

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, February 21, 2017, at 6:00 p.m., in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

Present: Mark Caruso, William Mays, Joseph Fawbush, Robert Fultz, Jr., and Dee Belcher

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

At this time, Mayor Mays stated he would like City Council to consider amending the agenda to include under Item 7-G-1 a proposed partnership agreement between the Southwest Virginia Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) and the City's Department of Social Services.

26196

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to amend the agenda to include the proposed partnership agreement between the two entities.

The invocation was given by Boy Scout Troop 301 Life Scout Chaplain Dominic Sluss and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Boy Scout Troop 301. Troop 301 then recited the Scout's Oath and Law for Council.

26197

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the February 7, 2017, meeting as presented.

26198

There was no one present for the Audience for Visitors.

26199

A public hearing was held to solicit public input on local community development and housing needs in relation to Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for a project in the City.

Mr. Ramey explained Virginia's CDBG funds are administered through the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), and in 2017, DHCD will have multiple programs available for funding under the Competitive Grant. In order for the City to use Competitive Grant funding, the City will need to meet three national objectives and the project must be categorized under one of DHCD's five primary project types which include: Economic Development, Housing, Community Facilities, Community Service Facilities, and Comprehensive Community Development. The City's most recent use of CDBG funds was the \$1,000,000 Josephine Sewer project. However, the City has utilized this type of CDBG funding in the past for the Laurel Trails Subdivision, downtown revitalization, and other water and sewer projects in the City.

There were no comments from Council prior to the public hearing.

Mayor Mays opened the public hearing.

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

There were no comments from Council.

26200

Mr. Ramey advised the City will hold another public hearing in March to complete DHCD requirements and will name a project at that time to apply for potential CDBG funding.

Council had been given a copy of A Resolution in Support of the Thomas Jefferson International Dark Skies Park Designation.

Mr. Ramey noted that Mr. Jack Kennedy originally requested support for this park designation. He then said Boy Scout Troop 301 was in attendance and Eagle Scout Candidate Daniel Rose would explain Troop 301's involvement and his efforts to have Bark Camp Lake designated as a Dark Skies Park.

Eagle Scout Candidate Daniel Rose said he, along with Mr. Jack Kennedy and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Develop have been working to create an International Dark Skies Park designation at Bark Camp Lake. Mr. Rose stated the purpose of the project is to protect the dark skies in the Bark Camp Lake area and to promote astrotourism. He explained that most dark sky designations are in the western United States and the International Dark Skies Association (IDA) is headquartered in Arizona. As part of the requirements for acceptance into the IDA and to receive the Dark Skies Park designation, the project must meet several requirements and two of these are a letters of support and resolutions from area stakeholders.

26201

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt A Resolution in Support of the Thomas Jefferson International Dark Skies Park Designation. (Insert)

The City Manager advised that the City has received a request from Norton City Schools to consider a budget amendment for encumbrances of local carryover funds from the FY 2016 fiscal budget in the amount of \$2,654. Mr. Ramey explained this is a request that Council sees on an annual basis after the completion of the audit, and that Interim Superintendent Gina Wohlford was in attendance to answer any questions Council may have regarding the supplemental carryover request.

26202

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve the supplemental carryover of FY 2016 local funds from Norton City Schools in the amount of \$2,654.

In their packets, Council had been given a list of encumbrances as of June 30, 2016 for the General Operating Fund to be carried over in the 2016-2017 budget in the amount of \$97,171. Mr. Ramey advised that since the amount is over one percent of the budget he is seeking permission to advertise a public hearing to carry over this money.

26203

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, Council authorized the City Manager to advertise a public hearing to cover encumbrances in the amount of \$97,171.

Mr. Ramey advised the City has been working closely with Norton Rescue Squad since 2013 to ensure the viability of emergency services to Norton citizens. As a result of the relationship with the Norton Rescue Squad, an independent board was established to oversee the management of the organization and the City has been providing financial and accounting services as a result of the Memorandum of Understanding between the two

26204

entities. The City Administration is requesting additional funding in the amount of \$12,500 to keep Norton Rescue Squad moving forward and the money will only be transferred as a documented need arises.

At this time, Vice Mayor Fawbush took over the proceeding due to the Mayor's newly appointed position to the Norton Rescue Squad Board.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Belcher, NO – None, ABSENT – None, ABSTAIN – Caruso, Mays, Council approved a budget amendment for additional funding in the amount of \$12,500 from unappropriated reserves as needed.

At this time, Mayor Mays presided over the meeting again. Council packets contained a request from the Commissioner of Revenue to refund erroneously assessed 2016 real estate taxes to: Justin Leach, 311 Colony Court, in the amount of \$114.30.

Mayor Mays stated the Commissioner's refund submission to Council noted two different amounts and clarified that the correct refund amount is \$114.30 and not the erroneous \$144.30 as also noted on the submission.

26205

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council authorized a refund for erroneously assessed 2016 real estate taxes to: Justin Leach, 311 Colony Court, in the amount of \$114.30.

Council had been presented in their packets with A Resolution in Support of Working Collaboratively with the Counties of Wise, Lee, Scott, and Dickenson to Develop a Plan for Regional Economic Development Efforts.

Mr. Ramey said for the past two years the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission Board of Directors has been discussing the need to work regionally on larger economic development projects. In 2016, due to the efforts of LENOWISCO, administrators and economic developers from each of the member localities came together to discuss the possible interest of working together on regional projects. Afterwards, several towns and Dickenson County, who are outside the LENOWISCO Planning District, showed an interest in working together regionally and asked to participate in the meetings. Meetings have also included state and federal legislators, either in person or by staff representation, and all participants have indicated a desire to continue meeting to discuss working jointly on specific or multiple economic development projects throughout the region. Everyone involved in these meetings believes there is an immediate need to work cooperatively on a regional level which may provide more funding for projects and allow for potential assessment of revenue sharing between entities. The proposed resolution is to confirm that each legislative board is supportive of continued meetings and is receptive to potential projects from this group that will work collaboratively on regional economic development efforts. Each locality would have the option to be included or excluded from a potential project, and each project will require the approval of each governing board for that locality to participate in the project.

26206

After a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to adopt A Resolution in Support of Working Collaboratively with the Counties of Wise, Lee, Scott, and Dickenson to develop a plan for regional economic development efforts.

(Insert)

Council had one transfer to confirm. This transfer was to Norton City Schools, dated January 27, 2017, in the amount of \$100,000 to cover payroll expenditures.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to confirm the transfer to Norton City Schools as stated above.

26207

Mr. Ramey advised that City Administration has received a proposed partnership agreement between the Southwest Virginia Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC) and the City’s Department of Social Services. This type of agreement is required by many granting or oversight agencies and is similar to other agreements Council has approved previously. Mr. Ramey said Mr. Bradshaw has reviewed the document and recommends that City Council approve the agreement annually.

26208

After a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to authorize the City Manager to sign the agreement between the Southwest Virginia Children’s Advocacy Center and the Norton Department of Social Services.

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

26209

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.

26210

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.

26211

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert)

At this time, Mayor Mays asked if there was a motion on the floor,

Councilman Caruso made a motion to adopt a Resolution of Support for a Norton Industrial Development Authority Application to the Industrial Revitalization Fund (IRF) for Improvements to the Former Goad Property, 815 Park Avenue, S.W. for Improvements Connected to the City’s Downtown Revitalization Master Plan. In addition, the City Manager or Mayor is authorized to sign and submit any appropriate documents related to the submittal of the Industrial Revitalization Fund proposal. The motion was seconded by Councilman Fawbush, passed by unanimous vote, and Council adopted the Resolution of

26212

Support for a Norton Industrial Development Authority Application to the Industrial Revitalization Fund (IRF) for Improvements to the Former Goad Property for Improvements Connected to the City's Downtown Revitalization Master Plan. In addition, the City Manager or Mayor is authorized to sign and submit any appropriate documents related to the submittal of the Industrial Revitalization Fund proposal. (Insert)

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

Mr. Ramey reminded Council the Downtown Design Workshop Open House is scheduled for 5:30 p.m., tomorrow, in the City Council Chambers.

The latest Retail Sales Report had been placed at each member's desk.

Mr. Ramey gave Council a copy of the Norton County, Kansas, magazine that serves Norton County, Kansas, and the City of Norton, Kansas. He said the editor of the magazine contacted him over a year ago and wanted to compare two cities that share the same name as City of Norton, Kansas. Out of several cities across the country, the editor chose the City of Norton, Virginia, for the comparison to the City of Norton, Kansas. The article is on page 4 of the publication and the similarities between the two cities are interesting.

26213

The Capital Improvement Plan Work Session is scheduled for 8:00 a.m., Saturday, March 11, 2017, and the Budget Work Session is scheduled for 8:00 a.m., Saturday, April 1, 2017.

Mr. Ramey gave each Council member a Flag Rock Recreation Area vehicle window sticker and said he hopes one of the downtown businesses will begin selling the stickers.

In comments from Council:

Councilman Caruso thanked Jeff Shupe, Director of Finance, for the accounting work he performed to set up accounting system for the Norton Rescue Squad. Having a budget will allow the Norton Rescue Squad Board to make monetary projections in the future and his goal is to announce to Council that the Norton Rescue Squad is self-sufficient.

26214

Councilman Fultz said he is excited about the Downtown Design Workshop and the potential to revitalize downtown. Boy Scout Troop 301's attendance tonight caused him to realize 20 years forward that Council is building a future for the kids that were present at tonight's meeting. Thoughts of building the City for present and future generations to enjoy is rewarding.

26215

Councilwoman Belcher concurred with Councilman Fultz and said the number of kids involved with the scouts and learning to become good citizens gives her hope for a brighter future.

26216

She is looking forward to the Design Workshop Open House tomorrow and will be at the meeting as soon as the Planning District One meeting adjourned.

Councilman Fawbush concurred with each Council Member's comments and said the Design Workshop brings citizens together to include everyone's opinion about the direction of the City and generates a positive outlook. He said he believes the City does

26217



have a bright future and he hopes the workshop is well attended. He said the City has a great administration and he appreciates all their hard work including all the weekend and evening hours working to toward building a brighter future for the City of Norton.


He announced the City's second floor conference room is reserved for 4:30 p.m., Thursday, February 23, 2017, for a Woodbooger meeting to discuss the Woodbooger event in the fall. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Mayor Mays remarked that he will be late for the Design Workshop meeting and he is looking forward to the meeting.


He said he concurs with Council on their thoughts of Boy Scout Troop 301 and what he saw at tonight's meeting was future leaders.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
William Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rebecca K. Coffey, Clerk of Council

26218