

June 2, 2020

A Regular Work Session of the Danville City Council convened on June 2, 2020 at 7:45 p.m. in the Council Chambers located on the Fourth Floor of the Municipal Building. Council Members present were: James B. Buckner, L.G. "Larry" Campbell Jr., Mayor Alonzo L. Jones, Dr. Gary P. Miller, Sherman M. Saunders, Fred O. Shanks, III, Adam J. Tomer, and Vice Mayor J. Lee Vogler, Jr., (8). Madison J.R. Whittle was absent. (1). Council Members attended the meeting electronically on Zoom.

Staff Members present were: City Manager Ken Larking, Deputy City Manager Earl B. Reynolds, Jr., City Attorney W. Clarke Whitfield Jr., and City Clerk Susan M. DeMasi. Staff members attended the meeting electronically on Zoom.

Mayor Jones presided.

MINUTES

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Campbell and **second** by Council Member Buckner, Minutes of the Special Work Session held on May 12, 2020 were approved as presented. Draft copies were distributed to Council Members prior to the Meeting.

WORK SESSION ITEMS

CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Vice Mayor Vogler noted following a meeting of the Committee on Appointments, the Committee makes the following recommendations:

Airport Commission:	Appoint:	Robert Jiranek
	Reappoint:	Stephen Daniel
Danville Community College Board	Appoint:	Toshia Fitzgerald
Danville CPMT	Reappoint:	Tammy Warren and Demetrius Crews
Danville Pittsylvania CSB	Reappoint:	Rufus Fuller
Danville Utility Commission	Reappoint:	Helm Dobbins and Vanessa Cain
Social Services Advisory Board	Reappoint:	Kathy Andrews and Clarice Coleman

Council Members agreed to put the Appointments on an upcoming business agenda.

CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING THE PERSONNEL SYSTEM OF THE CITY OF DANVILLE

Director of Human Resources Sara Weller noted staff has to bring the Personnel System to Council annually. The Personnel regulations had very minimal changes and the biggest were for the pay system. The City had a pay study done with market analysis and staff was prepared to implement the new plan. Ms. Weller noted they were not submitting individual job descriptions this year; it has been done in the past but as a part of the study, they were being updated and

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was taking longer to do. The Ordinance, as written notes, if Council passes the Pay Plan they were also recognizing the job descriptions for each position will be completed and provided.

Council Member Shanks asked Ms. Weller to explain the localities that were used to compare and help set the range of wages for various job descriptions. Ms. Weller explained they used localities that were similar to Danville in size, and localities that the City tends to lose their employees to; localities that give Danville retention issues. For this specific study, Danville used sixteen localities for the general survey and they had seven specialty surveys that were for IT, Utilities and specialty areas they were able to get information for. Ms. Weller noted they used Bedford County, Blacksburg, Charlottesville, Christiansburg, Danville City Schools, Harrisonburg, Henry County, Lynchburg, Martinsville, Pittsylvania County, Pittsylvania County Schools, Roanoke and Roanoke County. Ms. Weller explained they also have a statewide compensation survey that all localities participate in, and they used that for some positions as well.

Vice Mayor Vogler questioned what the estimated increase in costs were to the City to implement this and Ms. Weller stated to move everyone who is below minimum of their new grade, the cost for that was about \$1.4M; \$480,000 of that was in the General Fund. Mr. Vogler asked what their comfort level in doing this was because of the pandemic, they don't know how it will impact the budget and revenues. City Manager Ken Larking explained the City was taking a number of measures to curb spending and they have other emergency revenue sources to use to bridge the gap for temporary measures, including the Budget Stabilization Fund which has \$3M in it. Staff was taking other active measures related to cost control, looking at that potential as a revenue source, and feels confident the City will be able to handle this increase; it was spread across several funds. Mr. Larking noted if the City has studied the market for a position, they should pay at least the minimum for that market for these employees. His priority, hopefully, was that the City can do that first. If the City has to curb spending with regard to salaries citywide, they will consider, in addition to hiring freezes, also delaying the implementation of the Pay for Performance system which was budgeted at an average of 2%. That could be delayed until the City has a little more clarity on how things were going with regard to the budget and revenue.

Dr. Miller noted it was very hard for the public sector to compete against the private sector with salaries and benefits and very much respects people who go into public service. At the very least, the City has to be competitive against the other public entities; if the City was not competitive there, they don't have a chance to get good, and retain good, personnel. This was something that was mandatory for the City to do. Mr. Saunders noted his agreement with Dr. Miller in terms of making sure the City employees were properly compensated. Mr. Saunders stated he hoped it was not the bare minimum, bringing them up to where they ought to be, but he was also concerned about competition. Mr. Saunders asked Mr. Larking if they were taking into account, in the future, the City may have to pay a little more than minimum wage to be competitive, to keep the City's services at the highest level and make sure the City was doing what it needed to do.

Mr. Larking noted the Council has funded, since the last pay plan, annual pay for performance increases for all employees. If they were performing as they should, they were eligible for at least an average of 2%; that sometimes ranges from a little less than 2% to 4 or 5% depending on the budget and the evaluations overall. Because that has happened every year, people who work for the City were able to move up through the ranges so they were not paid the minimum; as they gain experience and have done a good job, they get compensated for it. In addition to that, they do have some positions they have to hire, not at the minimum but within the range, in order to make sure they get the right candidate for the job. There were a lot of key positions they want to make sure they have the right people in place. Sometimes they come to the City with a lot of experience, which was a huge benefit to the City and they want to make sure they are fairly

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compensated for that. Mr. Saunders noted he was in favor of this, and Mayor Jones noted his agreement with Mr. Saunders; Mr. Larking and Ms. Weller have done a great job taking care of the employees.

Council agreed to put this on an upcoming business agenda.

CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF EDEN FOR WATER AND WASTEWATER SERVICES FOR BERRY HILL

Director of Utilities Jason Grey was present to answer questions by Council. Council Member Buckner noted he thought this was a great opportunity for the City to partner with the City of Eden, provide water to the Mega Park site and asked Mr. Grey to elaborate on that. Mr. Grey explained the Berry Hill Park was designed to be able to provide up to 7M gallons per day of water. Six million gallons of that was designed to come from the City of Eden. Eden had a robust water system infrastructure, they were a little closer than the City and elevation-wise they were better suited to be able to provide the mass quantity of water to the park. They have a robust wastewater infrastructure as well; it works out well to partner with them. Mr. Buckner stated he had reservations in the beginning and could not understand why Eden had such a robust water supply and he was reminded of their losing Miller Brewing a few years ago which used a tremendous amount of water and wastewater; he believes they will be well suited to provide everything that was needed out there.

Council agreed to put this on an upcoming agenda.

CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING THE DANVILLE CITY CODE DESIGNATING SEATS UNDER THE CARRINGTON PAVILION AS A NO SMOKING AREA

Director of Parks & Recreation Bill Sgrinia was present to answer any questions; there were no questions and Council agreed to put this on an upcoming agenda.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Interim Director of Economic Development Corrie Bobe noted she had one update and reminded everyone next week would be Business Appreciation Week. Given social distancing restrictions, they will be doing it a little different this year, but wanted to point out two items that will take place next week. The *Star Tribune* and the *Danville Register & Bee* will have a full page ad; at the bottom of the ad, there will be a sign for Business Appreciation Week to help “#Share the Love.” They encourage everyone to cut the bottom portion of that ad out and place it in their window to show their support and encouragement for businesses as they begin to reopen. Also, for the first time, they will be encouraging people to nominate a person or business that has really stepped up to help the community during the COVID pandemic. Beginning on Monday, people can go on their Facebook page, submit that person or business, tell their story as to why they were special and how they helped the community. On Friday of next week, they will share that with the public.

CLOSED MEETING

At 8:06 p.m., Vice Mayor Vogler **moved** that this meeting of the City Council of the City of Danville, Virginia be recessed and that Council immediately reconvene in a Closed Meeting for the following purposes: an Economic Development discussion and update concerning the prospective business or industry where no previous announcement has been made and/or the

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expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made as permitted by Subsection (A)(5) of Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended and more specifically to consider the relocation of local business in Danville and the discussion about unannounced projects considering locating in the Danville area.

The Motion was **seconded** by Council Member Saunders and carried by the following vote:

VOTE: 8-0-1
AYE: Buckner, Campbell, Jones, Miller, Saunders,
Shanks, Tomer, and Vogler (8)
NAY: None
ABSENT: Whittle (1)

Upon unanimous vote at 8:15 p.m., Council reconvened in open session and Vice Mayor Vogler **moved** for adoption of the following Resolution:

CERTIFICATE OF CLOSED MEETING

WHEREAS, the Council convened in Closed Meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.1-344.1 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, requires a Certification by the Council that such Closed Meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council hereby certifies that, to the best of each Member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements of Virginia Law under Section 2.2-3711 were heard, discussed or considered, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the Motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered by the Committee.

The Motion was **seconded** by Council Member Shanks and carried by the following vote:

VOTE: 8-0-1
AYE: Buckner, Campbell, Jones, Miller, Saunders,
Shanks, Tomer, and Vogler (8)
NAY: None
ABSENT: Whittle (1)

Mr. Saunders noted Danville has continued to be very successful in economic development, bringing jobs to the City, working within the region to include Pittsylvania County as well as Eden, North Carolina and asked if there were measures in place to keep the staff safe during these pandemic times. Mr. Larking stated several weeks ago when this first began, the City implemented a travel freeze for all employees; right now no City employee was allowed to travel without certain special exemptions in place. As the City moves through other phases, and the Governor will implement Phase 2 Friday, there were some recommendations and requirements for travel at that point and they will evaluate that to see whether or not it makes sense to reopen travel for the employees. There was not a lot of opportunity to travel, a lot of those opportunities have been cancelled or switched to a webinar situation. When it gets to the point where travel resumes, they will implement all appropriate safety protocols as recommended by OSHA; it will be vetted through the Human Resources department to make sure they are doing everything

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properly. Those requirements will be given to the employees when they travel and they will be expected to follow those recommendations.

Mayor Jones noted Galileo had an outstanding graduation last week, and George Washington High School was doing their graduation, they started Monday and Tuesday and were completing their graduation on Wednesday. To all the graduates in the City and County, this has been an unprecedented time for the young people, and to all the family members of the young people, congratulations on their graduates.

Reverend Campbell asked Mr. Larking with the uneasiness in the nation, does he feel that there were more ways they can relate to the community, hot lines or other preventive measures or does he feel there was a need for an additional outlet. Mr. Larking noted he thought it was important for them to listen to the community and find out what their concerns were. He thinks they will have a good opportunity to do that. One of the opportunities they have going forward, as the City residents and the voters consider whether or not to adopt the referendum for casino gaming, was what to do with those revenues that the City will be receiving. This new revenue source provides a chance for the City to help the community in a number of ways, and one of those was to invest in the neighborhoods, in local and small businesses and invest in the people so they can find opportunities for themselves going forward. A planning process would be good to implement where the City actually asks the public what they think on how to use the new source of revenue and what do they think would be a good way to reinvest in their neighborhoods, in themselves, in these businesses so they can build a sustainable future for all parts of the community.

There being no further discussion, Council Member Saunders **moved** to adjourn, the Motion was **seconded** by Council Member Buckner and carried by unanimous voice vote.

ADJOURNED: 8:33 P.M.

APPROVED:

s/Alonzo L. Jones
MAYOR

ATTEST:

s/Susan M. DeMasi, CMC
CITY CLERK