

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held Tuesday, February 20, 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, and Bill Bradshaw, City Attorney

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

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the February 6, 2018, meeting as presented. 262605

There was no response to the Mayor's Call for Visitors. 262606

Council had been presented in their packets with a Resolution Authorizing the City Administration to submit a SolSmart Application with Technical Assistance from the National Association of Counties and Appalachian Voices.

Mr. Adam Wells, New Economy Program Manager of Appalachian Voices and Solar Workgroup, presented a PowerPoint overview on the U. S. Department of Energy Sunshot Initiative SolSmart Designation Program. He said the purpose of the program is to assist local governments in becoming "open for solar business" by providing expert technical advice to update or modify local code regulations, websites, permitting processes, marketing, finance, and any other items that present a barrier to solar energy development. Mr. Wells said local governments can achieve one of three SolSmart Designations once any identified obstruction to solar energy growth has been removed. Once the city receives one of the three designations, gold, silver, or bronze, the city will be open to attracting solar energy investment and create economic development by providing jobs in the solar energy sector. 262607

Mr. Ramey said he was not aware of any city ordinances regulating solar development, and noted his only concern with moving forward with the SolSmart Designation is the volume of administrative work that might be required to complete the process to receive the classification.

After a brief discussion, the city attorney advised the resolution does not commit the city in any way to the SolSmart Designation, and that the city can pull out of the process should council deem it necessary to do so.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Authorizing City Administration to Submit a SolSmart Application with Technical Assistance from the National Association of Counties and Appalachian Voices. (Insert)

Mr. Ramey advised that City Parks and Recreation Director Michele Knox and Special Projects Coordinator Katie Dunn were present to update council on the upcoming 2018 Calendar of Events.

Ms. Dunn handed out a "Get Outside in Norton, Virginia" calendar to members and stated that she and Ms. Knox have been working on adding new events and activities for 2018 in an effort to get more citizens outside and exploring Norton. Ms. Knox said they held a community informational session last week and reviewed the calendar of events with several citizens. Ms. Knox said attendees at the session were confident the new events added for 2018 were good activities for citizens to engage in and would encourage outdoor recreational involvement. Ms. Dunn and Ms. Knox gave an overview of the activities and noted the added events were in addition to normal activities, such as Fourth of July, farmers market, Fantastic Fridays, Best Friend Festival, and other events held throughout the year. Ms. Knox said the majority of events are free, and Ms. Dunn stated the events will be advertised on the city's website and social media.

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Mayor Mays thanked Ms. Knox and Ms. Dunn for the update on the 2018 Calendar of Events.

The next agenda item was an overview of the city's new webpage design.

Mr. Ramey said the city contracted several years ago with CivicPlus to design a website for the city. He stated CivicPlus specializes in working with local governments to design municipal websites and the company uses a platform that allows its users to develop and maintain their own webpage. Mr. Ramey noted in the original contract with CivicPlus the city was due an upgrade on its webpage design without incurring additional expense. Via a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Ramey then presented an updated and more tourism-related city website and explained the web pages were constantly evolving with new information. He said the new look has taken about a year to design and the software CivicPlus provides has been a benefit to city, because the city does not have to use a third party to revise or modify pages.

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Council members said they were pleased with the new design, and Mayor Mays thanked city administration for their work on updating the city's website.

Council had been given a copy of a Declaration of Emergency for confirmation of the flooding that occurred February 9-11, 2018.

Mr. Ramey said the city is required by the state to have council confirm the emergency declaration in the event state resources are needed to adequately respond to the situation or the city qualifies for emergency funding from the state. The city manager also said the Norton's Emergency Management Coordinator Todd Lagow was present to update council on the flooding event.

Mr. Lagow stated the weather situation was being monitored and the information initially received did not present a huge concern. However, later on a state of emergency was declared because he was concerned about the water covering the roads in the Dorchester Area and Flanary Avenue in the Ramsey section of Norton. In addition, there was concern that if Clear Creek breached its banks it would be difficult to evacuate citizens on Flanary Avenue. As a result of the declaration, the city elected to ask citizens to voluntarily evacuate in both locations and an emergency shelter was opened at the Community Center. There were five individuals that decided to evacuate and the city was

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fortunate that the flooding did not cause more damage. Mr. Lagow said the main reasons for declaring a state of emergency were the recommendation from the state and the ability to mobilize state assistance should the situation escalate.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt an Emergency Declaration for the February 9-11, 2018, Flood Event. (Insert)

Council had one transfer to confirm. The transfer was to Norton City Schools, dated January 30, 2018, in the amount of \$150,000 to cover January 2018 payroll expenditures.

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 confirm the transfer to Norton City Schools as stated above.

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, to consult with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel as per Section 2-2-3711 (A) (8) of the Code of Virginia, as amended, and 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 body as per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (3) of the Code of Virginia, as amended.

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Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

The city attorney left during closed session.

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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.

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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.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, 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 Building Code Board of Appeals for a five-year term to expire January 17, 2023.

Councilman Fultz nominated T.J. Flanary to be reappointed to the Building Code Board of Appeals for a five-year term to expire January 17, 2023.

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

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Mayor Mays declared T. J. Flanary reappointed to the Building Code Board of Appeals for a five-year term to expire January 17, 2023.

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Board of Zoning Appeals to fill the unexpired term of Joe Buchanan whose term expires June 2, 2018.

Councilman Caruso nominated Brad Austin to be appointed to the Board of Zoning Appeals to fill the unexpired term of Joe Buchanan whose term expires June 2, 2018.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved that the nominations cease. 262616

Mayor Mays declared Brad Austin nominated to the Board of Zoning Appeals to fill the unexpired term of Joe Buchanan whose term expires June 2, 2018. Mr. Austin's nomination will be submitted to the Wise County Circuit Court for approval.

At this time, Mayor Mays asked if there was a motion for A Resolution Supporting the Norton Industrial Development Authority (NIDA) to Apply for an Industrial Revitalization Fund (IRF) Grant for the Property formerly known as the "Goad Building" located at 815 Park Avenue, S.W., and to Authorize the City Manager and/or Mayor of the City of Norton to Participate with the Project and Sign Any Appropriate Documents Related to the IRF Proposal. 262617

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Supporting NIDA to Apply for an IRF Grant for the NIDA Property located at 815 Park Avenue, S.W., and to Authorize the City Manager and/or Mayor of the City of Norton to Participate with the Project and Sign Any Appropriate Documents Related to the IRF Proposal.

In comments from the City Manager:

He said Intern Daniel Pinard will hold the first Rally Norton meeting at 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, February 28th in Council Chambers. This meeting is part of the Rally Southwest Virginia Community Action Project that encourages community leadership and participation. Participants of the Rally Norton meetings will decide upon a project to utilize a \$5,000 mini grant that is being provided by Opportunity Southwest Virginia. 262618

He placed at each member's desk the December 2017 Retail Sales Tax Report.

Mr. Ramey said the Chamber of Commerce will be holding a ribbon cutting ceremony for Eastman Credit Union at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, February 21st, in the Norton Commons Shopping Center.

The City will be holding a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 11:00 a.m., Saturday, February 24th, for Rachel's Cupcakes at the new expanded location at 860 Park Avenue, N.W.

Mr. Ramey said the next budget/capital workshop is scheduled for Saturday, March 10th. He asked members to check their calendars for any conflicts with the work session.

The following comments were made by council members:

Councilwoman Belcher said she provided Mr. Ramey with a copy of the minutes of the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) meeting to place in the next council packet. 262619

She said she attended an orientation of the Appalachian Community Action and Development Agency and attended the Norton Rescue Squad Board meeting.

Councilman Fultz said one of the 2016 Norton Business Challenge winners Rachel Collins, owner of Rachel's Cupcakes, is expanding her menu and moving to a larger location downtown. Her business will now be called 860 Park Avenue Bake-a-Deli/Rachel's Cupcakes. He said Ms. Collins has hired several employees with the intentions to hire more staff. He noted that the business challenge was a good investment for downtown and a good opportunity for new entrepreneurs.

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Councilman Fultz said he is excited to see that Quick Lube is moving into the building previously occupied by Jerry's Service Center and he is optimistic about the progress occurring throughout downtown area.

Councilman Caruso asked the city manager if the Norton Industrial Development Authority (NIDA) was going to sponsor another business challenge.

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Mr. Ramey responded that the NIDA is going to fund another business challenge in 2018 and that city administration is currently finalizing the details for the contest.

Councilman Fawbush had no comments.

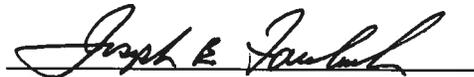
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Mayor Mays had no comments.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



Joseph Fawbush, Vice Mayor

ATTEST:



Rebecca K. Coffey
Clerk of Council