

June 1, 2021

The Regular June meeting of the Danville City Council was held on June 1, 2021, 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., Bryant Hood, Mayor Alonzo L. Jones, Barry P. Mayo, Vice Mayor Gary P. Miller, Sherman M. Saunders, J. Lee Vogler, Jr., and Madison J.R. Whittle (9).

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

INVOCATION

The Invocation was given by Dr. Gary P. Miller, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

Proclamation: LGBTQ Pride Month

Presented to: Liz Cervantes, Kaleidoscope

Ms. Cervantes noted June was LGBTQ Pride Month, and thanked Council for their support. Ms. Cervantes invited citizens to the Otterbots game on June 24th for Pride Night.

Proclamation: Business Appreciation Week

Presented to: Alexis Ehrhardt, Danville Pittsylvania Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Ehrhardt noted her appreciation of Council for their ongoing support. Business Appreciation Week was a longstanding partnership between the City, Pittsylvania County, the Chamber and the River District Association. Ms. Ehrhardt thanked Corrie Bobe and her team, especially Kim Custer, who puts this together.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM VISITORS

Mayor Jones recognized Drew Herring, Pastor of West Main Baptist Church, who noted several local congregations came together, with the permission of the Parks & Rec, to construct a community COVID 19 Memorial Wall. It was located under the HOME sign, and will be open for the next seven days for citizens to spend time in silence, prayer or write a message of remembrance for someone in the community who has been lost COVID. On June 8th at 7:00 p.m., they will have a community service of hope and remembrance.

MEETING MINUTES

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Buckner and **second** by Council Member Campbell, Minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on May 4, 2021, were approved as presented. Draft copies of the minutes had been distributed prior to the meeting.

APPOINTMENTS

Vice Mayor Miller **moved** for adoption of the following Appointment Resolutions:

Resolution No. 2021-06.01 – Reappointing Jessie Barksdale to the Airport Commission.

Resolution No. 2021-06.02 – Reappointing William Allgood to the Airport Commission.

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Resolution No. 2021-06.03 – Reappointing Philip Hall to the Airport Commission.

Resolution No. 2021-06.04 – Appointing Johnny West to the Dan River ASAP.

Resolution No. 2021-06.05 – Reappointing Sheila Baynes to the DCC Board.

Resolution No. 2021-06.06 – Reappointing Tammy Warren to the Danville Community Policy and Management Team.

Resolution No. 2021-06.07 – Reappointing Demetrius Crews to the Danville Community Policy and Management Team.

Resolution No. 2021-06.08 – Reappointing RJ Lackey to the Danville Development Council.

Resolution No. 2021-06.09 – Reappointing Shelby Irving to the Danville Pittsylvania Community Services Board.

Resolution No. 2021-06.10 – Reappointing Anna Kautzman to the Danville Utility Commission.

Resolution No. 2021-06.11 – Appointing Steven Merricks to the Danville Utility Commission.

Resolution No. 2021-06.12 – Appointing Mark Holland to the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research Board.

Resolution No. 2021-06.13 – Reappointing Tyquan Graves to the Social Services Advisory Board.

Resolution No. 2021-06.14 – Reappointing Alexis Ehrhardt to the Transportation Advisory Board.

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

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

NEW BUSINESS

PUBLIC HEARING – CONSIDERATION OF GRANTING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT AT 424 MEMORIAL DRIVE

Mayor Jones opened the floor for a Public Hearing regarding a Special Use Permit at 424 Memorial Drive. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Danville Register & Bee* on May 18, 2021 and May 25, 2021. No one present desired to be heard and the Public Hearing was closed.

Council Member Vogler **moved** for adoption of an Ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-06.01

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GRANTING SPECIAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION 2021-152 FOR RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL USES PERMITTED BY RIGHT WITH LOT FRONTAGE ON THE DAN RIVER IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 3.L SECTION C.11. OF DANVILLE ZONING ORDINANCE, AT 424 MEMORIAL DRIVE (PARCEL ID# 21344 AND 21322).

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

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

PUBLIC HEARING – CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO ALLOW THE CITY MANAGER, PLANNING DIRECTOR OR DESIGNEES TO INITIATE ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

Mayor Jones opened the floor for a Public Hearing regarding Amending the Zoning Ordinance. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Danville Register & Bee* on May 18, 2021 and May 25, 2021. No one present desired to be heard and the Public Hearing was closed.

Council Member Buckner **moved** for adoption of an Ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-06.02

AMENDING CHAPTER 41 ENTITLED, “ZONING ORDINANCE” OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF DANVILLE, VIRGINIA, 1986, AS AMENDED, MORE SPECIFICALLY, TO AMEND ARTICLE 4. SECTION A. INITIATION OF ZONING AMENDMENTS AND CHANGES BY ADDING SUBSECTION 4. ALLOWING THE CITY MANAGER, PLANNING DIRECTOR, OR THEIR DESIGNEES TO INITIATE ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS.

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

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

CONSIDERATION OF A REFERENDUM ON A ONE PERCENT SALES TAX INCREASE FOR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

Vice Mayor Miller **moved** for adoption of a Resolution entitled:

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-06.15

A RESOLUTION INITIATING A REFERENDUM TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY OF DANVILLE TO LEVY A GENERAL RETAIL SALES TAX AT A RATE NOT TO EXCEED ONE PERCENT (1%) TO PROVIDE REVENUE SOLEY FOR CAPITAL PROJECTS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OR RENOVATION OF SCHOOLS IN THE CITY OF DANVILLE, VIRGINIA IN ACCORDANCE WITH VIRGINIA CODE SECTION 58.1-605.1.

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

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Vice Mayor Miller noted it was their obligation to make sure children have safe, modern facilities to learn in. The State Legislature passed a bill that would allow localities to vote for a one percent sales tax in their area. This was not a Council mandate, all they were doing was putting it on the ballot in November for the public to decide. Council Member Saunders stated in order to be competitive in the world, they must have a great education system. In any facility where Danville students learn, helps determine their success in education. Mr. Saunders noted he was asking the citizens, it was their decision, to please support this effort, so the children can have a safe school to attend, to thrive and help the City to continue to grow. Council Member Vogler reiterated this was not a council decision, but they feel it was important that the citizens ultimately have the say in this; it will be the citizens who vote on this in November. Council Member Campbell noted his agreement with everything that was said, he supports this 100% and hopes the citizens of Danville will vote for this referendum. Council Member Mayo also noted his agreement with what has been said, wanted the citizens to understand that Council does support this and hopes the citizens will consider this.

Mayor Jones noted RRM presented this to Council several years ago indicating there were four schools built in the fifties: Johnson, Langston, GW and Woodberry; no action took place due to funding. Some have cottages in the back of schools, some of the HVAC units need replacement and staff hopes no major capital costs occur. Mayor Jones commended the school board and the superintendent on what they were doing, as well as the teachers and DPS staff.

City Attorney Clarke Whitfield explained there were two parts in order to get this referendum passed; this was first part, the 1% sales tax. That will fund a bond, because Danville was a City, and the charter requires the City to issue bonds for that. The second part will be approving bonds up to a certain amount. That will allow all the money to come in at one time so that everything can be done to fight price increases; that will come in July. Toward the end of July, both resolutions will be filed with the circuit court; August 13th is the date they have to be signed by.

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

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

**BUDGET AMENDMENT – CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2021
BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR FUNDS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
RIVER FRONT PARK, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$740,000**

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Campbell and **second** by Council Member Mayo, an Ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-06.03

AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR AN AWARD FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$740,000 FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RIVER FRONT PARK AND APPROPRIATION OF SAME.

was presented by its **First Reading**, as required by City Charter, to lie over before final adoption.

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**BUDGET AMENDMENT – CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2021
BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FUNDS IN THE
AMOUNT OF \$29,142,851**

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Vogler and **second** by Council Member Buckner, an Ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-06.04

AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE BY INCREASING REVENUES FROM THE US DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY FOR THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN IN THE AMOUNT OF \$29,142,851 TO BE USED AS SPECIFIED BY THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN AND APPROPRIATION AS FOLLOWS

was presented by its **First Reading**, as required by City Charter, to lie over before final adoption.

Council Member Campbell asked the City Manager to explain this to the Citizens. City Manager Ken Larking noted the American Rescue Plan was adopted by Congress and signed by President Biden a few months ago, providing localities with a certain amount of funding depending on population and status within the CDBG program. The City will be receiving two payments, one which they just received; they were not able to spend any of those funds until City Council adopts a budget. The other half was supposed to come no sooner than one year later. The funds were very similar to the CARES Act funds provided by Congress last year. Those funds were used by the City, under the guidance provided by the Federal Government, for things like helping people with utility bills, mortgage and rent payments, and helping small businesses weather the storm of the pandemic. They also helped provide marketing, PPE and encouraged people to be safe during the pandemic. The CARES Act did not allow local governments to replenish lost revenue due to the pandemic. The American Rescue Plan does allow the City to use a portion of the funding to replenish any lost revenue they could justify, based on the pandemic; there was a formula the Finance Director will use to determine that amount. The intention was to take a careful look at all the rules and regulations associated with how the City can spend those funds and to implement them in a similar way that the CARES Act funds were spent, with the guiding principal being helping people and the community respond to the pandemic. Equity was an important aspect of these funds, that was a highlight of what they want the City to do; the intention was to be careful, following the spirit of the legislation, and also have an eye toward what other projects the City can do to produce a sustainable economic future for the community. He has been working with Department heads on ideas on how to invest these funds for the future. They want to make sure to look at the Investing in Danville work, discuss ways they could invest in the community, and use that as a guiding principal on how the City uses these funds.

The goal was to help improve people's lives, help reduce their costs, help people get through the pandemic, utility assistance, rent and mortgage assistance for individuals, and grants for businesses to stay in business or thrive, as well as helping maintain the health of the community. One of the other aspects that was important for the community was that Danville have good, stable housing with energy efficient homes; that was an allowable expense. Mr. Larking noted he would like to look at what the City can put in place to help people make their homes more energy efficient, which would save them money in the short and long term. This falls into a City Council priority of improving housing in the community which will be a cost savings they will be able to enjoy for many years. It was important to note that the Finance Director and he were going to make sure they were not recommending these funds be used for things that were not allowed by the Federal Government.

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Mr. Saunders noted a lot of employers were trying to find people to hire and does not know if that was an employment or employee issue, or training, but the pandemic assistance will not last and people do need to work, and need skills to get these jobs. There were a lot of people with skills, plumbers, carpenters, etc., but they were not certified. A lot of people will not hire them if they don't have certification to qualify for the employer's insurance; could the City help these people become certified so they can work as subcontractors or contractors for businesses that may come to Danville. Mr. Larking noted staff has had a discussion about that topic, if the City could find a way for job training, job skills, get people certified, give them an opportunity to get the work that was out there, that was coming; it was something that was allowed by the American Rescue Plan.

Mayor Jones recognized Tommy Bennett, President of the Danville Chapter of the NAACP who stated that the NAACP had a meeting with Dr. Angela Hairston, and the NAACP was in full support of the 1% sales tax for the schools.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Larking noted he attended the Galileo graduation last Friday morning, his daughter was one of the students who graduated. Mr. Larking applauded the school system for the work they did.

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

Vice Mayor Miller noted earlier this evening, in Memphis, TN, his grandson was born.

Council Member Saunders noted his congratulations to the Vice Mayor, and asked Vice Mayor Miller for a copy of his Invocation.

Council Member Vogler reminded citizens that Youth Baseball sign ups were going now in the City; this Friday was the last day for sign-ups. The Danville Otterbots were having their first game of the season this Thursday at 7:00 p.m. at American Legion Field. Mr. Vogler noted it was important to remember what Memorial Day signifies, and to honor those that served and lost their lives in service to the Country.

Council Member Whittle thanked everyone in the military for their service. Mr. Whittle noted Danville has a lot of jobs available, at every level; if people want to work, there were jobs available.

Council Member Buckner thanked Kaleidoscope for the great work they do in the community and can't wait for the event coming up at the Otterbots game. Mr. Buckner reminded citizens the Food Truck Rodeo was this Saturday from twelve until six and hopes citizens can make it out.

Council Member Campbell noted it was good to see the Superintendent and School Board members at Council this evening.

Council Member Hood noted in honor of Memorial Day, he wanted to pay homage to the fallen service men and women. He would like to acknowledge his mentor, Mr. Philip Campbell, school board members and the Superintendent. Congratulations on Business Appreciation Week and the LBGTQ group for their Proclamations, and congratulations to the Class of 2021.

Council Member Mayo congratulated the School Board and Superintendent on a great year. The parents of GW High School were having an end of year party on June 4th, at Carrington Pavilion from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.; tickets were available from parents. Cedar Terrace was having an end of school community and youth engagement day on June 3rd from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. with food

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and entertainment. Mr. Mayo noted Danville Community College was doing a lot of training for jobs and would like to discuss this with the City Manager.

Mayor Jones noted City Council allotted money for summer jobs, school gets out Wednesday and asked Deputy City Manager Earl Reynolds for an update. Mr. Reynolds invited Superintendent of Danville Public Schools Dr. Hairston to give an update on the program. Dr. Hairston thanked the Council for supporting the program, noting students will start on June 7th, with a week of skills training; the parent meeting was tomorrow evening. The students will be introduced to their employers next Friday; everyone has been placed, the 14-16 year old students were going to Goodwill, the older students, 16-18 will work for a combination of City Departments, the School system and few other outside agencies. They were placed, notified and were excited to start. Mayor Jones noted there were a lot of activities going on in Danville Public Schools as well and Dr. Hairston stated they have a robust summer school program for remediation and new learning. There was a Cyber Camp going on at Johnson Elementary, Camp Invention at the Institute, with lots of opportunities for the children to be busy this summer and encouraged them to take advantage.

Mayor Jones noted this weekend was a busy weekend with the food truck festival and later that afternoon a Senior Prom at the Carrington Pavilion. The Mayor requested this information be put out to the citizens on the website or have it put on the City's Facebook page. Mr. Larking noted they will use whatever tools necessary to get the word out as much as they can and encouraged anyone listening that sees information the City sends out, to tell their friends and relatives that there were opportunities for young people to get involved in something positive for the summer.

Mayor Jones recognized the School Board members attending tonight's meeting, and thanked citizens attending tonight's meeting.

ADJOURNED: 7:51 P.M.

APPROVED:

s/Alonzo L. Jones
MAYOR

ATTEST:

s/Susan M. DeMasi, CMC
CITY CLERK