs are one of the city's largest expenses that are typically out of the city's control. He said the Regional Jail Authority is asking the state to

262476

stop making decisions that force jail expenses back on localities and to restore per diems to 2009 levels or increase the per diem paid to the localities for housed inmates.

Councilman Fawbush, who is also the city's representative on the Southwest Regional Jail Authority, added that the state is now waiting two years to pick up state-responsible inmates instead of the one year requirement as in previous years. The decision to wait two years to collect state-responsible inmates is an unfunded state mandate that localities are having to pick up the cost to house the state's inmates in the local jails.

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the Resolution Requesting that the General Assembly Restore Regional Jail Per Diems to 2009 Levels or Increase the Per Diems Paid to the Localities for Housed Inmates. (Insert)

Mr. Ramey advised due to the recent cases of variant rabies discovered in Wise County the City has received a request from the Wise County/City of Norton Health Department asking the City to sponsor a rabies vaccination clinic on November 11, 2017, at Powell Valley Animal Hospital in Big Stone Gap. He said state code requires a bi-annual rabies vaccination clinic and that the requested clinic will be managed by health department.

262477

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Caruso and Fultz, Council moved to approve the request from the Wise County/City of Norton Health Department to sponsor a rabies vaccination clinic on November 11, 2017, at Powell Valley Animal Hospital in Big Stone Gap.

The next agenda item was the authorization to refund erroneously assessed 2017 Public Service Real Estate Taxes to New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC, "doing business as" AT&T. Mr. Ramey said the Commissioner of the Revenue did not receive the 2017 State Corporation Commission's Statement of Assessment until September 15, 2017, so an accurate assessment could not be determined for the first half billing of public service real estate taxes.

262478

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve the refund in the amount of \$511.55 for erroneously assessed 2017 Public Service Real Estate Taxes to New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC, "doing business as" AT&T, 1010 Pine Street, Room 9E-L01, St. Louis, Missouri.

Council had one check to confirm. This check was to U. S. Bank Operations Center, dated September 1, 2017, in the amount of \$103,363.76 for a loan payment for water debt retirement.

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Caruso and Fultz, Council moved to approve the check to U. S. Bank Operations Center as stated above.

262479

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, 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.

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

262480

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.

262481

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

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

He would like to schedule a workshop with Council in November to update members on grants and projects on which City Administration is currently working. He will contact Council to determine a date for the workshop.

262482

Copies of the latest Retail Sales Tax Report, September traffic counts for Route 619 and Flag Rock, and a sample ballot were placed at each member's desk.

The Halloween Bash in the Park is scheduled Saturday, October 21st and Halloween will be observed Tuesday, October 31st from of 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

In comments from Council:

Councilwoman Belcher commented sometimes you fail to notice the beauty of our area until you are away from home for a period of time.

She thanked city employees for their efforts to make sure that the citizens of Norton have the services that many enjoy and utilize. She noted many of the employees' jobs are dangerous and she is thankful for all they do.

262483

Councilman Fawbush also expressed his appreciation to various departments in the city and to city administration that worked long, hard hours this weekend to ensure that the events were successful. He also thanked the inmates from the Duffield Regional Jail that worked the races and festival this weekend and said they were very courteous and helpful.

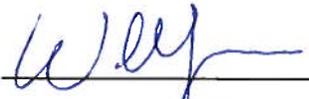
262484

Mayor Mays stated when working in St. Paul he hears many positive comments about what Norton is doing. He said St. Paul is very active promoting their town and has a great deal happening in their locality too. It is nice to hear all the pleasant comments about the city from St. Paul residents which is a salute to city employees and the city's leader, Mr. Ramey.

262485

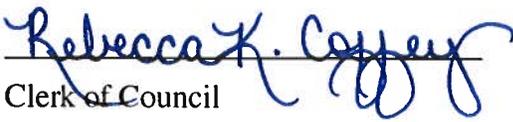
There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting adjourned.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Clerk of Council