

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, February 17, 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 Delores Belcher

Also Present: Fred L. Ramey, Jr., City Manager

Absent: Bill Bradshaw, City Attorney

The invocation was given by the City Manager and was followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Assistant Police Chief Joe Baird.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Delores Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the February 3, 2015 meeting as presented. 25416

There was no response to the Mayor's call for visitors. 25417

Due to the weather conditions, the representatives of the Pro-Art Association were not in attendance at tonight's meeting for a presentation on their activities. They will be in attendance at the March 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. 25418

Mr. Ramey advised Council that they could go ahead with the consideration of a 2014-2015 Local Government Challenge Grant Application in the amount of \$5,000 for the Pro-Art Association.

He advised Council that this is a matching grant and last year, the City appropriated \$4,500 instead of the regular amount of \$5,000. Mr. Ramey advised he would check and see, if permitted by the State and if the City can find matching funds in the amount of \$500, the grant would be for the full \$5,000 with \$4,500 going to Pro-Art and the remaining \$500 going toward City arts' activities. The deadline for submission of this application is April 1<sup>st</sup>. 25419

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to authorize the City Manager to apply for a 2014-2015 Local Government Challenge Grant in the amount of \$5,000.

In their packets, Council had a request from the Commissioner of Revenue to refund erroneously assessed 2014 personal property taxes in the amount of \$138.76 to Ms. Ruby Coffey, who resides in the county.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve a refund for erroneously 2014 personal property taxes to Ms. Ruby Coffey in the amount of \$138.76. 25420

Council had a request from the Commissioner of Revenue for a refund of 2014 real estate public service taxes in the amount of \$2,233.76 to Cellco Partnership dba Verizon Wireless due to an over assessment.

25421

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve a refund to Cellco Partnership dba Verizon Wireless in the amount of \$2,233.76.

The City Manager gave a PowerPoint presentation to update Council on the Phase III Water Improvement Project. Beginning with the history of the projects which began with a Water Improvement Study conducted in 2009 which proposed a three phased approach for funding purposes. Of these three phases, Phase I and Phase II are now completed and Phase III has had the construction contract signed. He then went over the timeline of Phase III, which began in 2012, and advised that the bond closing occurred on February 12, 2015. Areas included in this project are the intersection of 10<sup>th</sup> Street, upper 10<sup>th</sup> Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Street, parts of Virginia Avenue, The Terrace, Highland Avenue, part of Chestnut Street, City Hall area to 6<sup>th</sup> Street, and 7<sup>th</sup> Street to Park Avenue. Also a new service line that is currently under the railroad tracks will be rerouted away from the tracks and run to Kentucky Avenue.

25422

Citizens in the affected neighborhoods will experience some inconvenience; however, the City and the contractor will do as much as possible to limit the inconvenience to our citizens.

Following a brief discussion during which Mr. Ramey answered questions from Council, Mayor Mays thanked Mr. Ramey for this update.

Mr. Ramey advised Council that the dates for the annual Capital Improvement Project Meetings have been scheduled for March 7<sup>th</sup> and tentatively set for March 21<sup>st</sup> in Council Chambers. The City Administration hopes to have the information for these meetings out to Council members a week before each meeting. The time of the meetings needs to be determined.

25423

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, 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.

25424

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.

25425

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.

25426

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, 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)

Mayor Mays opened the floor for a nomination to the Norton Rescue Squad Board of Directors for a one year term to expire February 1, 2016.

Councilman Caruso nominated Todd Lagow to the Board.

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

25427

Mayor Mays declared Todd Lagow appointed to the Norton Rescue Squad Board of Directors for a one year term to expire February 1, 2016.

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

He had placed a copy of the most recent Retail Sales Tax Report at each desk.

Regarding the Memorandum of Understanding with the Southwest Virginia Climbing Coalition and the Access Fund that had been recently executed, he has provided Council members with a copy of their press release, the Access Fund Facebook Post, and their Membership Newsletter for review.

Council photos are tentatively scheduled for the beginning of our Capital Improvement Meeting which is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>.

He recently met with Bill and Nancy Jones, representatives of the Country Cabin and they had provided 2014 statistics that he shared with Council: These were:

- 2014 Attendance – 6,828 (10% increase over 2013)
- Dock Boggs Festival Attendance – 350+/-
- Hosted 3 bus tours of approximately 100 people
- Guests Attended from 26 states and 6 countries (Holland – 3, Israel – 1, England – 2, United Kingdom – 2, Canada – 1, and the Netherlands – 3.

25428

He provided Council members with an application for the Air Med (Wings Air Rescue) Membership Program that will be shared with City employees. He thought Council members would have an interest in this program also.

He recognized our Public Works Department, who has been working around the clock, during the snow fall this week.

The following comments were made by Council members:

Councilman Caruso stated that the current Sales Tax Report is down 2.29%.

He asked if letters had been sent out to the various organizations receiving discretionary funding from the City and appropriated in the budget and also to internal departments. Mr. Ramey advised this had been done and are due in February 18th. Both the Mayor and Councilman Caruso stated that, in their opinions in the future, if the letters are not received on time, then we should not provide funding.

He asked the status of the Board Appointment Application Letter and was advised by the City Manager that he is awaiting comments from City Council.

25429

Thanks were extended to the Climbing Coalition for their association with the City and asked that the City Manager forward this information provided tonight to the Tourism Committee.

Thanks was also extended to the Public Works, Police Department, Fire Department, and all others for the work being done during the inclement weather we are experiencing.

Councilman Fultz advised he would like to have additional application forms on the Air Med Membership Program and thought it was a great opportunity for our citizens. He further commended all fire, rescue, police, and public works departments for the work being done during this rough weather week.

25430

Councilman Fawbush commented, as a Council appointed member of the C-N-W Authority, that they have held a budget hearing meeting and plan to bring their employee benefits in line with those of the three participating municipalities.

25431

He reiterated the comments from fellow council members on giving thanks to the public service personnel for a very much appreciated job.

Councilwoman Belcher extended thanks to the public works and public service personnel for doing such a good job.

Mr. Ramey advised that we only have five pieces of snow removal equipment and there is only so much that can be done with snow and he appreciated the kind words for the public service employees and that he would share Council's sentiment with the employees.


25432

Mayor Mays echoed the remarks for the public service employees and advised Councilman Fawbush that he appreciated the job he is doing on the C-N-W Authority Board.

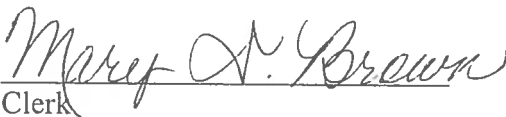
25433

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA

  
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William J. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Clerk