

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, February 21, 2012 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 Rev. Ken Taylor and was followed by the pledge of allegiance 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 February 7, 2012 meeting as presented.

25305

During the audience for visitors, William "Buzz" Witt, a member of the City of Norton Tourism Committee and the Spearhead Trails Committee, spoke briefly to Council. He advised that he would be bringing the new Executive Director of the Spearhead Trails Committee to a future council meeting to introduce him.

25306

The High Knob Tower groundbreaking will be within the next six weeks and they will be planning some activities and will be presenting some figures to Council regarding this.

Council had a request from the Department of Social Services for an additional appropriation for the fiscal year 2012 as pertains to the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA).

Speaking to Council was Rev. Ken Taylor, Chairperson of this Committee advising that the caseload has grown this year to 34 compared to 23 last year. Also speaking briefly was Roger Ramey, Director of the City of Norton Social Services Department. Due to this increase, they are requesting an additional appropriation of \$67,762.03 which will be matched by State funds. Rev. Taylor advised that this is a mandated program by the State.

25307

The City Attorney advised since this is state mandated, the City will have to come up with the funds.

As an appointee of Council, Councilman Roop advised that he sits on the Community Policy and Management Board.

At this time, Councilman Hunnicutt took his seat on Council.

25308

Following a brief discussion during which Councilman Caruso advised he has an issue with those being in the system who do not need to be and he also has a serious philosophical objection with how the system works.

25309

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by the following roll call vote: YES – Hunnicutt, Fawbush, Roop, Mays, NO – Caruso, who stated his vote is a symbolic resistance to unfunded mandates and what he believes

is a system that has gone awry, Council moved to appropriate \$67,762.03 additionally for the year 2012 for the Comprehensive Services Act of the City of Norton Social Services Department with said funds to come from Unappropriated Reserves.

Council members expressed their appreciation and thanks to Rev. Taylor and Mr. Ramey for the work they are doing.

Included in Council's packets was a copy of the original and expired Service Agreement with the C-N-W Regional Sewer Authority and a copy of the second Service Agreement.

Mr. Ward asked that Council take no action on this agreement tonight and then asked the City Attorney to go over some of the items where he has concerns.

Mr. Bradshaw then discussed the items that had been presented to Council in their packets.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was the consensus of Council to table this agreement and for the City Attorney to convey Council's concerns to the C-N-W Board and the participants in this Authority and bring it back to Council at a future date.

Council had been presented in their packets A Resolution of the City of Norton Authorizing the Submission of an Application to the Virginia Department of Health for Funding of a Water Project.

The City Manager advised that the City does not know if these funds will be a grant or loan; however they wish to apply for them on the Phase III of the System-Wide Water System Improvements Project, which is a one million dollar project and will affect water lines on Virginia Avenue, 10th Street to 6th Street and some off-shoot lines of 10th, The Terrace, and Highland. Deadline for submission of application is April 1, 2012.

Upon a motion by Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Caruso, Hunnicutt, Fawbush, Roop, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Authorizing the Submission of an Application to the Virginia Department of Health for Funding of a Water Project. (Insert)

Mr. Ward advised that the first council meeting in March is March 6th. This date is also the Virginia State Republican Primary Election and Council Chambers is the voting precinct in Norton. He asked Council's direction as to how they would like to handle this meeting. He further advised that the annual Capital Improvement Meeting will be held on March 9th at Noon at The Inn in Norton.

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to dispense with the March 6th council meeting and, if necessary, a special called meeting can be held.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, 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.

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

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

2531

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.

2531

Upon a motion by Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Caruso, 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)

The Mayor opened the floor for nominations to the Southwest Virginia Regional Jail Authority to fill the unexpired terms of William Mays and Ernie Ward, who have resigned.

Councilman Caruso nominated Joseph Fawbush to fill the unexpired term of William Mays which will expire on December 31, 2012 and Fred Ramey to fill the unexpired term of Ernie Ward, which will expire on April 3, 2013.

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

Mayor Mays declared Joseph Fawbush appointed to fill the unexpired term of William Mays, which will expire on December 31, 2012, and Fred Ramey appointed to fill the unexpired term of Ernie Ward, which will expire on April 3, 2013.

2531

Mayor Mays advised that it had been a pleasure to serve on this Board, but due to business commitments, he can no longer do so. Mr. Ward is resigning due to his impending retirement.

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

The annual Capital Improvement Meeting will be held on Friday, March 9th, at Noon at The Inn in Norton.

In Council's packets is a letter from Byron Cantrell, Chairman of the Norton Industrial Development Authority, advising that this is the ten year anniversary of the Hotel Norton. All floors have been renovated except for the mezzanine. There are eight businesses located there with a total of 150 employees. There have been 518 lobby rentals and over 52,000 people have attended events there.

25317

There were no comments from the City Attorney.

25318

In comments from Council members, Councilman Roop extended congratulations to Mr. Colby Dean, a J. I. Burton student, who has won his third straight State Wrestling Championship.

Congratulations were extended to NIDA on the ten year anniversary of the Hotel Norton and he thanked the members for their service and leadership. He stated he also liked the concept of a new sign for the Hotel Norton, which is a duplicate of the one that was there when he was growing up.

His third comment was on the consolidation issue of the Norton City Schools with Wise County Schools. He stated he had watched the Wise County School Board Meeting and sees that there is still some interest from them for consolidation with the City of Norton. He advised that if Wise County wants to discuss this again, he thinks the City should listen.

Following a lengthy conversation in which all council members voiced their opinions, the City Manager asked for direction.

It was the consensus of the majority of the council members to have a joint meeting with the City of Norton School Board and representatives of the Wise County School Board to discuss a written proposal as pertains to school consolidation. Councilman Caruso voiced his opposition to this meeting without a formal written plan. He further stated that the Norton School Board should be working on a plan to keep City schools operational for at least 20 years.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William J. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Clerk