

February 6, 2018

The Regular February meeting of the Danville City Council was held on February 6, 2018, 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 John B. Gilstrap, Vice Mayor Alonzo L. Jones, Dr. Gary P. Miller, Sherman M. Saunders, Fred O. Shanks, III, J. Lee Vogler, Jr., and Madison J.R. Whittle (9).

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

Mayor Gilstrap presided.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Invocation was given by Council Member Gary P. Miller; the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag followed.

MEETING MINUTES

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Buckner and **second** by Council Member Whittle, Minutes for the Regular Council Meeting held on January 2, 2018 were approved as presented. Draft copies had been distributed prior to the Meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

PUBLIC HEARING – AMENDING CHAPTER 41 OF DANVILLE CITY CODE ENTITLED “ZONING ORDINANCE”, SPECIFICALLY ARTICLE 10 ENTITLED “SIGNS.”

Mayor Gilstrap opened the floor for a Public Hearing to Amend Chapter 41, Article 10 of the Zoning Ordinance. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Danville Register & Bee* on January 23, 2018 and January 30, 2018. No one presented desired to be heard and the Public Hearing was closed.

Vice Mayor Jones **moved** for adoption of an Ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 2018-02.01

AMENDING CHAPTER 41, ENTITLED “ZONING ORDINANCE” OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF DANVILLE, VIRGINIA, 1986, AS AMENDED, MORE SPECIFICALLY ARTICLE 10, ENTITLED “SIGNS”, SECTION N, ENTITLED “PERMITTED SIGNS IN THE CB-C CENTRAL BUSINESS COMMERCIAL DISTRICT” AND SECTION O, ENTITLED “PERMITTED SIGNS IN THE TW-C, TOBACCO WAREHOUSE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT” TO ADDRESS THE NUMBER AND SIZE OF SIGNS PERMITTED PER BUILDING.

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

Council Member Shanks questioned Director of Community Development Ken Gillie on the changes and Mr. Gillie explained they are matching two districts. Mr. Shanks stated it used to be wall signs were permitted for each wall of the building facing the public street and Mr. Gillie noted it was one sign per wall, per building. Mr. Shanks stated it is now saying one sign on the premises based on the lateral square footage, and asked if the lateral square footage applies to each sign or cumulative square footage, and are they increasing the square footage.

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Mr. Gillie noted in the Central Business District, they are increasing the square footage, in the Tobacco Warehouse they are not; they are bringing the two districts into compliance with each other because staff feels they are very similar. The Central Business District had a limit on one sign and the square footage was less, staff is now matching that with the Tobacco Warehouse District.

In response to Mr. Whittle, Mr. Gillie explained the reason this came about, First Citizens Bank in the Central Business District was only allowed one wall sign facing Main Street. They had locked out the square footage, and the tenants on the other floors couldn't advertise; if they were in the Tobacco Warehouse District they had that option. Staff felt that the two districts were similar enough, now that they are all part of the River District per se, that they should have matching signage and allow additional tenants on the upper floors where buildings are developed, to have the ability to place signage. Staff felt it was most equitable to go to a square footage basis of the building; additional square footage is given for the added height of a building. It is up to the owner to break it up for the number of signs they have based on what that total square footage would be. Mr. Whittle questioned the setback, it was five feet off of the right of way, and Mr. Gillie explained most of the buildings downtown are built up to the right of way, staff is not anticipating them having ground signs.

Mr. Vogler questioned if this is going to make it easier for business owners in the district to have signage on their buildings and Mr. Gillie explained it will make it easier for business owners to have signage, and as they develop the second and third floors on the larger buildings, for upper floor tenants to have them. It will also allow for some additional signage that is not available right now. The Central Business District was allowed less signage than someone in the Tobacco Warehouse; staff is trying to level the playing field between everyone on the River District. Mr. Whittle stated if a block has a five foot setback, for a sign on the building, how far to the encroachment of the right of way. Mr. Gillie noted on the building, the City allows for a projection of twenty four inches off the face of the building itself. There are quite a few businesses in the downtown that have developed projecting signs.

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

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

CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF THE LISTED STREET TO THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2018-02.01

AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A REQUEST BY THE CITY OF DANVILLE TO THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION THAT CERTAIN STREETS BE ADDED TO THE DANVILLE HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE SYSTEM.

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

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In response to Mr. Saunders, Mr. Larking explained the \$14,000 is the additional amount of maintenance funds the City would receive annually if this project was added to the City's streets. Mr. Saunders questioned if the State would also pay for future repairs and Mr. Larking stated they expect the City to make those repairs because it is part of Danville's street system; the \$14,000 is an annual reimbursement the City will receive in addition to other funds the City receives to help maintain the streets in the City. Brian Dunevant, City Engineer, noted that particular project was a revenue sharing project; the City paid half and VDOT paid half. As much money as the City wants to put up, up to a \$5M project, he believes VDOT would match it or entertain the application to match it. Mr. Dunevant noted there is only so much money allocated to the program; VDOT rates the projects, funds as many as they can, but they usually can't fund all of them. Mr. Saunders noted this project was a huge improvement and commended the City staff on it.

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

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

BUDGET AMENDMENT – CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING THE FY2018 BAO FOR A GRANT FROM THE DANVILLE REGIONAL FOUNDATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$25,000 FOR A “SEE THE POSSIBLE” GRANT

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Campbell and **second** by Vice Mayor Jones, an Ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 2018-02.02

AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2018 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE TO INCLUDE A GRANT FROM THE DANVILLE REGIONAL FOUNDATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$25,000 TO COVER THE TRAVEL EXPENSES FOR 12 CITY STAFF AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS TO VISIT TWO RIVERFRONT PARKS TO “SEE THE POSSIBLE”.

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

BUDGET AMENDMENT – CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING THE FY2018 BAO TO PROVIDE FOR THE PROCEEDS OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2018-02.03

AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2018 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS OF FISCAL YEAR 2018 AND APPROPRIATING SAME

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

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Mayor Gilstrap recognized the students from Tunstall High School who were in attendance.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor Gilstrap questioned how Deputy City Manager Earl Reynolds was doing and City Manager Ken Larking stated he was doing well.

City Attorney Clarke Whitfield welcomed Chief Booth as Danville's new Police Chief.

ROLL CALL

Council Members congratulated and welcomed Danville's new Police Chief, Scott Booth and noted they looked forward to working with him.

Vice Mayor Jones recognized Danville's Fire Department, who received an ISO Rating of One. Mr. Jones noted Council Member Shanks serves on the Danville Utility Commission which will be meeting on February 26, 2018 at 4:00 p.m., and encouraged citizens to attend the meeting if they have questions.

Council Member Miller noted Alexis Ehrhardt was in attendance, she is the new Chamber of Commerce President. Dr. Miller noted he visited the Solar array complex on Kentuck Road, it was very impressive, and it is at no cost to Danville Utilities. The City just has to buy the low cost power and will receive renewable energy credits which can be sold; this is a great project.

Council Member Saunders hoped the City's former Police Chief is enjoying his retirement and thanked all the men and women that will be working with the new Chief. Mr. Saunders congratulated the Fire Department on earning their new rating, recognized Ms. Ehrhardt on being the new Chamber president, and welcomed the Tunstall High School students. Mr. Saunders congratulated Mayor Gilstrap on his new grandson.

Council Member Shanks noted he looked forward to City Council, staff, the Chief and Public Safety working together to help Danville, there is plenty to improve and the Chief will be a part of that. Mr. Shanks noted the Danville Utility Commission meets the fourth Monday of each month, those meetings are broadcast on River City TV and encouraged citizens to watch and learn more about what Danville Utilities is doing to try mitigate the rates, congestion charges and transmission charges. Mr. Shanks explained there were lot of things that have occurred to drive the cost of electricity up, including tremendously cold weather for a long period of time in January. Mr. Shanks assured citizens that Danville Utilities is doing everything in its power to find sources of power generation that will be less costly and put Danville right behind others. Mr. Shanks noted Danville Utilities has a rebate program for insulation, upgrading heat and ventilation systems and for other power conservation measures.

Council Member Vogler recognized Brother Pete Hairston in attendance, owner of a local business in Danville. Mr. Vogler noted Council Members have received messages from citizens regarding the Utility bills; there are people in the community paying high utility bills, which has a negative impact on the community. Council needs to do what it can to try and solve this problem, and explore all options to deliver quality services to the customers at an affordable price.

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Council Member Whittle noted his power bill increased as well, but he will be going to the Utility Commission meeting to get answers to his questions. Mr. Whittle noted he had a fire in the apartment below his, the Fire Department did a great job taking care of it; they are a professional crew and thanked everyone who was there.

Council Member Buckner noted in 2015 there was a study done on whether the City should sell Danville Utilities. At that time, the City was told it was probably a bad idea to sell it; Mr. Buckner noted he would like to see that study revisited. Mr. Buckner congratulated the Danville Fire Department on their rating, Council is proud of the work they do every day. Mr. Buckner asked staff to look into recording and airing the IDA meetings.

Council Member Campbell noted he agreed with the earlier comments; Alexis Ehrhardt made an excellent presentation at the breakfast meeting this morning and he looks forward to working with her and the Chamber of Commerce.

Mayor Gilstrap welcomed Chief Booth to Danville and looks forward to working with him through the City Manager. Mayor Gilstrap noted he has a new grandson, Beau, he was born on January 13th, and recognized the Tunstall students, they are welcome anytime.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

APPROVED:

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK