

The regularly scheduled City Council meeting was held on Tuesday, January 8, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. with Mayor William Mays presiding.

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

Also Present: Fred L. Ramey, Jr., City Manager and Bill Bradshaw, City Attorney

The invocation was given by Rev. John Ellington and was followed by the pledge led by Police Chief James C. Lane.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the December 4, 2012 meeting as presented.

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During the audience for visitors, Rev. John Ellington, 401 Chestnut Street, local pastor and volunteer chaplain of the Norton Police Department spoke to Council regarding the death of Assistant Police Chief and Lead Investigator, Roger Cooke, on Christmas evening. He stated that members of the Police Department, along with Mayor Mays, City Manager Fred Ramey, and Finance Director Jeff Shupe turned out to honor Assistant Chief Cook by standing along Park Avenue and saluting the ambulance taking Roger to the Mountain View Hospital. A police car was in front and behind the ambulance to escort him. He stated that Roger was an honored member of the Police Department and a wonderful officer and friend to all. He also stated that he thinks all first responders are not adequately appreciated and that they should be applauded and given thanks for all the work they do.

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On behalf of the Norton Police Department and the citizens of Norton, he would like to extend a heartfelt thank you for those who were there to honor Roger.

Police Chief James C. Lane spoke to Council regarding the unexpected death of Assistant Chief Cook and advised that the Department continues to struggle and mourn this loss of, not only a co-worker but, a dear friend. He expressed thanks to the City Administration and City Council for their support during this time and stated that it meant a lot to the Department. He thanked Mayor Mays, City Manager Fred Ramey, and Finance Director Jeff Shupe for being out with them Christmas night to honor Roger. He also thanked Councilman Fawbush who spoke with them. All of this was greatly appreciated by all in the Police Department and he wished to express their sincere thanks.

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The City Manager showed Council members and those present a special video that the City Administration has been working on for over a year. It will be part of the Heartwood Collection and will be one of 17 videos in this collection. Norton is the third community that has completed their video.

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After showing the video, Mr. Ramey advised it is on the City website and on Channel 51 every night at 8:00.

Mayor Mays and council members advised they were very impressed with the video and that it will help to bring tourists to our area.

An update on the fourth annual Farmers Market was given to Council by Market Manager, Carmen Cantrell. Several of the vendors and farmers were present tonight as well as Michele Knox and Becky Coffey, City employees who also work with the market. Ms. Cantrell advised that they held 20 markets in this fourth year and averaged 25 vendors per market. After introducing the vendors, those present gave them a round of applause.

Ms. Cantrell also thanked the Norton Industrial Development Authority for the indoor facility and expressed further thanks to the City and City Council for helping to make this market a resounding success. She then advised the Norton Farmers Market is the largest of its type in the area.

Following her presentation, Mayor Mays asked Ms. Cantrell to come forward and receive an Outstanding Service Award Plaque from Council on behalf of them and the citizens of Norton for her many hours of hard work.

Ms. Cantrell thanked Council very much and advised it could not be as successful without the support of City Council and the citizens of this community.

Mr. Ramey thanked the vendors who came tonight. Mayor Mays asked the vendors if any of them had any comments and three vendors spoke briefly to Council thanking them for the inside facility and stating that Ms. Cantrell was the heart of the Farmers Market.

Council had been presented with a request by Southwest Ambulance Service to locate its operations within the City of Norton on Kentucky Avenue. Mr. Ramey advised he had previously met with the owners, Troy and Angela Ramey.

Speaking on behalf of Southwest Ambulance Service was Ms. Carolyn Jessee.

Following a brief discussion and 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 Supporting the Relocation of Southwest Ambulance Service to the City Norton. (Insert)

Ms. Jessee thanked Council for their action tonight.

Council had a request by Comcast Cable for the City to consider the de-regulation of Comcast's basic, installation, and equipment rates.

Mr. Ramey advised he was contacted in late November or early December by Mr. Russell Byrd, Sr. of Comcast regarding this request.

Mr. Byrd was present at the meeting to speak to Council. After sharing a hand-out with Council, Mr. Byrd advised Council of the improvements Comcast had made in this area in the past several years. They are asking that the City approach the FCC about forfeiting the de-regulation of rates and allowing them to offer a lower priced tier for City of Norton residents. They can offer a low priced tier of \$21.95 per month, but cannot offer it to Norton citizens due to the City's authority to regulate cable pricing.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was the consensus of Council for Mr. Byrd to send additional information to Mr. Ramey and Mr. Bradshaw and for this item to be brought back for consideration at Council's next meeting which will be held on January 15th. Mr. Byrd advised he will be in attendance at the meeting on the 15th.

In their packets, Council had been presented with A Resolution of Support of the Crooked Road Organization's effort to pursue National Heritage Area Designation through the National Park Service and the U. S. Congress.

Mr. Ramey advised Council that this item is being given them for informational purposes and no action needs to be taken tonight.

During a lengthy discussion, Mr. Ramey advised that both Senator Warner and Congressman Griffith are supporting this request.

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The City Manager had supplied Council members with additional information tonight on this topic and Councilman Caruso asked Council members to go on-line and read both pros and cons on this topic. He specifically asked that they read a particular letter from which he had quoted tonight.

Mayor Mays advised that he would like to review the information given to them tonight and bring this item back to the meeting on January 15th.

Council had a copy of a check and two transfers to approve. These were a check to Summers-Taylor in the amount of \$102,661.26 dated December 20, 2012 and a transfer to the Norton City Schools in the amount of \$250,000 dated December 19, 2012 and a transfer in the amount of \$160,000 to the Norton City Schools dated December 5, 2012.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve the one check and two transfers as specified above. (Insert – Councilman Roop's Disclosure Statement)

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 per Section No. 2.2-3711 (A) (1) of the Code of Virginia, as amended.

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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.

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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 Fawbush, 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)

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In comments from the City Manager, Mr. Ramey advised:

Statements of Economic Interest forms are due to the City Clerk by January 15th.

He is happy to advise that we have an overall reservoir water supply of 105.6 million gallons as of January 6th. This is up from 76.3 million gallons as of November 27th.

Dog and cat licenses are on sale and due by January 31st. Advertising has been done in the Coalfield, the City's website, and Facebook page.

He hopes to bring to Council, at the next meeting, research done on the personal property/decals which Council had asked for during the budget process.

The Coalfield Regional Legislative Reception will be held on January 17th at the Omni in Richmond.

He has gotten Council members copies of the Train Calendar that they had asked for previously. Also there is a copy of an article and photos supplied by Ron Flanary.

He formally stated that the City was recently informed of the death of former City Manager, Charles R. "Charlie" Brown, who served from 1982-1988. He advised that Mr. Brown was very supportive of regionalism and an early leader in the effort to establish the Coeburn-Norton-Wise Regional Wastewater Authority; pushed for a comprehensive study of the downtown that led to the Downtown Revitalization Project that was started in 1989; brought technology into local government; and started the Capital Improvement Program.

Mayor Mays advised that he was very supportive of the Enhanced 911 System also.

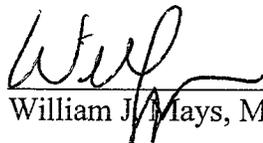
In comments from the City Attorney, Mr. Bradshaw advised that he had received a list from the Treasurer's Office of three year delinquent real estate taxes and is moving forward with it.

In comments from the City Council, Mr. Caruso asked if fishing licenses are on sale. Mr. Ramey advised they were and an ad was being worked on to advertise same. He also asked that Council be given a list of the delinquent tax properties giving a street address. Mr. Ramey advised he had already talked with the Treasurer on this and he also hopes to have a map to show the locations.

Councilman Roop followed up on Councilman Fawbush's comments at the last meeting that the past four years have gone by fast and Council had tackled some tough issues over this time; however he advised that he really enjoyed it. He further stated that even though Council members sometimes disagreed, they have always remained professional and respectful of each other. He appreciated that and the relationship with Council.

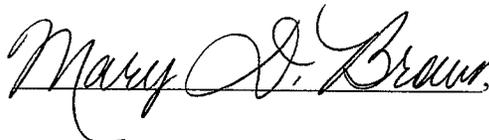
There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William J. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Mary D. Brown, Clerk