

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held Tuesday, September 3, 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

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 Councilman Mays, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by the following vote: YES – Mays, Fultz, Fawbush, Caruso, and Belcher, NO – None, ABSENT – None, council moved to adopt the minutes of the August 20, 2019, meeting as presented. 262815

There was no response to the Mayor's Call for Visitors. 262816

A public hearing was held to receive comments regarding a proposed ordinance to Authorize Maintenance, Fees, and Rules and Regulations Governing the Highland Cemetery.

The city manager said the proposed ordinance basically authorizes the city to maintain the cemetery, permits the city manager to establish rules and regulations, and allows city council by resolution to establish fees.

Council members had no comments prior to the public hearing.

Mayor Fawbush opened the public hearing. 262817

There being no public comment on the proposed ordinance, Mayor Fawbush closed the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, council moved to adopt an Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Norton, Virginia, Authorizing Maintenance, Fees, and Rules and Regulations Governing the Highland Cemetery. (Insert)

A public hearing was held to solicit public input regarding a proposed Ordinance Amending Chapter 20 – Reservoir, To Make It Unlawful to Possess a Gasoline-Powered Engine or Petroleum-Based Products, Except in the Designated Parking Area and Access Roads within the Reservoir Area.

Mr. Ramey said the city had recently received questions asking if gasoline-powered engine could be on a boat but not in the water. He said the city's ordinance did not specifically address the question, so council asked the city attorney to draft a proposed ordinance prohibiting gasoline-powered watercraft and other petroleum-based products on the reservoir and any other areas not designated as a parking area or access roads within the reservoir area, excluding emergency services operators or other governmental agencies, such as the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF).

Mayor Fawbush opened the public hearing.

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

There was no comment from council. 262818

Upon motion by Councilman Mays, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, council moved to adopt an Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Norton, Virginia, Amending Chapter 20 – Reservoir, To Make It Unlawful to Possess a Gasoline-Powered Engine or Petroleum-Based Products, Except in the Designated Parking Area and Access Roads within the Reservoir Area. (Insert)

A public hearing was held regarding a United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development (USDARD) proposed loan/grant application to purchase two emergency vehicles.

Mr. Ramey said USDARD requires the advertisement of a public hearing giving notice that the city is considering an application to USDARD to purchase emergency vehicles through a loan/grant package. Mr. Ramey noted that he had given members copies of a resolution stating that a public hearing was held, and that council authorizes city administration to submit an application with any and all related paperwork for the loan/grant package to purchase two emergency vehicles.

Mayor Fawbush opened the public hearing.

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

There were no comments from council.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Mays, Fultz, Fawbush, Caruso, Belcher, NO – None, ABSENT – None, council moved to adopt a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Submit an Application, Including Any Additional Required Paperwork, for a Loan/Grant Package to the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development for the Purpose of Purchasing Two Emergency Vehicles. (Insert)

Lonesome Pine Regional Library Director Julie Short provided an update on library activities and noted that September is Library Card Sign-Up Month.

Via a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Short presented a variety of activities the library offers citizens throughout the year on and off campus, and noted September is Library Card Sign-Up Month. She said the Friends of Wise Library (FOWL) held a book signing in February at the Hotel Norton featuring *Love Between the Covers* with Adriana and Mary Trigiani that raised \$3,000 for children's activities at the library. Some of the other activities included the National Endowment for the Arts 2019 Big Read that showcased author Ron Rash's *Burning Bright: Stories* that feature narratives about the Appalachian area. Ms. Short said the library also conducted a social media workshop for local businesses and provides Pre-School and After-School Programs, and a Teen Headquarters Program on Tuesdays. She said the library mails out books to the homebound and the library actively participates in the community by attending the Norton Friends and Farmers Market and Norton Elementary and Middle School Meet the Teacher Night. She said the library participated in the city's Best Friend Festival and Christmas Parade and offered many other programs including author Jahmal Potter reading his book *Where is the Woodbooger?* Ms. Short told council the library is very thankful to the city for helping make these events possible for the community, and that the city is an essential partner with the library.

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Mayor Fawbush thanked Ms. Short for the presentation and for the valuable outreach to citizens of Norton.

Council had been presented in their packets with a Proclamation Declaring September 2019 as Library Card Sign-Up Month.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to adopt the Proclamation Declaring September 2019 as Library Card Sign-Up Month. (Insert)

In packets for council consideration was a check to W-L Construction & Paving, Inc., dated July 10, 2019, in the amount of \$180,742.27, to cover the second phase of 2018 paving.

Upon a motion by Councilman Mays, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, council moved to confirm the check to W-L Construction & Paving, Inc., as stated above.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Mays, Fultz, Fawbush, Caruso, 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 Publicly 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 Fawbush declared council in closed meeting.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, 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.

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)

262825

Mayor Fawbush opened the floor for nominations to the Spearhead Trail Blazers for a three-year term each to expire on May 1, 2022.

Councilman Caruso nominated Beth Walker to be appointed to the Spearhead Trail Blazers for a three-year term to expire on May 1, 2022.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Mays, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved that the nominations cease.

Mayor Fawbush declared Beth Walker appointed to the Spearhead Trail Blazers for a three-year term each to expire on May 1, 2022

In comments from the city manager:

Mr. Ramey said the grand opening of Sugar Hill Cidery, LLC., is scheduled at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, September 4th, at 115 – 8th Street, S.W.

He said the Wise County/City of Norton Chamber of Commerce has invited council to a ribbon cutting ceremony planned at 11:30 a.m., Tuesday, September 17th at Castle Service Center located at 398 Park Avenue, N.E.

Mr. Ramey informed council the second half of real estate and personal property tax tickets will be mailed this week.

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He said he provided council with a copy of a portion of an article regarding historical information on the recently refurbished and reinstalled Coca-Cola clock sign. Mr. Ramey said the article led author Larry Jorgensen, who wrote *Coca-Cola Trail: People and Places*, to contact him regarding the refurbished Coca-Cola clock sign. He said Mr. Jorgensen is writing a second book and wants to include the Coca-Cola sign located in downtown in his book.

Mr. Ramey provided at members' desks a Pro-Art package that includes tickets for this year's programs.

Mr. Ramey said the Woodbooger Geocache and the Bengue Revenge Bike Race are both scheduled for Saturday, September 7th.

He said the city made the top 10 finalists in the second round of competition in the Blue Ridge Outdoor Magazine annual "Top Adventure Town" competition, and he encouraged everyone to vote.

Mr. Ramey said a bid opening was held today for the tennis court project at the 11th Street Park. He said bids came in over budget but city administration and the contractor are looking for creative ways to reduce costs.

Mr. Ramey said he provided council with copies of the latest Flag Rock and High Knob traffic counts.

He said the Woodbooger Geocache and the Bengue Revenge Bike Race will be held Saturday, September 7th, the Castle Service Center Ribbon Cutting is scheduled at 11:30 a.m., Tuesday, September 17th. He said the High Knob Hellbender and the Woodbooger Festival are scheduled for Saturday, October 5th, the Virginia Municipal League (VML) Conference is scheduled for October 6th and 7th in Roanoke, and the Cloudsplitter Ultra 100 Trail Race will take place Saturday, October 12th.

Councilman Caruso informed Mr. Ramey he would be attending the VML Conference on October 6th and 7th.

The following comments were made by council members:

Councilman Fultz said he is looking forward to all the upcoming outdoor events in the city.

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Councilman Caruso asked for clarification on the VML Conference schedule.

Mr. Ramey handed out a flyer to council that included the schedule of events for the VML Conference.

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Mayor Fawbush said he would like for the Tennis Court Project to include the entire scope of the project and that he would like the consensus of council to authorize the city manager to begin negotiating with the contractor to obtain a final cost to complete the entire Tennis Court Project and report his finding to council. Mayor Fawbush explained due to the time sensitivity of this project, if Mr. Ramey needs to make a decision on any portion of the contract, he must be authorized to do so with the contractor.

Council was in consensus to authorize the city manager to negotiate a final cost to complete the entire scope of the Tennis Court Project and to begin construction on any portion of the contract due to the time sensitivity of the project, and to report the total cost of the project to complete the entire list items for the 11th Street Tennis Court Project to council.

Mr. Ramey said after speaking with the contractor he could provide council with an update on the total cost but he doesn't expect the additional projected cost will be over \$25,000 to include all the items listed in the project. He noted this project is listed as a

262830

Capital Improvement Project (CIP) and that other CIP projects are coming in under budget which could help fund the full scope of the Tennis Court Project.

Mayor Fawbush said he was pleased to find downtown crowded with people Saturday evening. He said the streets and parking lots were full of parked cars and people were walking downtown. Mayor Fawbush said council's plans are coming to fruition as a packed city center is proof of council's work.

Mayor Fawbush said Laura Campbell asked him to bring a fundraiser before council that she and others are currently working on to purchase a large inflatable football helmet tunnel for the football team to run through. Ms. Campbell said the total cost is \$4,000 and approximately \$1,500 has been raised toward their goal. Mayor Fawbush suggested to council if the group raises \$3,000 towards the purchase of the inflatable football helmet run through tunnel, council will donate the remaining \$1,000 from unappropriated reserves.

Upon a motion by Councilman Mays, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, council moved to approve a \$1,000 donation from unappropriated reserves toward the purchase of an inflatable football helmet tunnel for the John I. Burton Football team to run through, contingent upon generation of the \$3,000.

Mayor Fawbush said Ben Foy of WLSR Radio in Big Stone Gap, Virginia, is wanting to place a garden or a 4x6 Prisoner of War (POW)/Missing in Action (MIA) statue in the city's Veteran's Park. Mayor Fawbush said Mr. Foy said that if the city would provide a 4x6 concrete pad, then Rolling Thunder, a United States advocacy group dedicated to the accountability for all POW/MIA service members from all U.S. wars, would pay the remaining cost for the project. Mayor Fawbush asked the city manager to review the request and see if space is available in Veteran's Park for this project.

Mayor Fawbush said Ben Foy also asked him to begin doing a 10-15 minute Norton update program on WLSR Radio on Wednesdays called "Wednesday's with the Mayor."

At this time, Councilman Caruso said he wanted to comment on a couple who visited his store Saturday, August 31st from Kingsport, Tennessee. He said they came to camp at Flag Rock Recreation Area and said the area was beautiful. He said they wanted to know how long the park remained open for camping and that they would be back in October to camp at Flag Rock.

262831

There being no further business to come before council, and upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by consensus of council, the meeting adjourned.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



Joseph Fawbush, Mayor

ATTEST:



Rebecca K. Coffey, Clerk of Council