

The regular meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, April 1, 2003 at 7:30 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor Robert Raines presiding.

Present: Joseph Hunnicutt, Jack Wallace, Robert Raines, William Mays, and Joseph Fawbush

Also Present: E. W. Ward, City Manager and Bill Bradshaw, City Attorney

The invocation was given by Father Tim Drake and was followed by the pledge of allegiance, which was led by Assistant City Manager Fred Ramey.

Upon a motion by Jack Wallace, seconded by Joseph Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to approve the minutes of the March 18, 2003 meeting as presented.

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During the Mayor's call for visitors, Mr. Michael Jackson of 11th Street, off of Countiss Avenue, spoke to Council regarding a vacant house next door to him and owned by Gerry Henry, who now resides in Holland. The house is used by Phil Henry and looks like a junkyard. He presented Council with pictures of the house and also of vacant property with several junk vehicles on it. He had contacted the City previously on both of these complaints and said nothing had been done.

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Mayor Raines referred both items to the City Manager and advised Mr. Ward to get back with Mr. Jackson on these two items.

Dr. Terrance Suarez, President of Mountain Empire Community College, spoke briefly to Council, giving them an update on the college. He then advised Council that the College would be seeking appropriations from Council in the amount of \$3,910 as their regular appropriation, \$2,500 for the Small Business Center, and \$8,640 for the City's share of the Capital Maintenance Project, which is a new parking lot.

Dr. Suarez advised that he would be happy to answer any questions Council may have.

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Mayor Raines thanked Dr. Suarez for his presentation and advised that their appropriation requests would be included into the City's budget cycle.

Mr. Brad Stallard and Mr. Emmit Wampler of the Wise County/City of Norton Health Department were present at tonight's meeting to discuss two items with Council. The first of these items was an update on the West Nile Virus. The Health Department encourages Council to adopt an ordinance on mosquito control and he provided the City Manager with a sample ordinance.

The second item to be discussed with Council was rabies. He advised that a dead bat, which had rabies, was found in the Norton City Park. Mr. Stallard also advised that the Health Department encourages Council to adopt an ordinance on dogs and cats running at large and provided the City Manager with a sample ordinance.

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Following a question by Mayor Raines regarding the smallpox vaccination, Mr. Wampler advised that shots are being given to Health Department nurses and hospital

personnel, and that there had been no adverse reactions to the vaccine in the Lenowisco Health District.

Mr. Bobby Lane of Lane Engineering gave Council a brief update on the Water Line Replacement Project. He advised that the Park Avenue and West Main Avenue areas have been completed and that paving on East Park Avenue should start tomorrow.

The work on Kentucky Avenue should begin in about a week. About half of the pipe on Kentucky Avenue has been replaced.

The completion date on this project is currently May 30th and it should finish on schedule and on budget.

Mayor Raines thanked Mr. Lane for this update.

Council had been furnished a copy of a proposed ordinance to impose a cigarette tax in the City. Mr. Ward advised that, if Council so decides, the City will seek a five cents tax per pack on cigarettes. At present, no municipality in the County has adopted this ordinance; however, all towns are looking favorably at adoption.

If Council so desires, a public hearing and consideration of adoption could be done in early May with an effective date of July 1, 2003 and an enforcement date of August 1, 2003.

It was the consensus of Council to authorize the City Manager to move forward on this ordinance and to advertise a public hearing for the May 6, 2003 council meeting.

Council was presented with a copy of a proposed ordinance to increase the meals tax in the City to six percent from the current five percent. This could generate an estimated \$100,000 per year in revenues for the City.

Following a brief discussion, it was the consensus of Council to advertise a public hearing on this increase in the Meals Tax Ordinance at the May 6, 2003 meeting.

Council had furnished a copy of A Proclamation Declaring the Month of April as Keep America Beautiful Month in the City.

Upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous vote, Council authorized Mayor Raines to sign A Proclamation Declaring the Month of April as Keep America Beautiful Month in the City. (Insert)

Mr. Ward advised that Saturday, April 26, 2003 is Clean Up Day in the City and that the free pick up runs from April 18th to April 28th.

In their packets, Council had a copy of a check in the amount of \$132,293.68 made payable to R. S. Jones and Associates for approval.

Upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve a check in the amount of \$132,293.68 made payable to R. S. Jones and Associates for work on the Water Line Replacement Project.

Upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by Joseph Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to go into closed meeting to discuss personnel as per 2.2-3711 (A) (1) of the Code of Virginia, as amended.

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Mayor Raines declared Council in closed meeting.

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

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Mayor Raines 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 Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by William Mays, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Hunnicutt, Wallace, Mays, Fawbush, Raines, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert)

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Mayor Raines opened the floor for nominations to the Great Southwest Regional Group Home Commission for a four year term which will expire on April 1, 2007.

William Mays nominated Carlos Noaks be reappointed to this Commission.

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Upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by Joseph Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved that the nominations cease.

Mayor Raines declared Carlos Noaks reappointed to the Great Southwest Regional Group Home Commission for a four year term which will expire on April 1, 2007.

Mayor Raines opened the floor for nominations to the Southwest Virginia Regional Jail Authority for a two year term which expires on April 3, 2003.

Joseph Hunnicutt nominated Robert Raines be reappointed to this Authority.

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Upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved that the nominations cease.

Mayor Raines declared Robert Raines reappointed to the Southwest Virginia Regional Jail Authority for a two year term which will expire on April 3, 2005.

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

The School Board will present their budget and a public hearing will be held on the new Comprehensive Plan at the next council meeting.

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The Chamber of Commerce Gala will be held on Saturday, April 12th and the City has tickets if any members of Council wish to attend.

In comments from the City Attorney, Mr. Bradshaw advised that the General Assembly passed and the Governor had signed the Charter Amendment for the City that prevents any member running for City Council having to list any party affiliation.

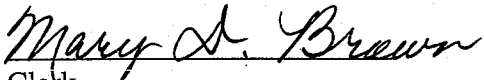
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There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA


B. Robert Raines, Mayor

ATTEST:


Clerk