

The regular meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, November 19, 2002 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers with Mayor Robert Raines presiding.

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

Absent: Joseph Hunnicutt

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 City of Norton Police Chief Sam Mongle.

At this time, Mayor Raines, on behalf of Council, presented to the City Manager a matted and framed print of our national motto, "In God We Trust," to be posted in a prominent location where it can be seen by everyone.

Mr. Ward thanked Council for this presentation to the City.

Upon a motion by Jack Wallace, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the October 15, 2002 meeting as presented.

20314

A public hearing was held on the consideration of a Utility Easement for the purpose of installing and maintaining a new water line.

Mr. Ward advised that this hearing is being held for the purpose of a temporary construction easement and a permanent utility easement on City property. The easement will be 20 feet in width and the centerline shall be the location of the proposed new water line and is located on Park Avenue, N. E. in the vicinity of the Community Center. The lender for this project, Rural Development, is requiring the City to obtain easements.

20315

The City Attorney also spoke briefly to Council on this easement.

Mayor Raines opened the public hearing.

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

Both the City Manager and City Attorney answered questions from Council.

Upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to authorize the signing of this easement for the purpose of the installation of a water line in the area of East Park Avenue. (Insert)

Council had a request from the Norton City Schools for a budget amendment to the 2002-2003 budget in the amount of \$21,249.51.

Dr. John Sessoms, Superintendent of Norton City Schools, was present and spoke briefly to Council advising them that this amount comes from E-Rate funds and was not included in budget.

20316

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve a budget amendment to the 2002-2003 Norton City Schools budget in the amount of \$21,249.51.

The City Manager advised Council that as of today we have a total reservoir capacity of 91.45 million gallons. He further advised Council that early in November, the City had stopped purchasing water from the Wise County Public Service Authority and that through the October billing cycle, the City has purchased a total of \$169,810.75 in water from the PSA.

The Water Line Replacement Project has begun and work is in process on West Main Avenue and East Park Avenue. R. S. Jones, Contractor, has two crews working on this project.

The Big Stone Gap Interconnect Project is tied in with the Big Cherry Dam Project and is currently on hold.

The City will be hiring an engineering firm to conduct our dam inspections, which are held every two years. The inspection report is due by December 15th. The City will, in all probability, again obtain a Conditional Permit to operate its reservoirs. Mr. Ward discussed briefly with Council other problems at the reservoirs and advised them that they will be discussed during the Capital Improvement Meeting in the spring.

Mayor Raines asked that our citizens be patient with any unavoidable delays during the installation of these new water lines.

Council had been presented with a copy of the audit for the Norton Industrial Development Authority for the year ended June 30, 2002. The audit had been prepared by Thrower, Livesay, and Blanton and has been given a clean opinion. Mr. Ward attributes this greatly to Mr. Robert Leonard, Treasurer of the NIDA.

Mr. Ward advised that the \$800,000 loan NIDA obtained in the early 1990's has been paid down to \$350,000 and the \$280,000 loan made for Phase II of the Hotel Norton Project will be paid back over a ten year period.

Following a brief discussion on this audit, Mr. Ward advised he would be willing to answer any questions Council may have on this audit.

Mayor Raines thanked Mr. Ward for this presentation.

Council had been presented with A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Norton, Virginia Authorizing Continued Participation in the Commonwealth of Virginia Set-Off Debt Program.

Mr. Ward advised that this was merely a housekeeping item to change the name from the past treasurer to that of our new treasurer, Barbara Muir.

Upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by the following unanimous vote, YES – Wallace, Mays, Fawbush, Raines, NO – None, ABSENT – Hunnicutt, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Norton, Virginia Authorizing Continued Participation in the Commonwealth of Virginia Set-Off Debt Program. (Insert)

A check made payable to the Norton City Schools in the amount of \$210,000 was submitted to Council for approval.

Upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve a check in the amount of \$210,000 made payable to the Norton City Schools.

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20319

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Upon a motion by Jack Wallace, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, 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.

20321

Mayor Raines declared Council in closed meeting.

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

20322

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

20323

Mayor Raines advised that there was no action from Council from the closed session.

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

Having had our first election in November, Council needs to schedule an organizational meeting to be held in January prior to the first meeting, which will be January 7, 2003. Following a brief discussion, it was the consensus of Council to hold this organizational meeting at 7:00 p.m. on January 7, 2003, just prior to the first council meeting.

20324

The City Audit for the year ended 6/30/02 will be presented at our next Council meeting.

The City offices will be closed Thursday and Friday, November 28th and 29th in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday.

There were no comments from the City Attorney.


20325

Mayor Raines advised that the annual Christmas Parade will be held on December 7th with the tree lighting to be held in the lobby of the Hotel Norton.

20326

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA


B. Robert Raines, Mayor

ATTEST:


Mary D. Brown Clerk