

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, November 7, 2017, 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 Delores Belcher

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

The invocation was given by Pastor Roger Sloce 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 Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by the following vote: YES – Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, ABSTAIN – Caruso and Fultz, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the October 17, 2017, meeting as presented.

262486

During the Mayor's Call for Visitors, Mr. Mark Hollyfield, Executive Director of Coeburn–Norton–Wise Regional Waste Water Treatment Authority (CNW), came forward and reported that the CNW facility has been recognized as the 2017 Waste Water Treatment Facility of the Year by the state Rural Water Association. Mr. Hollyfield presented a replica of the award to Mayor Mays and said it was a team effort to achieve this award. He also had prepared booklets for Council detailing the history of the CNW plant and thanked members who had served on CNW's board and noted the good working relationship with Mr. Ramey and city administration.

262487

On behalf of Council, Mayor Mays congratulated Mr. Hollyfield and CNW employees on receiving this prestigious award and for their hard work to provide an exceptional waste water treatment facility for the citizens of Norton, Wise, and Coeburn.

A public hearing was held to receive public input on an Ordinance to Create a Regional Industrial Facilities Authority (RIFA), Pursuant to the Virginia Code Section 15.2-6400, et seq.

Mr. Ramey gave a brief history on the purpose for creating a Regional Industrial Facilities Authority and said Wise, Scott, Dickenson, and Lee Counties, and the City of Norton were in agreement that this direction was in the best interest of the region to recruit larger economic industry to the area. Mr. Ramey said Council has reviewed the draft ordinance and if approved, it will establish the Lonesome Pine Regional Industrial Facility Authority for Lee, Wise, Scott, and Dickenson Counties, and the City of Norton. He noted Council authorized a public hearing on the matter at the October 17th meeting and the hearing has been advertised.

The City Attorney added the formation of the Regional Industrial Facilities Authority is a framework and does not obligate the City in any future economic projects. The agreement between the municipalities and the creation of an authority will allow for funding and bond issuances and the ordinance is in accordance with state code.

Mayor Mays opened the public hearing.

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

262488

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to adopt an Ordinance to Create a Regional Industrial Facilities Authority for Lee, Scott, Wise, and Dickenson Counties, and the City of Norton, named the Lonesome Pine Regional Industrial Authority, Pursuant to Section 15.2-6400, et seq. of the Code of Virginia. (Insert)

Mayor Mays recognized Fire Chief Todd Lagow who presented Council with a list of the fire department's working officers for fiscal year 2017-2018 as required by City Code.

Chief Lagow said he provided a letter for Council's packet listing the following working officers for Norton Fire Department: Steve McElroy, Assistant Chief (Operations); Marty Hagy, Assistant Chief (Safety); Buddy Cash, Captain (Administrative); Billy Mays, Captain (Special Operations); Stephen McElroy, Captain (Grants/Training); Skipper Dorton, Lieutenant (Equipment/Training); Tim Couch, Lieutenant (Apparatus/Training); Greg Mays, Lieutenant (LE Liaison/Training); and Cody McElroy, Lieutenant (Public Safety Education). Chief Lagow said currently the average response time for a call is 46.9 seconds, which is largely due to first responder vehicles. The department averages 18 personnel per call and has a total of 549 years of fire officer experience. Chief Lagow thanked Council for support of the department and said he would answer any questions members may have pertaining to the fire department.

262489

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to approve the working officers as listed above for the Norton Fire Department for FY2017-2018.

Mayor Mays expressed Council's appreciation to Chief Lagow and the working officers of the Norton Fire Department for the protection given to the community by their volunteer service.

In their packets, Council had a request from MineShaft Harley-Davidson of Pikeville, Kentucky to use the city's "Woodbooger" Service Mark for the purpose of promoting a motorcycle ride in Southwest Virginia and Eastern Kentucky and to design a t-shirt using the Woodbooger image.

Mr. Clint Meade, General Manager of MineShaft Harley-Davidson, explained that the Pikeville dealership's territory includes Eastern Kentucky, Wise, Dickenson, and Buchanan Counties and the City of Norton. He said MineShaft desires to incorporate the Woodbooger into their marketing efforts and to create a destination ride that includes Flag Rock and the High Knob area. He said designing a unique t-shirt for motorcycle enthusiasts for a specific riding destination is part of the overall experience for riders. Furthermore, Mr. Meade said the use of the Woodbooger image would allow the dealership to drive motorcyclist through Kentucky and Virginia and into Norton. He said the dealership wants to give back to the community by helping to generate revenue from the tourism industry. Mr. Meade said the t-shirt will include map information about the City of Norton and can only be purchased at the Pikeville dealership.

262490

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to approve MineShaft Harley-Davidson's request to use the "Woodbooger" Service Mark for the purpose of creating a motorcycle ride and to use the Woodbooger image on a promotional t-shirt.

Council was presented a Resolution Authorizing Application for an Environmental Protection Agency Brownfield Assessment Grant as a Co-Applicant.

Mr. Ramey said the Guest River Group has been working with the Upper Tennessee River Round Table (UTRRT) on improving the water quality of Guest River. This group brought the towns of Wise and Coeburn, Wise County, and the City of Norton together to file a joint application through the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Brownfield Area Wide Planning Grant Program to identify, assess and prepare redevelopment sites that may have incurred possible environmental contamination. Mr. Ramey said Town of Wise and Wise County have approved the resolution and the Town of Coeburn will consider approval at its next council meeting. He noted that Wise County will act as the fiscal agent should the grant be awarded.

262491

After a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to Authorize Application for an Environmental Protection Agency Brownfield Assessment Grant as a Co-Applicant. (Insert)

The next agenda item was an authorization to refund erroneously assessed 2017 Personal Property Taxes in the amount of \$164.64 to HVT, Inc., as Trustee for HLT.

Mr. Ramey said the Commissioner of Revenue has determined that a vehicle assessed for 2017 personal property taxes for HVT, Inc., is garaged in Tennessee, so a refund in the amount of the \$164.64 to HVT, Inc., is warranted under these circumstances.

262492

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council authorized a refund for erroneously assessed 2017 personal property taxes to HVT, Inc., as Trustee for HLT in the amount of \$164.64.

The City Manager said the AmeriCorps/National Civilian Conservation Corps Delta 5 Team (AmeriCorps/NCCC Delta 5 Team) that was redirected to Florida in September to assist with hurricane relief efforts has been dispatched back to Florida to work on a homeless veterans project. Mr. Ramey noted that the city likes to recognize the AmeriCorps volunteers at the end of their assignment, but the team will not be returning to the city to complete their work on the Flag Rock Recreation Area trail system. Mr. Ramey showed Council the team plaque to honor this year's team. Council gave total consensus and support for City Administration to send the team plaque and individual team member plaques to the AmeriCorps headquarters. Council wanted to make certain that the team and its members were recognized for their service to the City of Norton.

262493

In their packets, Council had one check and one transfer to confirm. The check was to Wise County, dated September 8, 2017, in the amount of \$229,623.01, to cover shared services with Wise County. The transfer was to Norton City Schools, dated September 28, 2017, in the amount of \$175,000.00, to cover September 2017 payroll expenditures.

262494

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 Wise County and the transfer to Norton City Schools as stated above.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, 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 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.

262495

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

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

262496

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.

262497

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

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Norton Industrial Development Authority to finish the unexpired term of William J. Sturgill to expire on May 10, 2020.

Councilman Caruso nominated Bryan R. Lewis to be appointed to the Norton Industrial Development Authority to complete the unexpired term of William J. Sturgill to expire on May 10, 2020.

262498

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved that the nominations cease.

Mayor Mays declared Bryan R. Lewis appointed to the Norton Industrial Development Authority to finish the unexpired term of William J. Sturgill to expire on May 10, 2020.

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

As Council knows, the city was voted the 2017 Top Adventure Town in the Blue Ridge Outdoors magazine and the city was featured on the cover and in the November edition of the magazine. A travel writer with Blue Ridge Outdoors magazine also visited the city and made a video about our community. The video has been viewed over 30,000 times in less than a week.

Mr. Ramey said he has been meeting with local hotel managers and they have had good discussions related to tourism in the area.

He said he would like to schedule a workshop with Council to discuss current projects before the holidays. Council was in agreement to meet at 2:00 p.m., Sunday, November 12th.

Mr. Ramey advised Council he would be attending a required Department of Housing and Community Development workshop related to the city's downtown revitalization from November 13th – 15th.

262499

He placed at each member's desk the latest reservoir report, October traffic counts for Route 619 and Flag Rock Recreation Area, and a copy of the Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours at Norris Built Fabrication and Machine Shop located on Kentucky Avenue.

Mr. Ramey said Friends of Southwest Virginia will hold a "Smores & More" social and High Knob update at the Flag Rock Shelters at 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 8th.

Boy Scout Troop 301 and the Veterans of Foreign Wars will be conducting a United States Flag Retirement Ceremony in Coeburn at 2:00 p.m., Saturday, November 11th.

The city Christmas parade will be held at 6:00 p.m., Sunday, December 3rd.

The City Attorney had no comments.

262500

In comments from Council:

Councilman Caruso asked Mr. Ramey if the Tourism Committee was invited to the Friends of Southwest Virginia event on November 8th.

Mr. Ramey advised the Tourism Committee was welcome to attend the event.

Councilman Caruso said he spoke with Mr. Wayne Sturgill, who is the father of Dr. Sturgill who purchased the 617 Park Avenue, S.W., property which has the Coca Cola sign. Mr. Sturgill said his son Dr. Sturgill is very interested in working with the City to repair the Coke sign.

Mr. Ramey said he has been trying to reach Dr. Sturgill to discuss the sign and he asked that Dr. Sturgill contact him.

Councilman Caruso said Dr. Sturgill is also interested in moving the parking spaces on Market Street behind his building from the south side of the street to the north side of the street, which is closer to the office buildings.

Mr. Ramey said he would be glad to talk with Mr. Sturgill and his son regarding their idea and he would encourage Council to go by and look at the request to move the parking spaces. He reminded Council that any request would ultimately go through the Highway Safety Committee.

262501

Councilman Caruso said there are several areas throughout the city where weeds need to be addressed by property owners, as well as abandoned vehicle parts on one lot. He said, if needed, he would like for the city to send a letter to the property owners asking them to address these issues because these locations are a very visual part of our city.

The City Manager said in order for City Administration to address the weed issue the city's ordinance reads that the property has to be an improved lot which would include a structure or an improvement, but he will look into the request.

Councilman Caruso said he shared the Route 619 and Flag Rock traffic counts with a Forest Service representative and Mr. Caruso requested that Mr. Ramey if he would share the city's traffic counts with the Forest Service each month.

Councilman Fultz said Council was invited to attend the Norton Elementary Civics class at 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, November 14th to answer students' questions about local government.

Councilman Fawbush said he has attended the past three years and plans on attending Tuesday.

262502

Councilman Fultz commended City Administration for their work on RIFA and said he believes regional cooperation is a key component for economic development for the region.



Councilwoman Belcher agreed that RIFA is a positive step in the right direction.

262503

Councilman Fawbush applauded Councilman Caruso and Mr. Ramey on the Blue Ridge Outdoor magazine video and encouraged Council to keep capitalizing on the positive aspects of our area.

262504



Mayor Mays had no comments.

262505

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Clerk of Council

