

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held Tuesday, January 16, 2018, at 6:00 p.m., in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

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

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

The invocation was given by City Manager Fred Ramey, Jr., and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Police Chief James Lane. 262559

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by the following vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the December 19, 2017, meeting as presented. 262560

There was no response to the Mayor’s Call for Visitors. 262561

Council had been presented a list of Financial Encumbrances for the General Operating Fund in the amount of \$9,504 for the year ending June 30, 2017. Mr. Ramey said the encumbrances have been certified by the auditor and a public hearing is not required because the amount of the encumbrances is less than one percent of the total budget.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to approve the financial encumbrances for the General Operating Fund in the amount of \$9,504 for the year ending June 30, 2017. 262562

Mayor Mays advised that Agenda Item 6-B, Overview of the 2017 Summer Camps, will be tabled until the next council meeting scheduled Tuesday, February 6, 2018. 262563

The City Manager stated it was time to discuss the 2018 Independence Day Fireworks Display and noted that Council decided last year to hold the parade and fireworks show on Saturday, July 1. Mr. Ramey noted city administration did receive a few complaints last year about not having the celebration on July 4th, but most citizens enjoyed the fireworks and appreciated the city continuing to have the fireworks display. Mr. Ramey said the fireworks vendor has suggested the city have this year’s fireworks demonstration either the weekend before or the weekend after Fourth of July. Mr. Ramey said Council did not have to decide on a date tonight, but Council would need to make a decision soon so city administration can enter into a contract with the fireworks vendor. Mr. Ramey also gave Council the option of having the fireworks display on July 3rd or 4th, but stated that option would result in a either a minimum cost increase of \$8,000 to the city’s fireworks display or the city taking over the responsibility for shooting the fireworks.

After a lengthy discussion, it was the consensus of Council to hold the Independence Day Celebration Saturday, July 7th, and for members to decide at the next council meeting whether to contract with a fireworks vendor or take over shooting fireworks display. Mr. 262564

Ramey was also asked to gather information on training a certified shooter and contracting the town of Big Stone Gap's shooter and give a report to Council at the next meeting on February 6th.

Council had been presented in their packets with A Resolution in Support of House Bill 222 introduced by the Honorable Delegate Will Morefield. Mr. Ramey advised the legislation is seeking to incentivize companies to come into areas that have unemployment rates and poverty rates that exceed the state averages. Mr. Ramey said the localities that qualify under Bill 222 are considered to be eligible for income tax modification when a company creates 10 jobs with a minimum investment of \$5 million in new capital or the creation of 50 jobs in a qualified locality. Mr. Ramey noted Bill 222 will have a net neutral impact on the Commonwealth which means the state will still receive the company employee withholdings because grant funds will subsidize the company savings through grant payouts.

262565

After a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt A Resolution in Support of House Bill 222 introduced by the Honorable Delegate Will Morefield. (Insert)

Council had one transfer to confirm. The transfer was to Norton City Schools, dated December 7, 2017, in the amount of \$142,350 to cover the General Obligation School Bond, Series 2012 payment.

262566

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

Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, 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, and consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such council as per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (8) of the Code of Virginia, as amended.

262567

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

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

262568

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.

262569

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, 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 adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert)

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Ninth District Development Financing, Inc., for a two-year term to expire on January 31, 2020.

Councilman Fawbush nominated Carol Caruso to be reappointed to the Ninth District Development Financing, Inc., for a two-year term to expire on January 31, 2020.

262570

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

Mayor Mays declared Carol Caruso reappointed to the Ninth District Development Financing, Inc., for a two-year term to expire on January 31, 2020.

At this time, Vice Mayor Fawbush took over the meeting and opened the floor for nominations to the Norton Rescue Squad Board of Directors for one-year term to expire on February 1, 2019.

Councilman Caruso nominated William Mays to be reappointed and Delores Belcher to be appointed to the Norton Rescue Squad Board of Directors for one-year term to expire on February 1, 2019.

262571

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

Vice Mayor Fawbush declared William Mays reappointed and Delores Belcher appointed to the Norton Rescue Squad Board of Directors for one-year term to expire on February 1, 2019.

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Lonesome Pine Regional Industrial Facilities Authority for a two-year term to expire on January 16, 2020.

Councilwoman Belcher nominated Mark Caruso to be appointed to the Lonesome Pine Regional Industrial Facilities Authority for a two-year term to expire on January 16, 2020.

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

262572

Mayor Mays declared Mark Caruso appointed to the Lonesome Pine Regional Industrial Facilities Authority for a two-year term to expire on January 16, 2020.

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Lonesome Pine Regional Industrial Facilities Authority for a four-year term to expire on January 16, 2022.

Councilwoman Belcher nominated Joseph Fawbush to be appointed to the Lonesome Pine Regional Industrial Facilities Authority for a four-year term to expire on January 16, 2022.

262573

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

Mayor Mays declared Joseph Fawbush appointed to the Lonesome Pine Regional Industrial Facilities Authority for a four-year term to expire on January 16, 2022.

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

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Planning Grant that LENOWISCO Planning District applied for last year on behalf of the Towns of Appalachia and Big Stone Gap, and the City of Norton has been awarded. The grant, along with local funding, will assist in funding a feasibility study for possibly extending the Powell River Trail from Appalachia to Norton using the former Louisville and Nashville Railroad (L&N) abandoned rail line. A copy of an article about the project published in the Kingsport Times News was placed on Council desks.

The filings of annual Disclosure Statements are due to the clerk by February 1st.

262574

The Virginia High School Coaches Association (VHSCA) All-Star football game was held at Carl Smith Stadium on the campus of the University of Virginia's College at Wise on December 16, 2017. The Norton Tourism Committee made a contribution to host the event in Southwest Virginia and the city received a "thank you" letter and a photo of the banner showing the City of Norton as an event sponsor.

Mr. Ramey placed at each member's desk copies of the latest Retail Sales Tax Report and the traffic counts for Route 619 and Flag Rock Recreation Area. He noted the Route 619 counts are for half of the month due to a cable break.

He reminded council the 2018 Legislative Reception is planned for January 25th in Richmond, and he asked members to advise city administration if they plan on attending the reception.

In comments from Council:

Councilwoman Belcher commented the economy seems to be improving compared to when she started on Council.

262575

She said she hopes city employees will be safe as they are working in the weather tonight.

Councilman Caruso said he and his wife Carol will be attending the 2018 Legislative Reception.

He advised Police Chief Lane that Pathfinders Outdoor Adventures, LLC., will be using the city's firing range Saturday, January 20th.

262576

Councilman Fultz agreed with Councilwoman Belcher that the economy is improving, and stated he believes the momentum is a result of hard work. He said he is looking forward to the possibility of building a trail from Norton to Appalachia and believes the addition of this trail will greatly encourage current tourism efforts and be an asset for area residents.

262577

Councilman Fultz advised he plans on attending the Legislative Reception in Richmond.

Councilman Fawbush advised he plans on attending the Legislative Reception in Richmond.

262578

Mayor Mays commented that Southwest Virginia is a beautiful area and hopefully some of the economic gain the rest of the country is experiencing will materialize in our area soon.

262579

At this time, Councilman Caruso asked the City Manager if Bill Lancaster had contacted him.

Mr. Ramey stated he has spoken with Mr. Lancaster.

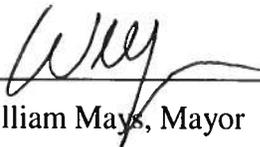
Councilman Caruso shared that Mr. Lancaster, of Bilco Productions, has made a 90 minute film on the culture around "Bigfoot" titled *Cultured Bigfoot*. Councilman Caruso said the purpose of the movie is not to follow the creature but to observe the people that pursue the animal. He noted that the majority of the film is recorded in the High Knob Recreation area.

262580

Mr. Ramey said he and Mr. Lancaster are trying to schedule a time to meet and that Mr. Lancaster's aspiration is first to have a premiere showing of the film then show the film at one of the area's festivals.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Clerk of Council