

The rescheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held Thursday, September 27, 2018, at 6:00 p.m., in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

Present: Robert Fultz, Jr., William Mays, and Delores Belcher

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

Absent: Mark Caruso and Joseph Fawbush

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

At this time, Mayor Mays said he would like council to consider amending the agenda to include under Item 6-E-1 a request from the Wise County Health Department to sponsor a Rabies Vaccination Clinic from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., October 13, 2018, at Powell Valley Animal Hospital in Big Stone Gap.

262849

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to amend the agenda to include under Item 6-E-1 a sponsorship request for a Rabies Vaccination Clinic, as stated above.

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by the following vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Mays, Belcher, NO – None, ABSENT – Fawbush, council moved to adopt the minutes of the September 4, 2018, meeting as presented.

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

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The next agenda item was recognition of the AmeriCorps/National Civilian Conservation Corps Team River 3.

The city manager said Team River 3 had completed several projects in the city and he had invited them to the meeting to share their tour in the city in case the team is redirected due to Hurricane Florence.

Team River 3 Leader Christy Folk told council the team had completed .56 miles of trail work, painted the farmers' market building downtown and several picnic shelters in the Flag Rock Recreation Area, changed the flag on Flag Rock, conducted recruiting at Union High School for AmeriCorps, and completed a few more assignments in the city. She said during the team's downtime, they visited the Southwest Virginia Museum in Big Stone Gap, saw musician Dave Edgar perform at the University of Virginia's College at Wise, and enjoyed several other activities in the city.

At this time, Councilman Caruso took his seat on council.

On behalf of council, Mayor Mays thanked Team River 3 for their work throughout the city and for their service to the country. Mayor Mays, along with City Trail Coordinator

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Shayne Fields, presented each team member with a plaque recognizing their service and a group photo was taken with council members.

After plaque presentations, Team River 3 Media Representative Sage Savoia-Di Gregorio presented a PowerPoint Presentation showing the team at work on several assignments throughout the city.

Council was given an update on the 2018 Woodbooger Geo-Tour that was held Saturday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, by co-event organizer Treavor Calhoun.

Mr. Calhoun informed council that 211 geocachers from 11 states participated in this year's geo-tour event. He provided council with event statistics on lodging and meals, and noted 78 percent of this year's geocachers participated in last year's Woodbooger Geo-Trail. Mr. Calhoun said he expects the number of participants in the 2018 geo-tour to grow exponentially with geocachers coming throughout the year to find caches. He said their goal next year is to make the event even larger, and he thanked council for allowing the geocachers to use the city as their "playground."

Mayor Mays thanked Mr. Calhoun for the update.

In their packets, council had a request from Planning District One Behavioral Health Services (PD1) seeking additional local funding to match the state's actual FY 2019 funding to the agency.

Mr. Ramey said once state funding was allotted, PD1 received more funding from the state than was originally projected by the agency back in February. He said to meet the city's required local match an additional \$1,430 is due to PD1 for the fiscal year 2018-2019.

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, council moved to amend the budget and appropriate \$1,430 from unappropriated reserves to match actual state funding received by Planning District One Behavioral Health Services for FY 2018-2019.

In packets for council consideration was an Athletic Facility Lease with the Norton City School Board for a parcel of land that is being used by John I. Burton High School.

The city manager said at the last meeting, council authorized the city attorney to draft a 40-year lease between the City of Norton and Norton City School Board for a parcel of land located at the end of the driving track at John I. Burton High School. Mr. Ramey said the parcel of land is being utilized by Norton City schools and that the school board recommended that the city lease or transfer the property to the school system as it has done in the past for similar city property.

Mr. Bradshaw noted that the lease can be cancelled and the school board must provide insurance on the property and indemnify the city. He added this will allow the school system to plan for the future and to use the property as the school determines.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Mays, Belcher, NO – None, ABSENT – Fawbush, council moved to approve a 40-Year Athletic Facility Lease between the City of Norton and Norton City School Board for a parcel of land located at the end of the driving track at John I. Burton High School.

Council had one check to confirm. The check was to Triad Freightliner of Tennessee, LLC., dated August 1, 2018, in the amount of \$139,990 to cover the purchase of a commercial garbage truck. 262856

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, council moved to confirm the check to Triad Freightliner of Tennessee, LLC., as stated above.

The next item before council was a request from the Wise County Health Department to sponsor a Rabies Vaccination Clinic from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., October 13, 2018, at Powell Valley Animal Hospital in Big Stone Gap.

The city manager said state code asks localities to hold a rabies vaccination clinic at least once every two years but the health department is conducting clinics more often due to the presence of rabies in the area. 262857

Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to sponsor a Rabies Vaccination Clinic from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., October 13, 2018, at Powell Valley Animal Hospital in Big Stone Gap, Virginia.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, council moved to go into closed meeting 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. 262858

Mayor Mays declared council in closed meeting.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to go back into open meeting. 262859

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. 262860

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

At this time, Mayor Mays asked the city attorney if he had a proposal he would like to discuss with council.

Mr. Bradshaw said the city has been working with a group of law firms to investigate and determine the cost incurred by the city due to the regional opioid epidemic. Mr. Bradshaw said he received the law firms' report and he has shared the information with council. He said if council desires to move forward he suggests the city consider a resolution authorizing the city attorney to file a lawsuit with the Virginia State Court to recover the damages incurred by the city as a result of the opioid epidemic.

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by councilman Fultz, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Mays, Belcher, NO – 262861

None, ABSENT – Fawbush, council moved to adopt a Resolution Authorizing the City Attorney to File a Lawsuit with the Virginia State Court to Recover Damages Incurred By the City as a Result of the Opioid Epidemic.

In comments from the City Manager:

Mr. Ramey said John I. Burton High School's Athletic Director Elijah Helton had contacted him regarding the school purchasing banners and the appropriate hardware to place banners downtown at each intersection. Mr. Ramey provided council with a photo of the proposed banners and said the school system wishes to hang the banners during fall each year and that the city could use the hardware to hang banners for city events.

After a brief discussion, it was the consensus of council to allow the school system to hang the banners as described to Mr. Ramey. Mr. Ramey asked Superintendent Gina Wohlford, who was in attendance, to advise Mr. Helton of council's decision.

Mr. Ramey advised the city has been awarded the School Resource Officer (SRO) Incentive Grant Program grant and that an SRO is scheduled to be at Norton Elementary and Middle School (NEMS) on Monday, October 1, 2018.

He said on Friday, September 14<sup>th</sup> he attended the NEMS "Project Fit America" that showcased the new playground at the location of the city's former swimming pool. Mr. Ramey said "Project Fit America" demonstrated how all students can get active by participating in cross-curriculum which combines physical activity with traditional math or science classes. Mr. Ramey said NEMS thanked city council for their support and for allowing the use of the property of the former swimming pool to install a new community playground. He said Ballard Health Care provided the last financial contribution to finish the new playground.

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He said the annual Walk-to-School Day has been rescheduled to Friday, October 12<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Ramey noted that he and several council members will attend the 2018 Virginia Municipal League Conference that is being held October 1-3.

He gave each council member the August Retail Sales Tax Report.

Mr. Ramey said the following activities will be held in the city during October: 2018 Woodbooger Festival, Friday, October 5<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, October 6<sup>th</sup>; High Knob Hellbender Saturday, October 6<sup>th</sup>; and Cloudsplitter Ultra 100 Trail Race Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Ramey informed council that reflective trail markers have been purchased and will be installed to mark the trail for the Cloudsplitter race.

He said the city will host the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (VDHCD) Coaching Summit October 29<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>.

The following comments were made by council members:

Councilman Fultz said he is grateful for the opportunity to have a school resource officer at NEMS, and he thinks the school banner project is a good idea.

Councilman Fultz said he is looking forward to the events scheduled in October.

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He said he attended the Spearhead Trails meeting and the board approved items for the Cloudsplitter Trail Race and the United States Forest Service.

Councilwomen Belcher said she attended the Appalachian Community Action and Development Agency, Inc., board meeting and Executive Director Lil Dupree is very appreciative of council's recent appointment of Jeff Shupe to the board.

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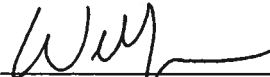
Mayor Mays confirmed council members were in consensus for cancelling the October 2, 2018, meeting due to city manager and council members attending the Virginia Municipal League Conference.

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It was the consensus of council to cancel the October 2, 2018, meeting.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA

  
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William Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Clerk of Council