

June 18, 2019

The Second Regular June meeting of the Danville City Council was held on June 18, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers located on the Fourth Floor of the Municipal Building. The following Council Members were present: 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, Vice Mayor J. Lee Vogler, Jr., and Madison J.R. Whittle (9). *Mr. Whittle entered the meeting at 7:04 p.m.*

Staff Members present were: Deputy City Manager Earl B. Reynolds, Jr., City Attorney W. Clarke Whitfield Jr., and City Clerk Susan M. DeMasi. City Manager Ken F. Larking was absent.

Mayor Jones presided.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Invocation was given by Sherman M. Saunders, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM VISITORS

Mayor Jones recognized Qonell Totten who informed Council and citizens of the Rock Da Block event on June 29, 2019 at Pumpkin Creek on Taylor Drive, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Mr. Totten invited Council Members and citizens to attend.

CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Saunders **moved** for adoption of the Consent Agenda:

Approval of Minutes from Regular Council Meeting held on May 21, 2019; draft copies had been distributed prior to the meeting.

Amending the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Appropriation Ordinance to Provide for a Retiree Bonus

An Ordinance Entitled, Ordinance No. 2019-06.08, Presented by its First Reading on June 4, 2019, Amending the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Appropriation Ordinance to Provide for a Retiree Bonus to be Paid from Various Funds' Unassigned Balance in an Amount not to Exceed \$275,000 and Appropriating the Same.

The Motion was **seconded** by Council Member Buckner 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)

OLD BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF THE BUDGET OF THE CITY OF DANVILLE, THE CSP AND BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE

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Approving the Budgets of the Various Funds of the City of Danville for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2020

Upon **Motion** by Vice Mayor Vogler and **second** by Council Member Buckner, a Resolution entitled, Resolution No. 2019-06.22, Presented by its First Reading on June 4, 2019, Approving the Budgets of the Various Funds of the City of Danville for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2020, was presented for Final Adoption.

Vice Mayor Vogler noted this year's budget was a collaborative effort between the City Manager, staff and City Council. There were significant things accomplished including the adoption of a paid parental leave policy for City employees; that was something he and Council Member Tomer felt was long overdue. The City will now offer paid maternity leave for mothers, paid bonding time for new fathers as well as paid adoption and foster care placement leave, and Council has added paid time off for those who are taking care of a sick parent. These policies will help the City recruit and retain the best employees. Council also took steps to ensure Danville Public Schools has the funding it needs to fill classrooms with top notch teachers by providing them with better salaries. They also took steps to improve public safety by approving funding for additional positions with the Commonwealth's Attorneys Office and the Police Department, as well as securing additional funding for the Danville Life Saving Crew. These are just a few of the improvements that came out of this year's budget process but are important steps in continuing the City's journey to being the come-back City; it was a journey that has gained the City national attention. Not long ago the unemployment rate in Danville was over 16%, today it is under 5%; the downtown was an embarrassment, today it was a success story receiving national praise. Not long ago, crime was the worst it had ever been, today it is rapidly declining, as much as 70% in some categories. The City has been through tough times, but today they are on a path to prosperity and with this year's budget they will continue on that path.

Council Member Tomer stated he was proud to be a part of the budget team with Council Member Shanks and proud that Council was able to reach a compromise. Mr. Tomer noted he was also happy to help lead the effort for more funding for the Life Saving Crew, and parental leave. He does want to caution the people at home, in some ways he thinks this budget is a Band-Aid over a large gash. He was voting to approve it, but it also builds on hopes of future economic development progress to help fill voids in upcoming spending. Mr. Tomer noted he hopes what they have in place, the work that economic development was doing, and the work the City was doing behind the scenes, comes to fruition. He also hopes that this budget and the tax increases are the last citizens will see for awhile. He was proud of this Council; there are some Council members he never thought would move the needle toward approving tax increases, but they came to the table with open minds, understood the fiscal situation the City was in and he was proud to serve with all of them.

Council Member Miller thanked Mr. Tomer and Mr. Shanks, noting this was a difficult budget year; that alleviated some of the stress, working with City staff and he appreciates what they did. Dr. Miller stated he was proud of the Danville Life Saving Crew funding; the City has underfunded them for years at a constant amount of \$80,000 which was very inadequate considering the amount of work they do and services they provide the City. Last year, Council gave the schools \$2.3M to fund teacher's raises which paid off; the City was not losing as many teachers and did not have to use as many substitutes. This year the City had to find ongoing funding for that. As Mr. Tomer said, the City has to look to the future, but he was optimistic, thinks things were going well and the City will come through with some major economic announcements that will bring in the funding; he will be supporting the budget.

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The **Motion** was adopted by the following vote:

VOTE: 8-1
AYE: Buckner, Campbell, Jones, Miller, Saunders,
Shanks, Tomer and Vogler (8)
NAY: Whittle (1)

Approving the Fiscal Year 2020 Capital and Special Projects Plan for the City of Danville, Virginia

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Buckner and **second** by Council Member Tomer, a Resolution entitled, Resolution No. 2019-06.23, presented by its First Reading on June 4, 2019, Approving the Fiscal Year 2020 Capital and Special Projects Plan for the City of Danville, Virginia, was adopted by the following vote:

VOTE: 8-1
AYE: Buckner, Campbell, Jones, Miller, Saunders,
Shanks, Tomer and Vogler (8)
NAY: Whittle (1)

Budget Appropriation Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2020

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Shanks and **second** by Council Member Miller, an Ordinance entitled, Ordinance No. 2019-06.07, Presented by its First Reading on June 4, 2019, Budget Appropriation Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2020, was presented for final adoption.

Council Member Shanks noted his agreement with Mr. Tomer and Dr. Miller, the City does have some holes that they didn't completely fill in this year's budget, but they delayed and hopefully omitted the potential for a tax increase next year. Council had a good compromise in putting off the half of the real estate tax increase, and eliminating the cigarette tax. Belts were tightened, and he thinks it was a responsible budget. It may have some things that need to be fixed next year if things don't go as well they expect, but he hopes they do. Mayor Jones noted to Mr. Tomer and Shanks, they did a excellent job and thanked the entire budget team.

The **Motion** was carried by the following vote:

VOTE: 8-1
AYE: Buckner, Campbell, Jones, Miller, Saunders,
Shanks, Tomer and Vogler (8)
NAY: Whittle (1)

NEW BUSINESS

APPROVING A SUPPORT AGREEMENT WITH THE DANVILLE PITTSYLVANIA REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL FACILITY AUTHORITY

Council Member Campbell **moved** for adoption of a Resolution entitled:

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-06.25

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RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DANVILLE, VIRGINIA
APPROVING A SUPPORT AGREEMENT WITH THE DANVILLE-PITTSYLVANIA
REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL FACILITY AUTHORITY

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

VOTE: 9-0
AYE: Buckner, Campbell, Jones, Miller, Saunders,
Shanks, Tomer, Vogler and Whittle (9)
NAY: None

**APPROVING THE 2019-2024 CONSOLIDATED PLAN AND THE 2019-2020 HUD ONE
YEAR ACTION PLAN**

Mayor Jones opened the floor for a Public Hearing regarding the City's Consolidated Plan and HUD Action Plan. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Danville Register & Bee* on May 12, 2019 and June 3, 2019. No one present desired to be heard and the Public Hearing was closed.

Council Member Buckner **moved** for adoption of a Resolution entitled:

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-06.26

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SUBMIT TO THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD) A ONE YEAR ACTION PLAN.

The Motion was **seconded** by Council Member Tomer.

Council Member Whittle asked for an explanation of the programs and funding and Ms. Megginson, Housing Development Specialist explained there were two different programs, one was the HOME program and the other the CDBG. There was a total of \$1.2M between the two programs, they will spend about \$129,000 on sub recipients, that money will go back out to the nonprofits in the community. Normally, at the end of the fiscal year, there wasn't any money left. Mayor Jones thanked the Community Development team for their work.

The **Motion** was carried by the following vote:

VOTE: 9-0
AYE: Buckner, Campbell, Jones, Miller, Saunders,
Shanks, Tomer, Vogler and Whittle (9)
NAY: None

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications from the Deputy City Manager, City Attorney or City Clerk.

ROLL CALL

Council Member Tomer thanked Council for the texts, calls, and kind words they said at the last meeting, and the hundreds of citizens that replied to his Facebook post and sent him private messages. He was at Duke for about two weeks, was still not 100%, has some surgery

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coming up, and thanked everyone for being understanding. As he continues to deal with this illness, he will come to every Council meeting he can, because he takes this job seriously. Mr. Tomer thanked Mayor Jones for his understanding on his absence and thanked Council.

Vice Mayor Vogler noted Council was glad to see Mr. Tomer back, he was missed; he served on the budget committee with Council Member Shanks and had numerous meetings on top of all the others. He attended them even when he wasn't feeling well; he is committed to the City and the future. They are glad he was back and will continue to pray for him.

Council Member Whittle thanked the staff and Council for their work on the budget, and noted his continued prayers for Mr. Tomer.

Council Member Buckner stated they are all happy Mr. Tomer was back. Mr. Buckner reminded citizens to be on the lookout for a press conference for Rock Da Block next week. The event will be Saturday, June 29th at Pumpkin Creek on Taylor Drive from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with various activities.

Council Member Campbell stated he was glad to have Mr. Tomer back, he serves the Council and the City very well.

Council Member Miller noted he was also glad to see Mr. Tomer back. Dr. Miller stated in Richmond in one weekend there were ten drug overdoses. There was a war against opioid overdoses, and it was being lost; people need to continue to fight against addiction. Dr. Miller noted the Supreme Court upheld the ban on uranium mining in Virginia,¹ and he hoped Mr. Larking is enjoying his vacation.

Council Member Saunders welcomed Mr. Tomer back.

Council Member Shanks welcomed Mr. Tomer back and noted his prayers will continue for him. Mr. Shanks stated Danville Utilities received a national award this week for their efforts in diversifying energy sources in the City. There was an open house at the Airport this weekend, it was a great opportunity to visit the airport with many activities going on. It will run between 10 and 3 p.m. Saturday.

Mayor Jones noted people would stop him and his family asking how Mr. Tomer was doing, asked citizens to keep paying it forward and encouraged people to pray for one another.

The meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

APPROVED:

s/ Alonzo L. Jones
MAYOR

ATTEST:

s/ Susan M. DeMasi, CMC
CITY CLERK