

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, April 6, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

Present: Mark Caruso, William Mays, Terry Roop

Absent: Joseph Hunnicutt and Joseph Fawbush

Also Present: E. W. Ward, City Manager and Bill Bradshaw, City Attorney

The invocation was given by Rev. Ken Taylor and was followed by the pledge led by Councilman Terry Roop.

Upon a motion by Councilman Roop, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the March 16, 2010 meeting as presented.

24680

During the Mayor's call for visitors, Mr. Mose Beaty of 324 Locust Avenue spoke briefly to Council advising that he was a member of the 2010 Forward Wise County Class.

24681

Mayor Mays welcomed Mr. Beaty to the meeting.

Mr. Ward gave Council a brief update on the March 29th meeting of the School Consolidation Committee which was held at the Wise County School Board Offices in Wise.

The meeting was very cordial; however there was not another meeting scheduled.

Councilman Roop had provided Council members with a synopsis of the meeting that had been included in their packets. He advised that the State of Virginia was offering incentives and there is a lot of money that can be saved by both school divisions if the consolidation takes place. He advised that Dr. Perry stated that site(s) would be selected within the next month or two. Both City Council and the School Board need to vote on the consolidation. He stated it was incumbent on Council to solicit input from citizens.

24682

Mr. Ward advised that our citizens need to be informed of the very high likelihood the School System is going to be more difficult to fund and there will be a significant increase in taxes or a reduction of services offered by the City or possibly both.

During this discussion, Councilman Hunnicutt took his seat on Council.

24683

Following a lengthy discussion, Councilman Roop advised that the City needs to find out as many facts as they can and advise our citizens as soon as possible.

24684

Dr. Terrance Suarez, President of Mountain Empire Community College, was present to give Council the State of the College Address as this will be his final presentation due to his upcoming retirement. Dr. Suarez advised that the City's representative on the MECC Board, Mr. Robert Isaac, was also present tonight and was recognized by Dr. Suarez.

He advised they are experiencing the highest annual enrollment that they have had. Dual enrollment has experienced a large growth. He then proceeded to discuss their budget, faculty/staff, physical plant, grounds, new programs, and renewal of their accreditation.

24685

Following his presentation, Mayor Mays thanked Dr. Suarez for his semi-annual visits to keep Council updated on happenings at the college and wished him the best during his retirement. Those present gave Dr. Suarez a standing ovation as he left the meeting.

Mr. Ward presented Council with information on the City's swimming pool and whether it should be opened for the 2010 season. He gave a brief PowerPoint presentation that showed some of the repairs that need to be made in order to open for the season. Michele Knox, the Parks and Recreation Director, was also present to answer questions from Council.

The City Manager advised that the pool is a 35 year old facility and has had no major improvements other than a liner installed in 1999 at a cost of \$97,760. He advised that the deck needs to be replaced at a cost of \$100,000 or \$7,500 for repairing. The original filters are still in use. There are also cosmetic issues such as ceiling tiles and restrooms that need to be addressed. The City loses about \$25,000 annually operating the pool; however, most pools do not make money and are a service to citizens.

24686

He then presented to Council his recommendation for staying at the same location and gave his reasons for doing so. He presented a long term plan which includes funding in the 2010-2011 budget of \$10,000 - \$15,000 for a Preliminary Architectural Report on a new water park type facility and gutting and renovating the Community Center. He stated the recommendation of Council is needed as to whether to make repairs and open the pool for this summer or keep it closed. He stated he did not recommend closing the pool without a plan.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was the consensus of Council to table this item until the next meeting and a decision will be made at that time.

Included in Council's packets was A Proclamation Designating April 2010 as Child Abuse Prevention Month in the City of Norton. Roger Ramey, Director of the City of Norton Social Services Department, spoke briefly to Council on this proclamation.

24687

Upon a motion by Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt A Proclamation Designating April 2010 as Child Abuse Prevention Month in the City of Norton. (Insert)

Council had a copy of a transfer to the Norton City Schools dated March 30, 2010 to cover payroll and fringe benefits in the amount of \$165,000.

Upon a motion by Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve a transfer in the amount of \$165,000 made payable to the Norton City Schools. (Insert - Councilman Roop's Disclosure Form)

24688

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to go into closed meeting to discuss personnel as per Section No. 2.2-3711 (A) (1) of the Code of Virginia, as amended.

24689

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

Upon a motion by Councilman Roop, seconded by Councilman Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to go back into open meeting.

24690

Mayor Mays declared Council back in open meeting.

The Clerk then polled each member of Council as to the certification of closed meeting with each answering yes.

The Clerk read A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting.

Upon a motion by Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Caruso, Hunnicutt, Roop, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Fawbush, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert)

24691

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Virginia Municipal League Policy Committees as submitted by the City Administration.

Councilman Hunnicutt nominated Fred Ramey, Tommy Roberts, Jeff Shupe, E. W. Ward, Roger Ramey, and Steve McElroy to the various policy committees.

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

24692

Mayor Mays declared Fred Ramey, Tommy Roberts, Jeff Shupe, E. W. Ward, Roger Ramey, and Steve McElroy appointed to the various policy committees of the Virginia Municipal League as presented by the City Administration.

In comments from the City Manager, Mr. Ward advised that:

Flag Rock is now officially open.

On May 1st, the Lonesome Pine Regional Library will hold its third annual Big Read at the Norton City Park at 1:00 p.m. Council members are invited to attend and participate.

During the meeting of November 17, 2009, a lady spoke before Council in the Audience for Visitors, complaining about the pedestrian buttons not working on the traffic light poles. These pedestrian buttons have now been replaced.

24693

At the next meeting, the Norton City Schools will present their budget for the 2010-2011 year. Also, Council will have a budget work session following their regular meeting.

In comments from the City Attorney, Mr. Bradshaw advised that he will conduct the final tax sale at 10:00 a.m. on April 16th on the front steps of the Wise County Court House.

24694

In comments from Council members:

Mr. Roop expressed appreciation to the City Attorney for the tax sales that have been held and also thanked the City Manager for taking care of the pedestrian buttons on the traffic light poles.

Mayor Mays asked Mr. Ward to inform the lady who had complained about the pedestrian buttons that they had been replaced.

There were no comments from Councilman Hunnicutt.

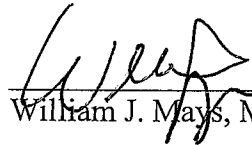
Councilman Caruso first expressed appreciation to the Norton Police Department for keeping our citizens safe.

He advised that a second workshop is being conducted by the Southwest Regional Recreational Authority Board on Friday, April 9th at the Holiday Inn to inform and train new entrepreneurs to take advantage of the new trail systems that the Authority is going to be bringing into the area.

He further advised Council that he teaches Junior Army ROTC at Thomas Walker High School and that his ROTC Academic Team competed nationally and won the first two phases against 1600 teams and was in the top 25 teams as they had done last year. They will be traveling in June to the National Championship and he expressed his thanks to the kids for the hard work they had put forth.

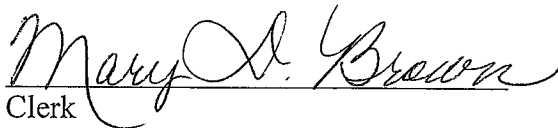
There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William J. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Clerk