

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held Tuesday, April 16, 2019, at 6:00 p.m., in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor Joseph Fawbush presiding.

Present: William Mays, Joseph Fawbush, Mark Caruso, and Delores Belcher

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

Absent: Robert Fultz, Jr.

The invocation was given by Pastor Freddie Powers 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 – Mays, Fawbush, Caruso, Belcher, NO – None, ABSENT – Fultz, ABSTAIN - None council moved to adopt the minutes of the April 2, 2019, meeting as presented.

263024

During the Mayor's Call for Visitors, Ms. Delores Bolling of, 639 Hillcrest Drive, S. E., spoke to council about several issues on Hillcrest Drive.

Ms. Bolling said city crews trimmed a tree on the city's right-of-way and left the debris and the wind blew the debris onto her property. Next, Ms. Bolling said a neighbor trimmed limbs out of pine trees and has not disposed of the cuttings causing the pine needles to be blown onto her property. She asked the city to pick up the limbs and debris. Also, Ms. Bolling said dog feces is another issue on Hillcrest Drive due to dog owners not picking up after their pets. She said she would like for council to work on adopting an ordinance that provides cumulative progressive fines for owners who do not clean up after their pets. Ms. Bolling said another problem is that her home is being devalued by two homes that burned near her property. Ms. Bolling then reverted back to winter snow removal explaining the city's services does not extend to her property and she would like for the city to plow to the end of the Hillcrest Drive. She then explained that neighbors are burning household trash at night and it feels her home with smoke. Ms. Bolling ended with asking council to address the issues she described on Hillcrest Drive and to start investing in the city's communities and neighborhoods to keep them attractive for citizens and visitors.

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Mr. Ramey said Danny Culbertson, President of Norton Youth Sports Foundation (NYSF), was in attendance to provide an update on their recent fundraising efforts.

Mr. Culbertson informed council that the foundation has raised \$9,000 of their \$15,000 goal. He said the organization assisted Norton Little League (NLL) with construction of a new batting cage and the foundation hopes to build new bathroom facilities with storage next year. Mr. Culbertson said May 31st is the deadline to order new football uniforms and equipment and new cheerleading uniforms at sale price.

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After brief discussion, Mayor Fawbush advised Mr. Culbertson council will consider NYSF's funding request at council's next budget meeting, and Mr. Ramey will contact him to inform him of their decision.

Tamara Greear of Thrower, Blanton, and Associates, P.C., was in attendance to present the 2017-18 Financial Audit for the City of Norton for the year ended June 30, 2018, and to provide members with a copy of the draft financial audit.

Ms. Greear explained council received a draft audit copy because city administration felt it was important that council have final audit numbers as they discuss the FY 2019-20 budget. She said she is not finished compiling the financial audit due to new enacted standards and since the audit is in draft form it is not for public release. Ms. Greear informed council the city received an unmodified or clean opinion. She then gave an overview of the audit and noted there were five material weaknesses and two significant deficiencies in internal controls. Ms. Greear said the city had two material weaknesses and the school board had three material weaknesses and two significant deficiencies. She said city administration and the school board have received a letter explaining the material weaknesses and significant deficiencies and both have been proactive in correcting the issues. Ms. Greear said the General Operating Fund closed with a total surplus of \$864,192, of which, \$331,453, is surplus from Norton City School Board. Ms. Greear then presented the Enterprise Fund and said council has been proactive in raising rates to make the Water Operating Fund (WOF) self-sufficient. The increase in revenue in FY 2017-18 is an indicator of council's prior action even though the WOF ended the fiscal year with a deficit in net position. Ms. Greear said self-financing utility funds are difficult for all localities and she encouraged council to continue being proactive and to review the fund in order to continue moving toward self-sufficiency. Ms. Greear then provided a brief summary of Norton City School Board's audit and said she will provide council a final audit within the next couple of weeks.

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Following a brief summation of the audit, Ms. Greear answered few questions from council members and Mayor Fawbush thanked Ms. Greear for her audit presentation.

In their packets for confirmation, council had draft Annexes and Appendices for the City's Emergency Operation Plan (EOP).

Councilman Caruso had some questions and he asked if he could meet with city administration to discuss them.

Councilman Mays suggested council go ahead and approve the annexes and appendices and Councilman Caruso could meet with the city's Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) Todd Lagow regarding his questions and to make any necessary adjustments since the EOP is a working document.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Mays, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to adopt the draft Annexes and Appendices for the city's Emergency Operations Plan with the understanding that Councilman Caruso and EMC Todd Lagow may make some changes to the documents.

Council had been presented in their packets with a Non Funded Challenge Cost Share Agreement Between the City of Norton and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Forest Service, George Washington Jefferson National Forest.

Mr. Ramey said the agreement is to document the cooperation between the two entities to allow the city to do some things on Forest Service lands. For example, the city is creating a High Knob Master Trail and in the future the goal is to have a trail extend to the High Knob Tower. Also, Mr. Ramey said some of the city's trails loop with Forest Service property and the agreement would allow city crews to provide maintenance on portions of the trails that are on Forest Service property. Mr. Ramey said the city would also like to include Forest Service

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property in a long range planning process through the High Knob Master Plan to include a trail that would eventually connect the city's trails to the town of Big Stone Gaps. Also, last year the Forest Service had a water issue at the High Knob Recreation Area and could not open the park. The Forest Service called the city for assistance and the city's Transmission and Distribution Department was able to work with the Forest Service to repair the water issue so the park could be opened.

After a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Mays, and passed by the following vote: YES – Mays, Fawbush, Caruso, Belcher, NO – None, ABSENT – Fultz, ABSTAIN - None council moved to authorize the city manager to enter into a Non Funded Challenge Cost Share Agreement Between the City of Norton and the USDA, Forest Service, George Washington Jefferson National Forest.

Provided in council's packets for their consideration was the Wise County Behavioral Health Crisis Intervention Team Transfer of Custody Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

Mr. Ramey informed council this agreement has not been presented previously for council's consideration and that Norton Police Chief James Lane was in attendance and could provide the background on the MOA.

Chief Lane informed council that Wise County Behavioral Health Services and the Wise County Sheriff's Department applied for a grant to fund an off-duty, sworn police officer or deputy position at the Crisis Intervention Team Assessment Center (CITAC) located at Norton Community Hospital. Chief Lane said he has voiced his concerns with the project being located in Norton and the increase in patients being transported to the City of Norton and being left or being released from the facility without a ride back home outside the City of Norton. Chief Lane said at the last meeting between the various agencies he voiced his concerns again and said his issues were somewhat addressed. He said he feels better about the project but he still has apprehensions about it. Chief Lane said Wise County Behavioral Health and the Wise County Sheriff's Department understands that if the agreement begins to have a negative impact on the city he will voice his concerns. He said he has reviewed the MOA and the city attorney has reviewed it as well. Chief Lane said he does not have an issue with the MOA but with the process. He said the program will be trial and error but he recommends Norton Police Department participate.

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City Attorney Bill Bradshaw added the city can terminate its participation with the program within 30 days and the can opt out of the automatic annual one year renewal.

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Mays, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to authorize Police Chief James Lane to execute the Wise County Behavioral Health Crisis Intervention Team Transfer of Custody Memorandum of Agreement.

A Resolution for the Local Public Safety 9-1-1 Telecommunicators Week of April 14-20, 2019, was presented for adoption.

Mr. Ramey said each year the city recognizes dispatchers for their service. He said this resolution is to honor hidden employees and draw attention to the work they do. He said last year Norton operators answered 4,500 emergency 9-1-1 calls and 28,213 non-emergency calls.

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After a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt a Resolution for the Local Public Safety 9-1-1 Telecommunicators Week of April 14-20, 2019. (Insert)

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, council moved to go into closed meeting for Personnel as per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1) of the Code of Virginia, as amended. 263032

Mayor Fawbush 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. 263033

Mayor Fawbush declared council back in open meeting.

The city attorney was excused at this time. 263034

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. 263035

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)

Mayor Fawbush asked if there was a motion to approve Mr. Ramey's recommendations to the 2019 Virginia Municipal League Policy Committees.

Councilman Mays made a motion to approve the following: Fred Ramey, Jr., on the Community and Economic Development Committee, Andrew Greear on the Environmental Quality Committee, Jeff Shupe on the Finance Committee, William Bradshaw on the General Laws Committee, Gina Wohlford on the Human Development and Education Committee, and Steve McElroy on the Transportation Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote. Council moved that the nominations cease. 263036

Mayor Fawbush declared the individuals listed above to serve on the 2019 Virginia Municipal League Policy Committees as noted above.

In comments from the city manager:

Mr. Ramey said 7 contractors attended the April 10th Pre-Bid Conference. He said Sugar Hill Cidery and the City of Norton were included in the state's new Virginia Cidery brochure.

Mr. Ramey said he provided at each member's desk the latest Retail Sales Tax Report and monthly financial statements. 263037

He said activities for this week include: Ladies mountain bike ride, a beginner or intermediate trail run, Easter Egg Hunt, Adopt-A-Truck, and Drug Take Back Event at CVS Pharmacy.

Mr. Ramey then shared the Budget Calendar with council.

The following comment was made by Mayor Fawbush:

Mayor Fawbush commented he recently viewed a Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine and noticed the first six pages of the magazine were advertisements for craft breweries. He pointed out the advertising represents the popularity of breweries with tourists and that Sugar 263038

Hill Cidery opening in Norton within the next few months is an important step in the development of tourism in the city.

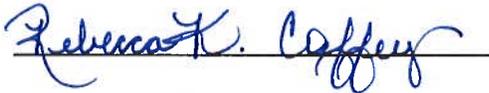
There being no further business to come before council, the meeting adjourned.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



Joseph Fawbush, Mayor

ATTEST:



Rebecca K. Coffey, Clerk of Council