

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, June 16, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

Present: Mark Caruso, Robert Fultz, Jr., William Mays, Joseph Fawbush, and Dee Belcher

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

The invocation was given by Rev. Freddie Powers followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Police Chief James C. Lane.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following vote: YES – Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, ABSTAIN – Caruso, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the June 2, 2015 meeting as presented.

25552

There was no response to the Mayor's call for visitors.

25553

A public hearing was held to consider amendments to the 2015-2015 General Operating Fund Budget in the amount of \$4,229,908.76.

Mr. Ramey advised that he was authorized at Council's previous meeting to advertise this public hearing on the budget amendments. City auditors had recommended that amendments include all grants and other additional revenue. The requested amendment was broken down into three categories: Unappropriated Reserves in the amount of \$181,433.18, Additional Revenues in the amount of \$2,790,475.58, and Loan Proceeds in the amount of \$1,258,000.00 for a total budget amendment of \$4,229,908.76.

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

Mayor Mays opened the public hearing.

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

There were no comments or questions from Council following the public hearing and upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to adopt the amendments to the 2014-2015 General Operating Fund Budget in the amount of \$4,229,908.76.

Council had been presented with an Ordinance Adopting the Budget for the City of Norton, Virginia for the Fiscal Year of July 1, 2015 Thru June 30, 2016 Appropriating Funds for All Contemplated Expenses of the City for the Fiscal Year and Placing Levies Upon All Real Estate, Personal Property and Bank Stock, Licenses, Fees, User Charges, and All Other Levies as Previously Imposed or Modified Herein.

Mr. Ramey advised that Council had adopted the City's 2015-2016 budget at the last meeting; however the budget ordinance had not been included. The City Manager advised that this ordinance stipulates the levies and fees that had been modified in the budget.

During comments from Council, Councilman Caruso stated he cannot support the budget, as adopted, without any economic development enhancements. He does not

support raising property taxes and then giving employees a raise. He further stated that the City cannot tax themselves out of the financial situation that they are currently experiencing. In his opinion, the Norton Industrial Development Authority must be more proactive in developing economic growth. He further asked that Council revisit the budget and rescind the increase in taxes.

There were no other comments from Council members and upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following vote: YES – Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – Caruso, ABSENT – None, ABSTAIN – None, Council moved to adopt An Ordinance Adopting the Budget for the City of Norton, Virginia for the Fiscal Year of July 1, 2015 Thru June 30, 2016 Appropriating Funds for All Contemplated Expenses of the City for the Fiscal Year and Placing Levies Upon All Real Estate, Personal Property and Bank Stock, Licenses, Fees, User Charges, and All Other Levies as Previous Imposed or Modified Herein. (Insert)

25555

Mr. Ramey advised that Dr. Keith Perrigan, Superintendent of the Norton City Schools, was present to discuss with Council the possible uses for the Norton City Schools projected 2014-2015 surplus.

Via a PowerPoint presentation, he stated that he had two plans. Plan A would require that they spend this surplus by the end of June and Plan B would allow them to have more time should Council adopt a resolution permitting them to establish a Capital Improvement Account. Plan B is his preferred plan as there are more options under this plan. Following his presentation, he advised Council that he would be happy to answer any questions.

Also present at tonight's meeting to offer input on this was the City's auditor, Tamara Greear.

25556

After a lengthy discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to adopt a Resolution for the Norton City School Board to establish a Capital Improvement Account for the audited surplus dollars of the 2014-2015 budget for the purpose of capital improvement items as discussed tonight.

Mayor Mays extended congratulations to Dr. Perrigan for the achievement of their accreditation. (Insert – if there is a resolution)

In their packets, Council had been furnished information regarding the submission of a 2015 COPS Grant Application for a School Resource Officer.

Last year, the City Manager was authorized to apply for this grant which is federal funding that will provide up to 75% of the salary and fringe benefit of a full time officer for a 36 month grant period. The fourth year will be completely funded by the municipality with a minimum 25% local cash match requirement and maximum federal share of \$125,000 per office position.

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Mr. Ramey advised that the City of Norton School Board, had approved up to \$10,000 of matching funds for this position. The deadline is June 19, 2015.

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, Council authorized the City Manager to proceed with the submission of the application for a COPS Grant.

The City Attorney advised if the grant is awarded, Council can vote on keeping the grant or turning it down.

The City Manager updated Council on the Proposed Playground at the Norton Elementary and Middle School.

On June 8, 2015, the City of Norton School Board voted to approve the request for the playground. Proposals had been advertised and the City received only one proposal and that was from the Norton City Schools. The City is continuing to evaluate the building issues and has been advised it will cost a minimum of \$3,000 to remove the power back to the Community Center Building. It is not looking promising to have the filter building torn down for the scrap metal, etc., due to the current value of scrap metal.

Mr. Ramey and the City Attorney are working on a draft lease agreement. Mayor Mays asked if the proposal could be approved tonight. The City Attorney advised that the Council can commit for a one year lease to the School Board or Council can wait before moving forward with the lease. This four year lease will be automatically reviewed annually for a sum of \$1.00 per year.

25558

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to accept the proposal of the Norton City School Board for the installation of a playground.

Mrs. Gina Wohlford, principal of the Norton Elementary and Middle School, thanked Council for their work on this project.

Council had been given a copy of A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Norton Adopting a Five Year Capital Improvements Program.

Mr. Ramey advised the only items listed in the first year of this plan are the annual paving appropriation of \$200,000 and the equipment leases in the amount of \$30,195.

Councilman Caruso stated he felt this document has no meaning and portrays a false image of a five year plan and that the City needs to change the way that it does business.

25559

Following Councilman Caruso's comments and upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by the following vote: YES - Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO - Caruso. ABSENT - None, ABSTAIN - None, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the City Council of the City Norton Adopting a Five Year Capital Improvements Program. (Insert)

Also included in Council's packets was a Resolution requesting that State Route 619 from the City of Norton to Fort Blackmore be included into the Virginia Byway Scenic Highway System.

The City Manager advised that Councilman Caruso had asked that the City try to get Route 619 included at an earlier meeting. He further advised that Wise County has adopted a similar resolution. Council had been furnished with a map showing this route.

25560

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES - Caruso, Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO - None, ABSENT - None, ABSTAIN - None, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Requesting that State Route 619 from the City of Norton to Fort Blackmore be Included into the Virginia Byway Scenic Highway System. (Insert)

Mr. Ramey advised one thing that may hurt us is that Route 619 is not paved all the way; however he thinks Scott County is working on that.

Council had a request from the Wise County Public Service Authority for one water tap for the Josephine Sewer Pump Station.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve one water tap for the Wise County Public Service Authority for the Josephine Sewer Pump Station. Approval of this tap expires in one year.

25561

In their packets, Council had two transfers and one check to be approved. The two transfers were to the Norton City Schools in the amount of \$100,000 to cover accounts payable items and \$145,000 to cover payroll and fringes. The check was made payable to the Norton Industrial Development Authority in the amount of \$122,156.34.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve two transfers and one check as stated above.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to go into closed meeting to discuss personnel as per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1) of the Code of Virginia as amended, and as per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (3) of the Code of Virginia as amended, discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publically held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body and Section 2.2.-3711 (A) (5) discussion concerning a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the community.

25563

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

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

25564

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

25565

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

He had placed a copy of the June Retail Sales Tax Report at each member's desk. He had also placed a copy of the Best Friend Festival Schedule for each member. The following reports were given on the three on-going projects:

Safe Routes to School: The project is continuing with landscaping, wall fencing, and blocks completed. The concrete contractor should begin work on Wednesday, June 17th, and work will proceed on curb and guttering. The DMME portion of the project is mostly complete.

Phase III Water Project: All areas have been placed in service and work is now being done at the head of 10th Street. Following 10th Street, work will begin at Hill Top using funds from a LENOWISCO grant.

25566

3rd Street Subsidence Project: This project will be shown to contractors on June 26th.

There were no comments from the City Attorney.

25567

In comments from Council:

Councilwoman Belcher stated she is attending weekly meetings on the Policy Management Board. She advised there are great people serving on the Board and also those working for the City.

Councilman Fawbush asked that Council look to the number of meetings to be held in July.

Councilman Fultz advised he is looking forward to the Best Friend Festival being held this week and to a great summer in the City. He stated he very much enjoyed the hike on National Trails Day and he looked forward to additional trail opportunities. He complimented the work done by the City's Trail Coordinator Shayne Fields and he looks forward to seeing progress accelerated on these trails.

Councilman Caruso stated he had e-mailed a contact with the Division of Land and Inland Fisheries regarding the management of a fishery. He had attended a Tourism Committee Meeting last week and had some items to be discussed with Council. He will e-mail this information to Council members. Also, he will forward to Council a marketing plan with a budget prepared by a guest at the Tourism meeting for their informational purposes. The Tourism Committee continues to work hard.

25568

Mayor Mays inquired as to how close the Administration was to advertising public hearing on the off road vehicles. The City Manager advised he had received information stating signage needs to be installed at certain locations. This should be re-submitted in the next couple of days. A brief discussion ensued regarding fees which the City Attorney advised were set by the General Assembly.

The Mayor then brought up the regular scheduled meetings in July and upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to cancel the meeting of July 6th.

Mayor Mays advised the Clerk that Council's was in receipt of her impending retirement and wished her the best.


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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William D. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Clerk