

City Council Meeting Packet



October 18, 2016

AGENDA

Norton City Council

October 18, 2016

6:00 P.M.

1. Roll Call
2. Invocation – Rev. Gary Hill
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Approval of Minutes
 1. Meeting of October 4, 2016
5. Audience for Visitors
6. New Business
 - A. Mountain Empire Community College Update by Dr. Scott Hamilton, President.
 - B. Update on the Replacement of Election Equipment by the Norton Electoral Board.
 - C. Update on the Salamander Research Being Conducted by UVA-Wise at the Flag Rock Recreation Area.
 - D. Consideration of Additional Funding for the Norton Rescue Squad.
 - E. Confirmation of Checks(s)/Transfer(s) in Excess of \$100,000.

- F. Closed Meeting as Per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (3) of the City 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.
- 7. Comments by the City Manager, City Attorney, and City Council.
- 8. Adjournment.

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, October 4, 2016, 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 City Manager Fred Ramey, Jr., and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Fire Chief Todd Lagow and members of Norton Fire Department.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by the following vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Fawbush, Mays, Belcher, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the September 20, 2016, meeting as presented.

There was no response to the Mayor's Call for Visitors.

The City Manager advised Code Section 8-38 of the Norton City Code requires Council's approval of working officers for the Norton Fire Department. He stated that Fire Chief Todd Lagow was in attendance to present these appointments for Council's consideration.

Chief Lagow presented Council with his recommendations for the department's working officers and introduced each member that was present. He then asked Mayor Mays to come forward and assist him in presenting badges to the new officers. Chief Lagow and Mayor Mays, assisted by the Mayor's granddaughter Ella Mays, presented insignias to new officers Captain Billy Mays and Lieutenant Greg Mays. Chief Lagow then thanked Council and the citizens of Norton for their support of the Norton Fire Department.

Upon a motion by Mayor Mays, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to approve the list of working officers for the Norton Fire Department for fiscal year 2016-2017, as presented by Fire Chief Lagow. At this time, the firefighters received a standing ovation and a round of applause.

Councilwoman Belcher thanked each member for their service to the City, as did the other councilmen.

At this time, Mr. Ramey asked Assistant Fire Chief Marty Hagy to come forward to recognize Norton Fire Department members who have reached 25 years of service.

Assistant Fire Chief Hagy provided a history on the tradition of the fire department of honoring personnel who have reached 25 years of service by having a formal portrait taken to display on the "Wall of Fame" in the Fire Hall. He stated, currently 21 fire department members have earned the distinction of having their portrait displayed on the "Wall of Fame," and five members will be recognized tonight for their years of service. Those present and receiving portrait service awards were: Zac Roberts, 30 years; Earl "Buddy"

Cash, 28 years; Chris Jones, 26 years; Steve McElroy, 25 years; and Fire Chief Todd Lagow, 26 years.

After the presentation of these awards, these firemen were honored with applause and a group picture was taken with Council.

The City Manager advised that Dr. Perrigan was in attendance to discuss the Supplemental Appropriation Request for Norton City Schools in the amount of \$255,570 to carryover 2015-2016 state funds.

Dr. Perrigan stated that, according to Superintendent's Memo 130-16, he is requesting a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$255,570 to carryover 2015-2016 state funds.

After fielding several questions from Council regarding the intended use of the carryover state funds, current enrollment, and balancing next year's budget, Dr. Perrigan advised that due to decreased enrollment and the governor's repeal of the 2 percent compensation supplement, it is his recommendation for the School Board to use the carryover funds to balance the 2016-2017 budget, along with absorption of two positions and additional cuts the school system is making. Regarding next year's budget, Dr. Perrigan stated the School Board is already planning for FY 2017-2018 and that unless there is an increase in enrollment or a change in state funding, the school system will absorb positions as employees leave through attrition. He said the School Board has a plan for current enrollment and a backup plan should enrollment continue to decline to 760 students.

At this point, Dr. Perrigan said the decline in enrollment across the region has sparked school systems in the area to organize a Coalfields Equity Summit to establish one regional voice to address funding issues in the Coalfield counties. He invited Council to attend the summit, which will be held at 6:00 p.m., October 13, 2016, in the Convocation Center Lakeview room at the University of Virginia's College at Wise.

Mayor Mays stated that City Council and the School Board need to schedule joint meetings to discuss the upcoming FY 2017-2018 budget.

Dr. Perrigan said he would add the joint meeting request to the School Board's next agenda.

Councilman Fawbush asked Dr. Perrigan if the school system anticipates coming back to Council this fiscal year for additional funding.

Dr. Perrigan said an additional local funding request is dependent on enrollment. He noted that the School Board has a plan for 764 students; but, if enrollment falls below that number, the division may have to ask Council for additional funding.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to approve the Supplemental Appropriation Request from Norton City Schools up to \$255,570 to carryover 2015-2016 state funds.

Councilman Fawbush asked Dr. Perrigan to spend the supplemental appropriation wisely and asked for a printed copy of the school's itemized budget.

Dr. Perrigan advised that the school system has reduced budget line items and are looking for cost savings in utilities. He said he would provide Council with an itemized copy of the budget.

Dr. Perrigan then thanked Council for consideration and action on the School Board's request.

In their packets, Council had copies of the following documents pertaining to the City of Norton Police Department: Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with the Southwest Virginia Children's Advocacy Center of Mountain Empire Older Citizens (CAC MEOC) and Wise County Department of Social Services; an Agreement for Asset Forfeiture Sharing with the Commonwealth's Attorney for Wise County; and an MOU with the Regional Narcotics Task Force 4M.

Mr. Ramey explained that MOU's and Agreements between the Police Department and area agencies are required to be updated or new MOU's and Agreements are created to meet new guidelines of the Department of Criminal Justice. He said these documents have been reviewed by the City Attorney and must be presented to Council for approval.

Mr. Bradshaw advised that the Police Chief does not have the authority to contractually bind the City and these documents require City Council's approval; and it is his recommendation that the City Manager and Police Chief sign the MOU's and Agreement.

After a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to authorize the City Manager and the Police Chief to endorse the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Norton Police Department and the Southwest Virginia Children's Advocacy Center of Mountain Empire Older Citizens; a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Norton Police Department and the Wise County Department of Social Services; an Agreement for Asset Forfeiture Sharing between the City of Norton Police Department and the Commonwealth's Attorney for Wise County; and a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Norton Police Department and the Regional Narcotics Task Force 4M.

Council packets contained a request from the Commissioner of Revenue to refund erroneously assessed 2016 public service real estate taxes to: AT&T Corporation, in the amount of \$288.90; MCI Communication Services, Incorporated, in the amount of \$1.07; and MCI Metro Access, in the amount of \$0.36.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve refunds for erroneously assessed 2016 public service real estate taxes to: AT&T Corporation for \$288.90; MCI Communication Services, Incorporated for \$1.07; and MCI Metro Access for of \$0.36.

Council had one check to confirm. This check was to Coeburn/Norton/Wise Regional Wastewater Authority, dated August 11, 2016, in the amount of \$139,484 to cover the City's portion of June and July 2016 wastewater treatment.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to confirm the check to the Coeburn/Norton/Wise Regional Wastewater Authority as stated above.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to go into closed meeting for 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 as per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (3) 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.

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 Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fultz, 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)

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

Mr. Ramey provided Council member's with a sample ballot for the upcoming November election, and stated that he has asked the Electoral Board and Registrar to demonstrate the new voting equipment at the next Council meeting. City staff has produced a video that demonstrates the voting process on the new equipment, and the video will be airing on the City's municipal access channel (NMAC51), as well as on Facebook.

A financial report on the 9 & 10 Year Old Girls Softball State Tournament Trip to Bridgewater, VA, was placed at Council's desks.

Mr. Ramey advised an AmeriCorps team is expected to arrive October 26.

The next Virginia Municipal League supper is scheduled for 6:00 PM, on Wednesday, November 4 at the Scott County Vocational Center in Gate City.

The 2016 International Walk to School Day is set for Friday, October 7, and Council is invited to participate.

The annual Halloween Bash in the City Park is scheduled from 4-7 p.m., Saturday, October 22.

The 5k Glow Run is Saturday, October 22.

The City and Dairy Queen will hold the 2nd Annual Turkey Day 5k on Thursday, November 24.

Family Preservation Services will conduct the Santa Fun Run 5k on Saturday, December 3.

The 2017 Hellbender 10k has already been scheduled for Saturday, October 7. There was a record number of participants for this year's race.

There were no comments from the City Attorney.

In comments from Council:

Councilman Caruso stated the Norton Rescue Squad will continue to provide emergency services to the community. The Rescue Squad Board is updating the Squad's By-laws and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Norton Rescue Squad and the City of Norton. He thanked Councilwoman Belcher for attending the board meeting and advised that the Board is going to ask the City to provide accounting and auditing services. Mr. Ramey is going to provide an electronic copy of the City's Personnel Manual and the Rescue Squad's management practices will emulate City policies in the near future.

Councilman Caruso provided each Council member with a copy of the October Blue Ridge Outdoors magazine and advised that there would be an article about the Norton trail system in either the November or December issue.

Councilman Caruso thanked the Police and Fire Departments for their hard work during tough economic times.

Councilman Fultz echoed Councilman Caruso's comments regarding the Police and Fire Departments and stated the representation of the Norton Fire Department at the meeting tonight displayed integrity, service, and commitment to the community.

He advised that at 6:00 p.m., Thursday, October 27, John I. Burton High School will have a homecoming parade. In conjunction with the homecoming parade, Ms. Cassandra Butler, Norton City Schools' Band Director, is having an alumni/parent band. Burton alumni or parents of current Burton band students that are not Burton alumni can participate in the alumni/parent band.

Councilman Fultz stated that he is continuing to look ahead for a brighter future despite the area's current economic situation.

Councilwoman Belcher stated that last week she had to use the emergency services of the Norton Rescue Squad, with the addition of several firefighters, and they responded quickly and were very professional. She thanked all emergency personnel for their service.

Councilman Fawbush was in agreement with fellow Council members regarding emergency services for the City of Norton. He said the longevity of volunteer service is remarkable and the collective effort between the Police Department and Fire Department is immense. He stated Council has been able to provide good equipment for the City's emergency personnel and needs to continue delivering up-to-date equipment to those who protect the City.

The 3rd Annual Woodbooger Festival is scheduled for Friday, October 14 and Saturday, October 15 at Flag Rock on High Knob and he invited everyone to attend the event.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA

William Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council



Inter-Office Memo

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Fred L. Ramey, Jr., City Manager *FR*
CC:
Date: October 14, 2016
Re: Update on Mountain Empire Community College

At our October 18th Council meeting, Dr. Scott Hamilton President of the Mountain Empire Community College will provide an update on the College.

Thank You.



COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD

PRESENTED TO

DR. SCOTT HAMILTON

WITH SINCERE APPRECIATION FOR 7 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE WISE
COUNTY/CITY OF NORTON AREA DURING YOUR TENURE AS PRESIDENT OF
MOUNTAIN EMPIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

PRESENTED BY

NORTON CITY COUNCIL

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2016

Hamilton: 'It's the people who do it'

by GLENN GANNAWAY • POST NEWS EDITOR

09.29.16 - 12:04 am

Well into his final year as Mountain Empire Community College's president, Scott Hamilton took time Monday to assess his tenure and take stock of the school's continuing challenges.

Like the Virginia Community College System overall, MECC has faced declining enrollments for several years as well as state funding reductions.

The school has maintained existing programs while working to add new ones — but outside funding is needed.

MECC has had substantial capital improvements and continues to innovate during his watch.

"This is a little college that has done a lot of innovative things," Hamilton said Monday. "It's the people who do it — the staff. It's all through the hard work of faculty and staff that those things get done."

Among the innovations are the college's new drone pilot certification program. MECC has also incorporated the technology into such things as environmental science, drafting, mapping and surveying, electronics and computer programming.

The college has also recently partnered with Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to secure matching funds for an electrical lineman program — a two-year associate degree can lead to very good, high-paying jobs, as Hamilton noted.

The college is also working on grant funding for a cybersecurity program. "There's a huge demand and those are good paying jobs," Hamilton said. "We have the basics here to get cybersecurity going . . . but again, we need additional funding."

"It's difficult for us to start a new program without outside support because of funding levels," he added.

While the college embraces programs that will prepare people for in-demand jobs, it continues to take on the challenge of maintaining programs in the face of falling enrollments.

Hamilton noted the impact that job losses in the coal industry have had on the region — and college enrollment. "When we lose enrollment, we lose funding, and it's been a challenge," he said. "But Mountain Empire's doing far better than the state average on that. We have exceeded the state average by a significant amount over the last few years. Ever since we saw a first decline in enrollment, we sat down and said, what can we do to stop this decline in enrollment, because it's hurting the college."

According to statistics published by the college and by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, MECC's fall semester headcount fell from 3,089 in 2012 to 2,718 in 2015; for the same years, the VCCS fall headcount numbers

dropped from 192,895 to 176,887.

According to State Council statistics, annual fulltime equivalent enrollment at MECC was 1,948 in 2012-13 and 1,784 in 2015-16, a drop of about 8 percent, although the 1,784 is up from 2014-15's 1,745. VCCS' FTE numbers fell from 123,652 to 111,124 — about 10 percent — in the same period. Fulltime equivalent numbers, which are crucial for school funding, convert part-time student hours to full-time.

Falling high school enrollments and labor market data meant the college wouldn't see a lot of new students coming in, "so the challenge was to maintain our enrollment in the face of declining numbers," Hamilton said.

"We decided the best way to maintain enrollment was to achieve student success and keep them in school, which is our job anyway," he said. "So we've taken the approach that student success is vital, and helping students succeed is how we're going to help the college succeed."

Although firm numbers won't be available until the end of the semester, MECC saw an enrollment increase in its last weekly report.

The college also endured the state budget cuts that came down two to three years ago. Virginia's financial crisis forced all agencies to cut their budgets by 7 percent. Over the last four years, MECC has reduced its staff by about 23. The reduction in force, Hamilton said, "is not something we want to brag about, but it's a fact." The reductions, he said, were done almost exclusively through attrition and enhanced early retirement options. "So we haven't had to have massive layoffs like some schools have faced," Hamilton said. "We could see this coming and planned ahead through attrition and early retirement to avoid trauma. So I think we've managed our decline in funding pretty well."

As the college's CEO, Hamilton said, one of his challenges has been to keep the budget in the black, "and I've done that." The school has even had a modest carryover at the end of each fiscal year, he said.

Hamilton oversaw the renovation of Dalton-Cantrell Hall, construction of new access and entrance facilities, numerous campus improvements, the development of several new career and technical programs, and MECC's five-year reaffirmation by the Southern Association of Colleges.



Inter-Office Memo

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Fred L. Ramey, Jr., City Manager *FR*
CC:
Date: October 14, 2016
Re: Update on Replacement of Election Equipment

At our October 18th Council meeting, the City Registrar, Marie Muir, and the Chairman of the Norton Electoral Board, Mike Brown, will be at the meeting to provide City Council with an update on the replacement of the election equipment.

Thank You.



Inter-Office Memo

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Fred L. Ramey, Jr., City Manager *FR*
CC:
Date: October 14, 2016
Re: Update on Salamander Research at the Flag Rock Recreation Area

At our October 18th Council meeting, Walter “Wally” Smith, Ph.D. will be at the meeting to provide City Council with an update on Salamander Research being conducted at the Flag Rock Recreation Area.

Thank You.



Inter-Office Memo

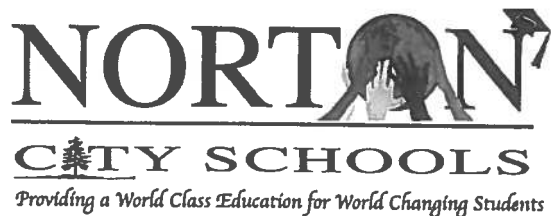
To: Mayor and City Council
From: Fred L. Ramey, Jr., City Manager *FR*
CC:
Date: October 14, 2016
Re: Additional Funding for the Norton Rescue Squad

In the FY17 City Budget, City Council appropriated \$25,000 to assist the Norton Rescue Squad. At this meeting, the City Administration will provide City Council with an update on those funds as well as a request for City Council's consideration for additional funding.

Thank You.

SCHOOL BOARD

Sherry Adams, Chairperson
Mark Leonard, Vice-Chairperson
Carol Caruso
April Fletcher
Joseph Stallard

**DIVISION SUPERINTENDENT**

Keith Perrigan, Ed.D.
kperrigan@nortoncityschoos.org
Phone 276.679.2330
Fax 276.679.4315

TO: Jeff Shupe, Director of Finance
FROM: Tamrya Spradlin, Supervisor of Finance (TS)
SUBJECT: Request For Funds
DATE: September 28, 2016

Norton City Schools requests a deposit of City Funds in the amount of \$200,000 to cover September 2016 payroll expenditures.

Thank you!