

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, May 4, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

Present: Mark Caruso, Joseph Hunnicutt, William Mays, Joseph Fawbush, and Terry Roop

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

The invocation was given by the City Manager and was followed by the pledge led by Dr. Jeff Comer, Superintendent of the Norton City Schools.

At this time, Mayor Mays welcomed Brian Stidham, Mitchell Elliott, and Rachel Jenkins, members of the Forward Wise County Class.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the April 20, 1010 meeting as presented.

24710

During the Mayor's call for visitors, Mr. Jim Hopkins, Roberts Avenue, spoke briefly to Council commending City employees – specifically Steve McElroy, Public Works Director, Steven McElroy, Billy Mays, Skipper Dorton, and Doug Carter, all members of the Norton Fire Department. He stated that during the snow storm in December, all of these individuals came to his rescue by bringing him oxygen and also by getting him to the hospital. He felt Council should be made aware of the type of employees the City has.

24711

Mayor Mays thanked Mr. Hopkins for supplying them with this information and advised it was nice to hear a good story about City employees.

Mr. Al Stecker, 305 Poplar Street, spoke briefly to Council advising of a water problem he has been experiencing at his home. He asked if the City, since they are putting in a new water line on Craig Street, could do something to repair the line on Poplar Street above his home to prevent it from breaking again. This line has broken a couple of times and the water comes over on his property.

24712

Mr. Ward advised that the City had applied for a Department of Health grant to replace this entire line and he is in hopes of it being funded.

Following a brief discussion, the City Manager advised that he would do the best that could be done on correcting this situation.

A public hearing was held on the 2010-2011 budget of the Norton City Schools. Mr. Ward advised that this budget totals \$7,365,608 for operations of which \$1,904,546 is from local funds. He further advised that Council needs to take no action tonight. Action on the budget will be taken at Council's meeting of May 18, 2010.

Dr. Comer, Superintendent of Norton City Schools, and Ron McCall, Chairman of the Norton City School Board, were present to answer any questions.

There were no comments from Council prior to the public hearing.

Mayor Mays opened the public hearing.

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

There were no comments from Council following the public hearing.

Mr. Ward advised this will be brought back on May 18, 2010 for Council's action.
(Insert – Councilman Roop's Disclosure Form)

The City Manager gave Council a brief update on the Wise County School Board School Consolidation. He advised that there had been no further meetings held. The School Board advised on April 26, 2010 that they were going to a 3 school – 1 lot approach and have advertised a public hearing for the end of May. The School Board has not named a site. One potential site is in Norton and the other is in the Town of Wise. He then advised he would answer any questions Council may have.

Mr. Roop advised that the only comment he had was to encourage everyone to read the newspapers and watch the Wise County School Board meetings to keep informed.

Council had a request from Bob Spera, President of EAA Chapter 1416 regarding the "LET FREEDOM RING – A Salute to American Veterans" event. This will be held September 23-26, 2010 at the Lonesome Pine Airport in Wise. Council made a contribution of \$1,000 last year toward the cost of this activity and he is asking that they make a contribution again this year.

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to table any action on this contribution until after July 1st when the City's new budget goes into effect.

The City Manager was asked to contact Mr. Spera and advise him.

Council had been furnished in their packets information regarding a digital sign for the Municipal Parking Lot near the Coalfield Progress Building. This had been discussed during the CIP meeting with the funds to come out of 2009-2010 budget. The estimated cost of the sign will range between \$20,000 - \$25,000 depending on the type of sign.

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to table any action on this sign until such time as they receive additional information and pricing for a two-sided sign which will be moved closer to the sidewalk that will provide better visibility and to allow the City Attorney to review the policy on sign usage.

Council had received a request for a budget amendment in the amount of \$96,000 to the 2009-2010 General Fund Budget. Mr. Ward advised these funds are from Rural Development and are a 75% grant with the City paying the remaining 25% for two police cars and an Incident Command Vehicle. The total amount the City will pay is \$36,740.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve a budget amendment in the amount of \$96,000 to the 2009-2010 General Fund Budget.

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

24718

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

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

24719

Mayor Mays declared Council back in open meeting.

The Clerk then polled each member of Council as to the certification of closed meeting. The Clerk then read A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting.

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

24720

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Norton Industrial Development Authority for a four year term which will expire on May 10, 2014.

Councilman Fawbush nominated James Collins to be reappointed to this Authority.

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

24721

Mayor Mays declared James Collins reappointed to the Norton Industrial Development Authority for a four year term which will expire on May 10, 2014.

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Community Services Board for a two year term which will expire on May 1, 2012.

Councilman Caruso nominated Sarah Davis to be reappointed to this Board.

24722

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

Mayor Mays declared Sarah Davis reappointed to the Community Services Board for a two year term which will expire on May 1, 2012.

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

He had passed out to members of Council a copy of a flyer inviting them to attend a Business Appreciation Luncheon to be held on May 20th at Mountain Empire Community College at 11:30 a.m. Any Council member wishing to attend should notify Mr. Ramey, Mrs. Brown, or himself.

He advised that Mr. Ramey was in receipt of an e-mail from the Lonesome Pine Library advising that the Big Read Event held last Saturday went very well. They advised that Councilman Roop did a fantastic job as Grand Marshall and wished to express their appreciation to him for volunteering his services.

24723

He had been made aware that the Coalfield had inadvertently reported that Council had cut the funding to the Little League Football and Baseball. This was a mistake and Mr. Lester has been notified and will print a retraction on this.

On November 1, 2005, Council issued a moratorium on all new sewer connections outside the City. Mr. Ward then proceeded to give four reasons for this moratorium. With the recent announcement from Congressman Boucher, our entire Guest River Interceptor is going to be upgraded as is our entire Benges Branch Interceptor. These are our two major arteries as far as transmitting flow. The only remaining piece is Park Avenue and the City has requested funding in the form of a 75% grant and 25% matching funds for this area. Since this is all taking place, Mr. Ward asked Council if they want to start a discussion on modification or lifting the sewer moratorium.

Councilman Fawbush advised that he has been approached by residents of Esserville that are on city water and wish to be on city sewer.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was the consensus of Council for the City Manager to proceed with negotiations with the Wise County Public Service Authority regarding sewer.

In comments from the City Attorney, Mr. Bradshaw advised that he has completed the existing assignment with the Treasurer that Council had given him to initiate suits to collect delinquent real estate taxes. He has recently received from the Treasurer a packet containing information to initiate new proceedings to declare delinquent and offer for sale to the public 15 parcels in the City belonging to 11 property owners. He has begun doing title searches and would appreciate an expression of Council's support in the form of a resolution authorizing him to proceed on the collection of these delinquent taxes.

24724

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Bradshaw advised he would prepare this resolution and have same in Council's next packet.

In comments from City Council, Councilman Caruso asked if the Norton Industrial Development Authority could assist in the payment of the new digital sign for the City's parking lot. He was advised by the City Attorney, who also represents NIDA, that their budget will be reduced next year. This was reiterated by the City Manager.

24725

Secondly, Councilman Caruso stated he believed that the City needs to amend their ordinance to put in a "catch and release" for the upper reservoir for bass.

There were no comments from the remaining Council members.

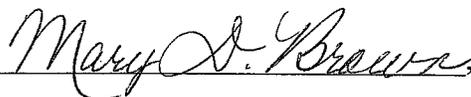
There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William J. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:


_____, Clerk