

**10 Robertson St.
Virginia**

**The "New River" City
February 22, 2016**

Radford,

Regular Meeting Number 12 of Radford City Council, F.Y. 2015-2016

The regular meeting of the Radford City Council was convened at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 10 Robertson Street, Radford, VA. The Mayor of the City, Dr. Bruce Brown, was present and presiding. Other members of City Council present were Mr. Daniel Keith Marshall, Mr. Robert Nicholson and Mr. David Michael Turk.

Others present were as follows:

Mr. David Ridpath, City Manager
Ms. Melissa Skelton, City Clerk
Mrs. Gail Cook DeVilbiss, City Attorney

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Mayor Brown, and a moment of silence was led by Mayor Brown.

MINUTE APPROVALS: On a motion by Mr. Nicholson seconded by Mr. Marshall, that the minutes for February 8, 2016 are approved as presented.

VOTE:

AYES: Mr. Marshall, Mr. Nicholson, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown
NAYES: None-0

REPORT

SUBJECT: Radford Transit

SUMMARY: The Radford Transit system is a collaborative partnership between the Federal Transit Administration, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Radford University and the City of Radford to provide comprehensive bus passenger service throughout Radford and destinations within the New River Valley. The system has reflected steady growth since 2012. The city contracts with the New River Valley Community Services to operate the 12 bus, 6 route system.

Brian Booth, Transportation Manager for NRVCS, presented an overview of the transit systems, ridership, along with the F.Y. 2017 goals.

Mayor Brown asked about advertising on the buses.

Brian Booth responded that they are working on getting advertisements on the bus.

Mayor Brown asked if they still meet with the University on an annual basis.

Mr. Booth responded they have a monthly subgroup meeting that includes both the City and University.

Mayor Brown asked if he felt optimistic about the State and Federal funding continuing.

Mr. Booth responded he feels they are steady and his understanding from their constituents at DRPT in Richmond that they will continue to receive funding.

Mr. Ridpath added, now that they are a part of the MPO, there were concerns that the City's funding would be reduced, but we actually received more than anticipated.

Mr. Turk asked how much the low gas prices will affect their budget this year.

Mr. Booth said it will help significantly.

Mr. Nicholson mentioned there has been discussion to look at the route design and the need to add routes or discontinue route and if this is something they look at.

Mr. Booth responded that they always monitor the ridership in each area and adjust the service so it fits the need in each area.

Mayor Brown shared in the past he mentioned he advocated forming a citizen advisory committee because they hear from citizens, if the transit had routes into the neighborhoods, there would be more local ridership. The more they can do with their public information offices to keep the public aware that the transit is fulfilling a need

Mr. Nicholson said he has talk with different people also, some who are riding because of physical need, or an economical need and it is nice to know we have the system out there and it is accommodating and people are able to connect not only within our community but with other area transit systems.

CITIZENS COMMENTS:

None

NEW BUSINESS

SUBJECT: Appropriation Ordinance # 1673.21: \$158,896 Extreme Recruiting Grant – Radford DSS

SUMMARY: The Department of Social Services has been selected to receive a grant to assist with child adoption services. The “Extreme Recruiting Grant”, developed by the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition, focuses on intensive recruitment for permanent placement for youth who have parental rights terminated, have been in the system a long time for an adoptive family, or are at risk of aging out of the foster care system.

Vicky Collins, Radford DSS director, shared they were very excited to receive this grant. She introduced Melissa Almond, supervisor, who oversees the adoptions through their agency. Ms. Collins shared that the agency has been able to find 19 permanents homes for children in the last 2 ½ years. She said that they will be the first public agency in Virginia to administer this program and since Mrs. Almond and her team has been so successful that state will be looking at them as a model as to how to roll it out to other agencies across the state.

Mayor Brown asked where the money actually goes, is it to the adopted families.

Ms. Collins responded that the money will be used to hire a team, whose sole purpose is find a permanent homes for the children.

Mr. Marshall said last time came did an extensive report on what was going on in the city and he remembers her letting them know how difficult it was keeping up with staffing with the growing needs in the City and was wondering with this new program if she was going to have the staff to handle the extra load.

Ms. Collins responded we will have a couple extra staff that the grant pays for, as well as Mrs. Almond and herself taking on extra duties, but also will see this team as being effective and it shrinks our case load and it makes it a little easier for existing staff to manage their case load.

Mr. Marshall asked if she knew why the City's poverty rate is above the state average of 11.5 %, and what we should be doing to turn it around.

Ms. Collins responded that poverty is a complex issue and there are a number of factors that effect this including the number of single parent families is higher than the state average. She shared there is an focus initiative taking place in another localities that is focusing those portions of the communities that are utilizing most of the resources and really looking at what is happening and how to help them get out of poverty. This initiative needs the support of the community at all levels.

Mr. Marshall stated we could use some guidance and help with this area.

Mr. Nicholson added that this type of initiative is a public/private partnership that all work together to look at what should be done to help uplift these individuals.

Ms. Collins agreed and said that New River Community College has been a great partnership and being a part of the solution.

Mr. Nicholson shared his appreciation of the staff at Social Services.

Mayor Brown said there are two things that would like to have City Staff work with them to look at is housing and the increasing population that have needs for their services.

ACTION: Mr. Nicholson made a motion to approve Appropriation Ordinance #1673.21 on its first reading, Mr. Marshall seconded the motion.

VOTE:

AYES: Mr. Marshall, Mr. Nicholson, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES: None-0

ACTION: Mr. Nicholson made a motion to approve Appropriation Ordinance #1673.21 on its second and final reading, Mr. Marshall seconded the motion.

VOTE:

AYES: Mr. Marshall, Mr. Nicholson, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES: None-0

CITY MANAGERS COMMENTS:

Mr. Ridpath stated that we have been through 2 snow storms now and have done well with gas prices being low. The extremely wet ground is causing significant road problems, we are getting a lot of potholes. The crews began patching them today.

CITY ATTORNEYS COMMENTS: None

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Mr. Marshall asked if all the Planning Commission, IDA, and Recreation meetings are open for the public, along with the minutes and notes.

Mrs. DeVilbiss responded that they were unless they had a closed meeting.

Mr. Marshall made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 p.m., seconded by Mr. Turk.

VOTE:

AYES: Mr. Marshall, Mr. Nicholson, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES: None-0

ATTEST:

Melissa A. Skelton, City Clerk of Council