

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, October 20, 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 Reverend Freddie Powers and was followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Fire Chief Todd Lagow and members of the Norton Fire Department.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by the following vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the October 6, 2015 meeting as presented. 25669

There was no response to the Mayor’s call for visitors. 25670

A Public Information Session was held to solicit public input on the VDOT MAP-21 Application for Funding.

Mr. Ramey advised that the funding will be used for a proposed 1.25 mile trail along the Guest River from the Norton Community Center to Kentucky Avenue that will be constructed of compacted gravel or pavement. Mr. Ramey explained when the City upgraded the sewer interceptor line in this area that the site became a great recreational opportunity to develop a river walk. Mr. Ramey hopes this project can become a multi-phase project allowing the trail to end on City property at the sewer plant in Ramsey. Mr. Cody McElroy who is assisting with the grant application is also present to answer any questions. 25671

Councilman Caruso stated the river walk was a fine project and very worthwhile.

There being no further comments from Council, Mayor Mays opened the Public Information Session.

There being no public comment, Mayor Mays closed the Public Information Session.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to continue the VDOT MAP-21 grant application.

The City Manager recognized Fire Chief Todd Lagow who presented Council with a list of working officers of the Department for the fiscal year 2015-2016 as required by City Code. Chief Lagow thanked Council for his appointment as chief and asked for Council’s approval of this group of volunteers. 25672

Chief Lagow then introduced each member that was present and advised Council that the working officers have over 200 years of experience. The average response time is approximately 2.5 minutes.

Mayor Mays thanked Chief Lagow and the working officers for their service to the City.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to approve the list of working officers for the fiscal year 2015-2016 as presented by Fire Chief Lagow. At this time, a round of applause was given to the firefighters.

Councilman Caruso thanked the firefighters for their service.

Mr. Ramey advised that Dr. Keith Perrigan, Superintendent of the Norton City Schools was present to request a Supplemental Local Appropriation to take part in the 2015 School Security Grant.

Before beginning with his presentation, Dr. Perrigan invited City Council to John I. Burton's Veteran's Day program on November 11, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at which time they will honor local veterans and rededicate the clock tower 11:11 a.m.

Dr. Perrigan advised Council that the school system wrote a School Safety Grant last year in the amount of \$95,930.97 and were advised the school system will be awarded \$76,025.00 in state grant funds with the stipulation of 25% local match of \$19,006.00. As a result, he was present tonight to ask Council for additional funding in the amount of \$19,006.00 to utilize the School Safety Grant.

25673

Following a lengthy discussion 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, Council moved to allocate \$19,006.00 from contingency to fund the school safety project as presented.

Included in Council's packets was a Proposed Utility Vehicle Ordinance. Mr. Ramey advised at the last meeting the City Administration was asked to provide Council with a list of streets where utility vehicles would not be allowed. Mr. Ramey, via a PowerPoint presentation, gave Council a visual of proposed streets and explained how the City Administration determined which streets utility vehicles would not be allowed to access.

25674

After a lengthy discussion, it was the consensus of Council to authorize the City Manager to advertise a public hearing on the Utility Vehicle Ordinance as presented.

Mr. Ramey advised the City recently received a request from the Virginia Municipal League to provide a locally handcrafted Christmas ornament that represents our community to be displayed on the holiday tree at the Governor's mansion. The City reached out to local master carver Maurice Vanhook who created an ornament of Flag Rock. Mr. Ramey shared the carving with Council and it was the consensus of Council that the ornament was a wonderful representation of the City.

25675

Council had included in their packets A Resolution Recognizing October as Disability Awareness Month and Celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Recognizing October as Disability Awareness Month and Celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. (Insert)

25676

In their packets, Council had one check to be confirmed. The check was made payable to Boring Contractors, Inc., in the amount of \$151,011.63.

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

25677

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

City has seen an increase in bear complaints with the largest concern around the school. The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) is very selective about trapping bears so the City is working with the school to empty their dumpster at the end of the day to try to resolve the issue.

Dr. Perrigan advised emptying the dumpster seems to have resolved the issue after the 2<sup>nd</sup> day but he was contacted by the state biologist and they will be sending a trapper to trap the bear and release it.

25678

The AmeriCorps team did not come due to the flooding in South Carolina. However, we are still hopeful they will come but not sure when they will arrive.

A copy of the latest monthly sales tax report was placed at Council's desks.

The Halloween Bash is scheduled for Saturday, October 24th at the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Park from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.

There were no comments from the City Attorney.

25679

In comments from Council:

Councilwoman Belcher stated the City firemen are a necessary component of the City and they do a lot to take care of our City.

25680

She is glad to see the City sales tax is improving.

Councilman Fultz said he noticed that several of the firemen in attendance tonight were born here, raised here, and graduated here and that is what makes Norton special. He is very appreciative of their service and their presence in the community and the events they work.

25681

He thanked Mr. Ramey and Mr. Cody McElroy for finding the VDOT MAP-21 funding for the proposed river walk project.

It is nice to see the wall project coming together and the signage looks great.

He was able to enjoy and be involved in the Woodbooger event this weekend at Flag Rock. He saw a great family event and commended Councilman Fawbush for his work on the event.

Councilman Caruso thanked Mr. Ramey and the City Attorney for their work on the Utility Vehicle Ordinance.

He would like an update on the ATV ordinance and how we are dealing with VDOT on this issue.

25682

Mr. Ramey advised he had spoken with a VDOT representative yesterday and he hoped to provide a letter to City Administration on the list of roads and streets the City provided to them at the next Council meeting.

Councilman Caruso advised Pennington Gap had opened a new ATV trail and he had a gentleman from Buchanan County in his store that wanted to know when Norton will be joining in on this venture.

Downtown business "Think Tank" has a lot of good ideas and all comments are positive. They have set up a blog site which displays cumulative ideas.

He thanked the Fire Department and Police Department for their work but especially wanted to thank Officer Mays and Officer Davis for their handling of an injured cat his daughter had found and the level of community service they demonstrated.

He said he believed we needed to educate the public one more time on how the wall was funded.

He and Carol participated in the Woodbooger event and felt it was a great event and it can only get better. He wants to commend City workers who worked the event for their enthusiasm and work.

He asked Council to advise if they would like to work on a new strategic plan or review and update the current comprehensive plan. He believes Council is doing a great disservice to the Citizens by not being planners.

Mayor Mays stated he believed the comprehensive plan would be a good place to start but he needs to reread the plan.

Mr. Ramey advised he would need to get everyone a copy of the comprehensive plan so they can be reviewing the document. Under the state code, the Planning Commission plays an important role in creating or updating a comprehensive plan and the goal is to get as many citizens as possible involved in the process.

Councilman Caruso stated he thinks the City not having a plan for the future is the greatest issue the City faces.

Councilman Fawbush thanked Mr. Ramey and Mr. Shupe for their continued work on City projects and their ability to make things work.

The City is blessed to have Police, Fire and Rescue services. Public Works and City Administration are at the top of their game.

He was fortunate to work with Public Works and Parks & Recreation at the Woodbooger event this weekend and he is very appreciative of their hard work and their work ethic.

Mr. Ramey stated the City loves working with individuals who plan an event and he doesn't believe the City has ever worked with a group that has been as organized as the Woodbooger event.

He thanked Norton City Schools for providing the characters for the event. He thanked Neil Walker for parking at the event.

Councilman Fawbush stated he believed the citizens of Norton are truly thankful for all the services the City provides to them. He has noticed some stress in surrounding towns and he would like to see the City's level of services continue or even grow in the future.

He stated the Fire Department is a great bunch and the Fire Department appreciates City Council's support. The Fire Department needs new equipment or to have the current equipment refurbished but they are making it work and he appreciates them for doing that.

He will have a formal report in a few weeks but he wanted everyone to know that the Woodbooger event could not occur without everyone's involvement.

Councilman Fultz stated there is a 5K Turkey Run on Thanksgiving Day and it is another opportunity for the community to get out and get involved. 25684

Mayor Mays wanted to echo Council's comments.

He would like to recommend that Council cancel the November 3, 2015 meeting since Councilman Fultz will be working the election.

It was the consensus of Council to cancel the November 3, 2015 meeting. 25685

He just wanted to repeat Council's comments and he advised that he feels very blessed and very privileged to serve with each Council member. He is very appreciative of their respect for one another even when they do not agree.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA

  
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William Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Clerk of Council