

May 21, 2019

The Second Regular May meeting of the Danville City Council was held on May 21, 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, 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 (8). L.G. "Larry" Campbell Jr., was absent (1). *Mr. Tomer left the meeting at 7:25 p.m.*

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.

Mayor Jones presided.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

Mayor Jones read a Proclamation entitled Business Appreciation Week, and presented it Alexis Ehrhardt. Ms. Ehrhardt thanked Council for their shared commitment to the business community, and thanked Kim Custer who spearheads this initiative each year.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM VISITORS

Mayor Jones recognized Clint Burnett, 1380 Orphanage Road, who spoke to Council about using debit cards to pay bills at the Financial Center.

Mayor Jones recognized Hakim Abdullah, 224 Clement Avenue, who discussed the Clergy patrol, and asked Council Members to get more involved at the ground level. Mr. Abdullah also discussed summer employment for teenagers, safe spaces for younger children, full time use of recreation centers, playgrounds in neighborhoods and summer recreation programs.

Mayor Jones recognized Savior Waddell who noted he was making a presentation for a project for his English class at Galileo, and discussed the effects of deforestation.

MEETING MINUTES

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Shanks and **second** by Vice Mayor Vogler, Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on April 16, 2019 were approved as presented. Draft copies of the minutes had been distributed prior to the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

APPROVING THE FISCAL YEAR 2020 DANVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS BUDGET

Upon **Motion** by Vice Mayor Vogler and **second** by Council Member Shanks, a Resolution entitled Resolution No. 2019-05.01, presented by its First Reading on May 7, 2019, Approving the Budget of the School Board of the City of Danville for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2020 was adopted by the following vote:

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VOTE: 7-0-1-1
AYE: Buckner, Miller, Saunders,
Shanks, Tomer, Vogler and Whittle (7)
NAY: None
ABSTAIN: Jones (1)
ABSENT: Campbell (1)

Mayor Jones invited Danville Chief of Police Scott Booth to address Council. Chief Booth updated Council on the Clergy Patrol, and Operation Safe Streets Southside, an initiative started with the Virginia State Police. Council Members thanked Chief Booth and his staff for the excellent job they are doing.

NEW BUSINESS

BUDGET APPROPRIATION – AMENDING THE FY2019 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR THE VICTIM WITNESS PROGRAM IN THE AMOUNT OF \$177,083

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Miller and **second** by Council Member Whittle, an Ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-05.07

AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR A GRANT FROM THE STATE FOR A VICTIM WITNESS PROGRAM IN THE AMOUNT OF \$177,083 AND APPROPRIATING SAME.

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

BUDGET APPROPRIATION – AMENDING FY2019 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIM PROGRAM GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$44,635

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-05.08

AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR A GRANT FROM THE STATE FOR A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIM PROGRAM GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$44,635 AND APPROPRIATING SAME

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

PUBLIC HEARING – AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO RENEW THE COMMUNITY GARDEN LICENSE WITH RIGHT TOUCH CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Mayor Jones opened the floor for a Public Hearing regarding Renewal of a Community Garden License. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Danville Register & Bee* on May 14, 2019. Mayor Jones recognized Reverend Tommy Crews, Right Touch Christian Church, who noted it was their third year doing the community garden. They have had good success

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the first two years and are looking forward to another year. No one further desired to be heard and the Public Hearing was closed.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-05.02

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO RENEW THE EXISTING LICENSE FOR COMMUNITY GARDENING ON NORTH MAIN STREET.

The Motion was **seconded** by Vice Mayor Vogler and carried by the following vote:

VOTE: 7-0-2
AYE: Buckner, Jones, Miller, Saunders,
Shanks, Vogler and Whittle (7)
NAY: None
ABSENT: Campbell, Tomer (2)

PUBLIC HEARING - AMENDING THE DANVILLE CITY CODE TO INCREASE THE REAL ESTATE TAX

Mayor Jones opened the floor for a Public Hearing regarding a Real Estate Tax Increase. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Danville Register & Bee* on May 10, 2019. No one present desired to be heard and the Public Hearing was closed

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Miller and **second** by Council Member Shanks, an Ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-05.09

AMENDING AND REORDAINING SECTIONS 37-27, 37-28 AND 37-29 OF THE DANVILLE CITY CODE THEREBY INCREASING THE REAL ESTATE TAX FROM EIGHTY (80) CENTS ON EVERY ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS TO EIGHTY-FOUR (84) CENTS ON EVERY ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS OF ASSESSED VALUE EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2019

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

PUBLIC HEARING - AMENDING THE DANVILLE CITY CODE TO INCREASE THE TAX ON TRANSIENT LODGERS AND IMPLEMENT A ROOM OCCUPANCY TAX

Mayor Jones opened the floor for a Public Hearing regarding an Increase to the Transient Lodgers Tax and Implementing a Room Occupancy Tax. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Danville Register & Bee* on May 10, 2019.

Mayor Jones recognized Gary Patel, 2160 West Main Street who stated he owned a small motel, and represented other motel owners. He does not oppose funding to the Danville Life Saving Crew but feels the motel owners are being easily targeted, and they opposed the room occupancy tax and the increase in lodging tax. All businesses should contribute to pay for the Life Savings Crew.

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Mayor Jones recognized Patrick Dewberry, 2130 Riverside Drive, representing the Hampton Inn & Suites, who spoke against the hotel tax and adding a \$2.00 per night occupancy tax. Mr. Dewberry asked Council to reconsider the \$2.00 per night tax.

No one further desired to be heard and the Public Hearing was closed.

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Shanks and **second** by Council Member Miller, an Ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-05.10

AMENDING AND REORDAINING SECTION 37-97 OF THE DANVILLE CITY CODE TO INCREASE THE TAX ON TRANSIENT LODGERS FROM SEVEN (7) PERCENT TO EIGHT (8) PERCENT AND TO IMPLEMENT A \$2.00 PER DAY ROOM OCCUPANCY TAX EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2019

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

Council Member Miller noted looking at different tax rates, at 8% Danville will still be on the low side. Most competing communities are 8%, Williamsburg was 10% plus \$2.00 per night; it doesn't stop people from going there. These taxes are paid by the visitors who stay at the motel, and noted he found it hard to believe someone would not stay at a hotel in Danville because of the \$2.00 per night fee.

PUBLIC HEARING – AMENDING THE DANVILLE CITY CODE TO INCREASE THE PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX

Mayor Jones opened the floor for a Public Hearing regarding an increase in the Personal Property Tax. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Danville Register & Bee* on May 10, 2019. No one present desired to be heard and the Public Hearing was closed.

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Shanks and **second** by Council Member Miller, an Ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-05.11

AMENDING AND REORDAINING SECTION 37-30 OF THE DANVILLE CITY CODE TO INCREASE THE PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX FROM \$3.50 PER \$100 ASSESSED VALUE TO \$3.60 PER \$100 ASSESSED VALUE EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2020.

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

COMMUNICATIONS

City Manager Ken Larking congratulated Multimedia Manager Marc Aron on winning two Telly Awards for his work on River City TV; it was well deserved. City Attorney Clarke Whitfield also noted his congratulations. There were no communications from Deputy City Manager or City Clerk.

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ROLL CALL

Council Member Miller stated Festival in the Park was a great show with kid's rides, entertainment and crafts, and a medieval village. The recognition for the GW State Champions was Saturday and noted his congratulations to the basketball team. Dr. Miller stated the story in the paper about Zagster, it did not hit a bump, the trail was still not totally open and people do appreciate using the bikes. Dr. Miller wished a Happy Memorial Day to everyone.

Council Member Saunders thanked Dr. Miller for the Invocation, and thanked Right Touch Christian Church for all they do. Mr. Saunders congratulated the GW Basketball Team for their recognition, Marc Aron for his awards, and thanked him for what he does. Mr. Saunders noted the Patriot Ride was last weekend, raising money for disabled veterans.

Council Member Shanks noted he looked forward to Memorial Day where citizens remember those who gave their lives for everyone's freedom, and congratulations to Marc Aron for the excellent awards. Mr. Shanks noted this year's budget was far from perfect, there were compromises in delaying tax increases that were proposed initially; regardless of that, citizens will be upset with Council.

Vice Mayor Vogler thanked Dr. Miller for his comments on the Bike Sharing, the story should have read, despite sections of the trail being closed for months, the number of riders was almost the same as when it started. Mr. Vogler noted congratulations to the couple who got married on Bridge Street, and the Festival in the Park was wonderful with huge crowds. Mr. Vogler noted people should be able to use a credit or debit card at the Financial Center.

Council Member Whittle stated no one came to complain about the increase in Real Estate taxes, and encouraged citizens to come to the next meeting to share their opinions.

Council Member Buckner noted Marc Aron does an excellent job, and congratulated him on his awards. The Bridge Street Food Truck Rodeo is June 1st with twenty trucks lined up so far. Mr. Buckner reiterated, the City needs to accept credit cards at the Financial Building.

Mayor Jones thanked Alexis Ehrhardt for all that she and her staff do, encouraged citizens to support their local businesses, and congratulated Marc Aron. Mayor Jones reminded citizens there were several graduations this weekend and congratulated all the upcoming graduates. The Parade of Champions was this Sunday.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

APPROVED:

s/ Alonzo L. Jones
MAYOR

ATTEST:

s/ Susan M. DeMasi, CMC
CITY CLERK