

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held Tuesday, June 18, 2019, at 6:00 p.m., in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor Joseph Fawbush presiding.

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

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

The invocation was given by the city manager and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Police Chief James Lane.

Upon a motion by Councilman Mays, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following vote: YES – Mays, Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, NO – None, ABSENT – None, ABSTAIN – Caruso, council moved to adopt the minutes of the June 4, 2019, meeting as presented.

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

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A public hearing was held to consider an amendment to the 2018-2019 City of Norton General Operating Fund Budget totaling \$934,700.

The city manager advised the budget amendment process is part of the city's audit requirement to identify unanticipated expenditures and revenues. He informed council a list of items representing \$213,200 in unappropriated reserves, \$548,500 in additional revenues, and \$173,000 in loan proceeds have been recognized and are listed in member's packet for consideration.

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Mayor Fawbush opened the public hearing.

There being no public input, Mayor Fawbush closed the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Councilman Mays, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, council moved to adopt the FY 2019 Budget Amendments to the City of Norton General Operating Fund totaling \$934,700.

Next, the Southwest Virginia Regional Recreation Authority (SRRA) Executive Director Shawn Lindsey was in attendance to present an update on the organization's activities.

Prior to his update, Mr. Lindsey advised he will be providing the city manager with a quarterly project list report for the seven counties and one city that SRRA serves to keep council informed on activities and projects going on within the region.

Mr. Lindsey said several current projects and activities ongoing will have a direct impact on the City of Norton. He said an off-road/on-road Jeep and dual sport bike routes are being developed. Mr. Lindsey told council the off-road/on-road project includes six trails that are already constructed in Scott, Wise, and Lee Counties with two of those routes connecting with the trail system in Norton. He said these trails have not been marketed and SRRA wants to create marketable trips with rides into the city of Norton and Lee, Scott and Wise Counties. Another project is connecting equestrian routes from Dungannon, Duffield, and Big Stone Gap to High Knob. Mr. Lindsey said Norton will see benefits from the interconnection of the equestrian routes to High Knob especially when SRRA markets the sites. Mr. Lindsey stated

263096

SRRA understands the United States Forest Service is important to Norton's economy and the relationship has led SRRA to perform a great deal of trail maintenance for the forest service. He said SRRA has assisted the forest service during emergencies, blazed trails on forest service land, and plans to replace gates with equestrian gates on forest service property this year, which will allow for year-round use of equestrian trails that will also benefit Norton. In addition, Mr. Lindsey said the SRRA Board has requested that he restart Spearhead Trail Blazers (STB). He said he will be hiring a part-time position to lead STB, and this person will be an event planner responsible for recruiting as many events as possible to the region, conducting educational classes among other duties, and reporting to the board.

After Mr. Lindsey's update and a brief discussion with council, the city manager advised council that SRRA was a huge help for the Cloudsplitter Ultra 100 Trail Race last year and council thanked Mr. Lindsey for his update and for the work SRRA is doing for the region.

Todd Lagow, chief operating officer (COO) for Norton Rescue Squad (NRS), was present to update council on the Norton Rescue Squad.

Via a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Lagow told council that Norton Rescue Squad has responded to an average of 1,150 calls during the past three years and he gave an update on squad's 2018 finances. He said bingo revenues are up and operating expenses have increased due to equipment purchases. He advised transportation revenue for 2018 totaled \$178,768, and the city made a contribution to the squad as well. Mr. Lagow thanked the City Finance Director Jeff Shupe and his staff for the prompt filing of Norton Rescue Squad's 2018 Tax Report. 263097

Council thanked Norton Rescue Squad members for their excellent work and service to the community.

Council was presented an Ordinance Adopting the 2019-2020 Budget for the City of Norton, Virginia, Appropriating Funds for All Contemplated Expenses of the City for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020, and Placing Levies Upon all Real Estate, Personal Property, Bank Stock, Licenses, Fees, User Charges, and All Other Levies as Previously Imposed or Modified Herein. The General Fund totals \$10,280,800; the Enterprise Fund, \$3,262,356; and Social Services Fund, \$1,303,217.

Mr. Ramey said a public hearing was held June 4, 2019, and the only revenue enhancement in the budget is a 35-cent increase to the base water rate in the Enterprise Fund. He said it has been seven days since the public hearing and an ordinance adopting the budget is included in council's packet for formal consideration. 263098

Upon a motion by Councilman Mays, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Mays, Fultz, Fawbush, Caruso, Belcher, NO – None, ABSENT – None, council moved to adopt an Ordinance Adopting the Budget for the City of Norton, Virginia, for Fiscal Year July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020, Appropriating Levies Upon all Real Estate, Personal Property and Bank Stock, Licenses, Fees, User Charges, and all Other Levies as Previously Imposed or Modified Herein. (Insert)

Council had been presented with a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Norton Adopting a Five-Year Capital Improvement Program.

The city manager said council was able to fund roof replacements on the two large picnic shelters and one of the small picnic shelters in the Flag Rock Recreation Area in the FY-19 budget. He said the FY 2019-20 Capital Budget includes replacing the roof at the community 263099

center, resurfacing the tennis courts at the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Park, increasing the paving budget, reserving funds for downtown revitalization, restarting the vehicle replacement program, increasing equipment leasing, funding dilapidated structure demolition, and funding for the Destination Center for a total funding of \$774,000 for FY 2019-20.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to adopt a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Norton, Virginia, Adopting a Five-Year Capital Improvement Program. (Insert)

Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following roll call vote: YES – Mays, Fultz, Fawbush, Caruso, and Belcher, NO – None, ABSENT – None, council moved to go into closed meeting for Personnel as per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1), and for the 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.

263100

Mayor Fawbush declared council in closed meeting.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilman Mays, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to go back into open meeting.

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Mayor Fawbush 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 Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert)

At this time, Vice Mayor Caruso took over the meeting and opened the floor for nominations to the Wise County/City of Norton Youth Services Board to fill the unexpired term of Makayla Martinez whose term expires July 1, 2022.

Councilman Fultz nominated Morgan Fawbush to be appointed to the Wise County/City of Norton Youth Services Board to fill the unexpired term of Makayla Martinez whose term expires July 1, 2022.

263103

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

Vice Mayor Caruso declared Morgan Fawbush appointed to the Wise County/City of Norton Youth Services Board to fill the unexpired term of Makayla Martinez whose term expires July 1, 2022.

Mayor Fawbush resumed control of the meeting and asked the city manager for his comments.

263104

In comments from the city manager:

Mr. Ramey said the city had a successful 2019 Best Friend Festival and he thanked the volunteers.

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He said the Downtown Project is within budget, the city attorney is reviewing the contract, and the city should be under contract shortly.

Mr. Ramey said the city is close to getting under contract with the pre-audit firm and will be hosting a kickoff meeting next week.

The city manager passed around a plaque the police department received from the Commonwealth of Virginia for achieving zero traffic deaths in 2018. He said this is the third year in a row the police department has received this award.

Mr. Ramey said the owner of the Coca-Cola sign is trying to select a date in July to install the Coca-Cola sign and he would like to have an event celebrating the refurbishment.

Mr. Ramey, via a PowerPoint presentation, showed council the historic marker that was commissioned in 1941 and is located at the Chamber of Commerce is in need of restoration. He said he contacted Historic Resources and the Virginia Department of Transportation, who is responsible for historical markers, and they advised they do not refurbish historical markers but replace the signs. So local artist Neil Walker has agreed to work with the city to restore the lettering on the sign after it is sandblasted, primed, and based painted.

Mr. Ramey continued the PowerPoint presentation and updated council on the status paving projects for 2019.

Mr. Ramey placed copies of the latest Monthly Retail Sales Tax Report, 2018 Water Quality Report, and a poster of the 2019 High Knob Outdoor Festival on council members' desks.

He provided council with a flyer of the July 4<sup>th</sup> activities and fireworks.

Mr. Ramey shared with council that Teddy Huff's daughter had passed away. He said an account may be set up to help the family pay for medical expenses, adding that when he has complete details he will provide members with the information in case they want to make a donation.

In comments from the city attorney:

In 2017, the city began acquiring easements for the Clear Creek Sewer Improvement Project. As of this date, the city now has all the required signatures, and since that time, the city has changed mayors due to an election, so the signature page had to be redone and signed by Mayor Fawbush. Now the city must accept any conveyance of real estate as city property and the city attorney asked council to consider a motion authorizing Mayor Fawbush to accept the easements on behalf of the city.

At this time, Vice Mayor Caruso took over the meeting and asked for a motion authorizing the mayor to accept the easements for the Clear Creek Sewer Improvement Project on behalf of the city. Upon a motion by Councilman Mays, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, council authorized the mayor to accept the easements as city property for the Clear Creek Sewer Improvement Project on behalf of the city. 263106

Mr. Bradshaw informed council the Wise County Circuit Court's special commissioner's reports have been approved for two tax sales for delinquent taxes and he will begin the process to sell the properties to collect the delinquent real estate taxes.

The city attorney advised he had petitioned the judge for council's recommended reappointments of Virginia Stokes and Gerald Lawson to the Board of Zoning Appeals and the judge has entered the order to approve the reappointments of both as requested.

Mayor Fawbush resumed control of the meeting and asked the members for their comments.

263107

The following comments were made by council members:

Councilman Fultz asked if Ballad Health saved the old St. Mary's Hospital sign. Mr. Ramey advised he would check with Ballad Health and advise council.

Councilman Fultz said he has been asked what the city is doing with the property and he informed citizens the city did not own the property. He noted that citizens have many ideas for the property.

263108

He agreed the Best Friend Festival was a success and he is looking forward to the installation of the Coke sign.

Mayor Fawbush said the city is ending FY19 on a positive note and starting FY20 in a positive direction. He said the city's favorable position is due to good leadership and management. He said he is proud of the city and its accomplishments and is looking forward to the completion of projects in the upcoming year.

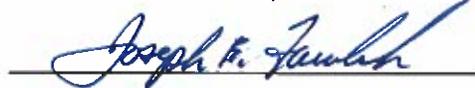
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Before adjourning, the city manager asked council if they were available to meet July 2<sup>nd</sup>. It was the consensus of council to cancel the July 2<sup>nd</sup> council meeting.

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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