

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, April 19, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

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

Absent: Joseph Hunnicutt

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

The invocation was given by Father Tim Drake and was followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Police Captain James C. Lane.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the April 5, 2011 meeting as presented.

25033

During the Mayor's call for visitors, Dr. Souhail Shamiyeh spoke to Council asking if something could be done this summer to the City's tennis courts at the 11th Street Park. He advised that he, along with others, would like to form a committee and solicit private donations to go toward funding these repairs along with funds from the City. He stated he would like for Mr. Ward to serve on this committee.

25034

Mayor Mays advised that the tennis courts had been discussed during the City's Capital Improvement Meeting and would be discussed again tonight in their budget work session.

Following a brief discussion, Dr. Shamiyeh asked permission to have the tennis courts checked out and estimates given to the Committee. The City Manager advised him that he could do so.

Mayor Mays thanked Dr. Shamiyeh for his concern regarding the tennis courts.

Council was again presented with a copy of a proposed Sewer Agreement with Wise County.

Mr. Ward advised that Council was given a synopsis of this agreement at the previous meeting. At that time, it was the consensus of Council to table this item in order that council members have additional time to read this document.

25035

Mayor Mays asked the City Attorney if he was comfortable with the agreement. Mr. Bradshaw advised that he was and he would be glad to answer any questions Council may have.

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the proposed Waste Flow Agreement with Wise County. (Insert)

Dr. Jeff Comer, Superintendent of the Norton City Schools, presented Council with a PowerPoint presentation on their 2011-2012 budget. He advised that this budget includes a step raise for employees and also stated that they would be eliminating one Title One position, a part-time financial position, an algebra readiness tutor, and two special

education paraprofessionals. They are required to hire a full time guidance counselor at the elementary school and this position will be filled.

The most dramatic increases come from the areas of hospitalization and retirement.

Following his presentation, he advised Council that they are asking for additional revenue in the amount of \$180,338. The Board is also asking that Council reappropriate \$128,000 in surplus funds back to the School Board to be used in the operational budget.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Dr. Comer advised he would be willing to answer questions from council members. He then fielded questions from Councilman Roop as to the ADM. Dr. Comer advised this budget is based on 850 average daily attendance.

Regarding the high school, Councilman Caruso asked if there is any type of funding efforts being discussed for the science labs as was done with the Athletic Complex wherein both private and City funds were raised and per the discussion brought up tonight by Dr. Shamiyeh for the tennis courts. He stated this is the third year he has asked if anything has been done regarding this.

Dr. Comer also advised that the roof at Burton needs to be replaced and they have been advised that the current roof has three to four more years of wear. The estimated cost for a new roof is approximately \$180,000.

There being no further questions of Dr. Comer, Mayor Mays thanked him for his presentation. (Insert – Councilman Roop’s Disclosure Form)

At this time, Ron McCall, Chairman of the Norton City School Board, spoke briefly with Council. He advised that the pressure is falling on the localities since the State is cutting funding. He also asked that Council consider giving the School Board the \$128,000 in surplus funds plus consider a commitment to them that they will continue to receive their surplus annually.

He advised that the boiler system at the high school will need to be replaced and this will be an approximate expenditure of two and one half million dollars.

His last comments were that he encourages the City to initiate a dialogue with Wise County on school consolidation. With the ongoing costs of education, it will be very difficult to fund and the composite index can be locked in for a period of years.

Mayor Mays advised he did not know of the legality for Council to stipulate that the surplus can go back to the School Board annually.

Mr. Bradshaw advised that this could not be done.

Mayor Mays advised that both boards have really difficult jobs in the next few years and thanked Mr. McCall for his comments.

Mr. Phillip Prince, representing the Appalachian Children’s Theater, spoke briefly to Council asking their consideration for an appropriation in the City’s upcoming budget. He briefly discussed the activities of the group and passed out a packet to members of Council.

Following Mr. Prince, Ms. Olivia Lowery, a 15 year old freshman at J. I. Burton High School, spoke briefly to Council advising that she is a member of this group and described what it meant to her to participate. She encouraged Council to fund this group as generously as possible.

Mayor Mays advised this request would be considered in Council's budget work session following tonight's meeting.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, 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.

25039

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

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

25040

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

25041

In comments from the City Manager, Mr. Ward advised that Winfred Collins has submitted his resignation to the City effective April 22nd and the Administration is proceeding with finding a replacement for him.

He further advised that the City Administration had been in contact with VDOT regarding the 4" base for the signal light being installed at the Hawthorne Intersection. VDOT has advised that the foundation is built 4" above the higher road elevation and is built outside the clear zone; therefore a guard rail is not required at this location. This was mentioned at the last meeting by Mayor Mays.

25042

Mayor Mays thanked Mr. Ward for following up on this.

There were no comments from the City Attorney.

25043

In comments from Councilman Roop he advised that:

He agreed with the concerns Mayor Mays had on this base at the Hawthorne Intersection and discussed the proposed turn lane at this location.

Old Dominion Power Company is anticipating a 13.8% increase effective January of 2012 and he hopes that our governing body will, in the strongest way possible, oppose this increase.

25044

He hates to hear that Mr. Collins is leaving; however, he has done a good job on dilapidated properties and having them demolished. He would like to see the City proceed to contact the owners of the old tipple at Spout Springs and try to get something done about it as well as other properties in the City.

He would like to commend Lt. Roger Cooke of the Police Department for his participation in the March Reading Month activities.

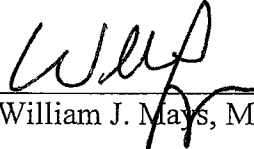
Councilman Caruso stated that he also opposes Old Dominion's proposed 13.8% increase and would like Council to express their opposition to this by some means.

Following a brief discussion, the City Manager will prepare a resolution to present to Council at one of their May meetings.

With the budget work session following tonight's meeting, he stated that it is important that we all live within our means and thinks the School System should start a public funding activity, like the one done for the athletic complex, for the science labs at the high school.

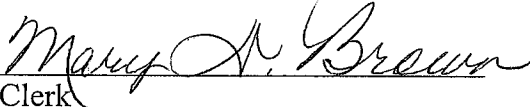
There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned to a budget work session which will begin at 7:20 p.m.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William J. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Clerk