

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held Tuesday, May 15, 2018, at 6:00 p.m., in the Municipal Council Chambers with Vice Mayor Joseph Fawbush presiding.

Present: Mark Caruso, Robert Fultz, Jr., Joseph Fawbush, and Delores Belcher

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

Absent: William Mays

The invocation was given by Pastor Freddie Powers and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Police Chief James Lane.

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the May 1, 2018, meeting as presented.

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

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A public hearing was held on the proposed 2018-2019 Norton City Schools budget. The total operational budget is \$9,092,975, of which, \$2,491,515 is local funding and includes \$1,655,643 for operations, \$813,765 for debt, and \$22,107 for the Textbook fund.

Superintendent Gina Wohlford, Supervisor of Finance Jacqueline Brooke, School Board Chairwoman Sherry Adams, and Vice Chairman Mark Leonard were present representing the School Board.

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Vice Mayor Fawbush noted the public hearing had been duly advertised and then opened the public hearing.

There being no public comments, Vice Mayor Fawbush closed the public hearing.

After a brief discussion, Vice Mayor Fawbush thanked Dr. Wohlford for answering council's questions.

Prior to presenting council with a PowerPoint presentation on the recent celebration of the Wise Branch Library's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Lonesome Pine Regional Library Director Amy Bond took a moment to remember Norton's library board representative Lann Malesky. Ms. Bond said Mr. Malesky was a passionate advocate for library services for Norton residents and was a committed representative of Norton on the library board.

Ms. Bond stated the library began its 60<sup>th</sup> celebration of the Wise Branch by showing a vintage film that featured the creation of the Wise County Public Library in its original building on Norton-Wise Road. She said Norton Elementary and Middle School (NEMS) choir, led by music teacher Ms. Gabriella Barnette was the highlight of the program.

Ms. Bond discussed the many events the library conducts each year in the city and said she hopes council can continue to fund library services at the current level.

Ms. Ginnie Stokes and Ms. Lynn Smith, representatives of the Friends of the Library, spoke in support of the library stating it serves the entire community and they understand the hard budget decisions council has to make. They said they are grateful to council for

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continued funding and they asked council to consider the vital services the library provides Norton citizens when deliberating the current budget.

Council had been presented a PowerPoint presentation on the city's proposed 2018-2019 Budget. Mr. Ramey advised council had provided guidance with portions of the budget and that city administration had to make some assumptions using the governor's proposed budget and the school's request for level funding.

Mr. Ramey shared historical revenue trends, the impact of annual inflationary cost on the budget, uncontrollable external impacts, and debt service analysis. Mr. Ramey said the proposed FY19 Budget includes no proposed revenue enhancements, the Enterprise Fund includes a 75 cent increase to the Base Water Rate for both inside and outside city customers, and level funding for Social Services. The City's Proposed General Operating Fund Budget totals \$9,669,460, which represents an increase of \$51,884. The budget includes an increase in salaries and fringe benefits and a two percent cost of living (COLA) increase for non-state supported positions. The Proposed Enterprise Fund totals \$3,207,904 and shows an increase of \$75,654. This net budget increase is due to a decrease in billable water consumption, the current debt schedule, and salary and benefit savings. A 75 cent increase in the base water rate is included in the proposed budget in an effort to make the Enterprise Fund more self-sufficient. Norton Social Services Budget totals \$1,386,620 and the city's appropriation will remain level at \$345,877. Mr. Ramey said city administration is requesting authorization to advertise a public hearing on the Proposed Fiscal 2018-2019 Budget.

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Early in Mr. Ramey's budget presentation, Mayor Mays entered Council Chambers and took his seat on council.

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Mayor Mays thanked the city manager and the city's director of finance for their work to present a balanced budget.

After comments and questions from council regarding needed capital projects, Councilman Fawbush motioned to authorize the city manager to advertise a public hearing on the FY 2018-2019 Budget as presented, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, 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 consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel as per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (8) of the Code of Virginia as amended.

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Mayor Mays declared council in closed meeting.

After attending the closed session, the city attorney left.

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

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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.

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

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to Kids Central (Head Start) for a three-year term to expire May 31, 2021.

Councilwoman Belcher nominated Scott Addison to be appointed to Kids Central (Head Start) for a three-year term to expire May 31, 2021.

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

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Mayor Mays declared Scott Addison appointed to Kids Central (Head Start) for a three-year term to expire May 31, 2021.

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Norton Industrial Development Authority (NIDA) to fill the unexpired term of Glenn Teasley whose term expires May 10, 2021.

Councilman Fawbush nominated Roger Sloce to be appointed to NIDA to fill an unexpired term which expires May 10, 2021.

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

Mayor Mays declared Roger Sloce appointed to the Norton Industrial Development Authority (NIDA) to fill the unexpired term of Glenn Teasley whose term expires May 10, 2021.

In comments from the City Manager:

Mr. Ramey reported that Mr. Bradshaw conducted a property tax sale Monday, May 14<sup>th</sup> and the city will receive approximately \$6,000 as a result of the sale.

Paving for FY18 began last week on Kentucky Avenue near the city's former sewer plant. Also, City Administration hopes to mill, pave, and stamp the crosswalk at the 5<sup>th</sup> Street and Park Avenue intersection. Mr. Ramey said city administration wants to see how this experimental process works before committing to stamp the other crosswalks downtown.

Mr. Ramey reminded members that in November 2017, council authorized the mayor to sign a Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) Grant agreement after the city's attorney had reviewed the document. Mr. Ramey said Mr. Bradshaw has completed that process and the agreement is ready for the mayor's signature. Mr. Ramey passed the agreement to the mayor for signing.

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Mr. Ramey handed out an invitation for the Chamber of Commerce Business Appreciation Luncheon scheduled for Noon, May 23, 2018, at the University of Virginia's College at Wise.

He said he has provided council with the May Retail Sales Tax Report and the Activity Calendar for the months of May and June.

The following comments were made by council members:

Councilman Caruso said he hopes the city can replace the roof on the Community Center this year.

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Councilman Fultz asked if city administration had an estimated cost of replacing the roof on the Community Center.

Mr. Ramey said an older estimate projected the cost to replace the roof on the community center to be in the \$30,000 to \$40,000 range.

Councilman Fultz asked about the possibility of raising the required \$25,000 matching funds for the school's safety enhancement grant instead of the required match being funded entirely by the city.

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Mr. Ramey said the matching fund requirement depends upon the granting agency.

Councilman Fultz said John I. Burton High School graduation is at 7:00 p.m., Friday, May 18<sup>th</sup> in the Richard Stan Wilson Gymnasium.

Councilwoman Belcher said she appreciates city administration's work on the budget and she sees positive momentum in the city from when she first began on council.

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Councilwoman Belcher said she appreciates council's ability to work together to accomplish the city's business, and stated other boards need to commit to working together to achieve the same goal.

Councilman Fawbush agreed with Councilwoman Belcher on council's capacity to work together and that city administration keeps council well informed on the budget.

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Councilman Fawbush said he would not be able to attend the 2018 Southwest Virginia Economic Forum beginning Thursday at the Convocation Center located on the University of Virginia's College at Wise but he plans to attend the Chancellor's dinner.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA

  
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William Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Clerk of Council