

The regular meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, March 18, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor Robert Raines presiding.

Present: Joseph Hunnicutt, Robert Raines, William Mays, and Joseph Fawbush

Absent: Jack Wallace and Bill Bradshaw, City Attorney

Also Present: E. W. Ward, City Manager

The invocation was given by the City Manager and was followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Mr. Ray Wells, a veteran of the Korean War.

Upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by Joseph Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to approve the minutes of the March 4, 2008 meeting as corrected. In Paragraph #21850, Vice Mayor Mays was listed as voting for adoption of A Resolution Supporting Southland Health Services. Vice Mayor Mays had advised, prior to the item being brought up for discussion, that he would abstain from any action or discussion. He was listed as abstaining; however his name was also listed as voting yes. The minutes have been corrected to show that Vice Mayor Mays abstained from any discussion or vote on this topic.

21857

At this time, Mayor Raines welcomed Fred Luntsford, a member of the Wise County Board of Supervisors and the manager of the Town of Appalachia and Mr. Don Castle, Manager of the newly opened Norton Holiday Inn.

Mr. Castle spoke briefly to Council and advised that they are now open for business. He further advised that they would be willing to do anything they could for the City and that they wish to be a good neighbor and part of the community.

21858

During the Mayor's call for visitors, Delores Bolling of Hillcrest Drive spoke briefly to Council regarding a dog and litter problem in her neighborhood. She had previously talked with Mr. Collins.

21859

After a brief discussion, these items were forwarded to the City Manager for handling.

Also speaking to Council was Larry Ingle, 5306 Esserville Road, requesting a sewer tap at this location.

Mayor Raines advised that the City currently has a sewer moratorium in place and has no idea when it will be lifted. The City is currently working with Wise County and hopes to find a solution to the sewer problems.

21860

A public hearing was held to solicit public input on a proposed Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) in the amount of one million dollars for the Josephine Sewer Extension Project. This grant will be submitted to the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.

Mayor Raines advised that a public hearing had been held at the last meeting and the public hearing tonight is to solicit public input on a specific project. This project is for the Josephine Sewer Extension Project.

Mr. Ward advised that the City has serious sewer problems. The Comprehensive Sewer Study will be presented at the next meeting and will recognize 23 million dollars worth of work to be done on these lines.

One of the issues mentioned in this study is the Benges Branch Interceptor Line, which runs from West Main Avenue to the pump station. The Commonwealth has set aside funds under the Southern Rivers Watershed Enhancement Program that allows cities and counties to apply for up to one million dollars for a specific project if the required criteria is met. The City has applied for a one million dollar grant to be used on this Benges Branch Interceptor Line from the Southern Rivers Watershed Enhancement Program.

The project selected for a Community Development Block Grant Program in the amount of one million dollars is the Josephine Sewer Extension Project. A meeting was held last week to solicit interest from the residents of Josephine and there was good participation. Information, income surveys, and user agreements have been received from some of the residents. The total cost of the entire project is 1.7 million dollars. The project will have to be done in two phases. Phase One will cover approximately 80 of the 120 households in Josephine and will provide a gravity line throughout the community. Phase Two will be a Pump Station concept due to the elevation differences. Should funds be available from Phase One, they will be used on the Phase Two part of this project.

21861

Mayor Raines opened the public hearing.

Present and speaking in favor of this grant application was Fred Luntsford, a member of the Wise County Board of Supervisors and the Town Manager of Appalachia, Ray Wells of Josephine, and Arthur Kilgore of Josephine.

There being no further comments, Mayor Raines closed the public hearing.

There were no questions or comments from Council following the public hearing.

Council had been presented in their packets A Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to apply for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) in the amount of \$1,000,000.

Upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Joseph Hunnicutt, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Hunnicutt, Mays, Fawbush, Raines, NO – None, ABSENT – Wallace, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Apply for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) in the amount of \$1,000,000. (Insert)

21862

The City Manager will continue to work with the residents of Josephine and Lenowisco to meet the March 26th deadline on this project.

Council had requests from the Freedom of Worship Church to obtain tax-exempt status on property owned in the City and a refund of the 2007 real estate tax.

Mr. Robbie Fultz was present and spoke briefly to Council asking for a public hearing to be set on this request.

21863

Mayor Raines advised that although the City Attorney was not present at tonight's meeting, he had sent Mr. Ward a letter stating that there are nine issues that must be answered by the requestor. The public hearing would be advertised and, at that time, Council would consider these nine issues before granting this request. Mayor Raines

asked Mr. Fultz to respond in writing to the nine issues in order for Council to have them as a reference during the public hearing. Mr. Fultz advised he would do so.

Mayor Raines also advised that Council will handle the issue of tax-exempt status on this property first before taking any action on the refund of the 2007 real estate taxes. The City Manager is to work with the City Attorney on the advertisement for the public hearing. Mr. Ward advised the target date for this public hearing would be April 15th.

Council had in their packets A Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Apply for a Health Department Grant in the amount of \$50,000 for the Oak Street Water Project.

The City Manager advised that these funds, if awarded, would be used to upgrade the area from Oak and 6th Street to Oak and 5th Street from a 4" water line to a 6" water line and would provide fire protection for this area.

21864

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Hunnicutt, Mays, Fawbush, Raines, NO – None, ABSENT – Wallace, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Apply for a Health Department Grant in the amount of \$50,000 for the Oak Street Water Project. (Insert)

Council was presented with A Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Apply for a Health Department Grant in the amount of \$50,000 for the Craig Street Water Project. The City Manager advised that this grant, if funded, would be used to upgrade the area from the Craig Street intersection at Oak Street up to the Craig Street intersection at Hagan Avenue from a 2" line to a 6" line. This will provide better water service and better fire protection to residents of this area.

21865

Upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Hunnicutt, Mays, Fawbush, Raines, NO – None, ABSENT – Wallace, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Apply for a Health Department Grant in the amount of \$50,000 for the Craig Street Water Project. (Insert)

Council had been provided with A Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Apply for a Health Department Grant for the Upper Norton Reservoir Project in the Amount of \$200,000.

Mr. Ward advised that this is a grant program from the Virginia Department of Health's Surface Water Development Grant Program and, if funded, will be used for the Upper Norton Reservoir Project.

21866

Upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Joseph Hunnicutt, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Hunnicutt, Mays, Fawbush, Raines, NO – None, ABSENT – Wallace, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Apply for a Health Department Grant for the Upper Norton Reservoir Project in the Amount of \$200,000. (Insert)

Upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to go into closed meeting to discuss personnel as per Section No. 2.1-3411 (A) (1) of the Code of Virginia, as amended.

21867

Mayor Raines declared Council in closed meeting.

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

2186

Mayor Raines 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 then read A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting.

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

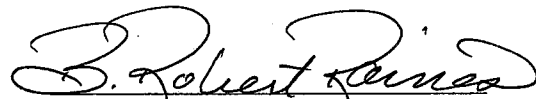
21869

In comments from the City Manager, Mr. Ward advised the annual Chamber of Commerce Gala will be held on Saturday, April 12, 2008 and the City will again sponsor a table. Council members should contact him for tickets.

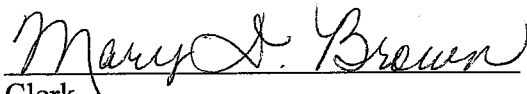
21870

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA


B. Robert Raines, Mayor

ATTEST:


Clerk