

March 21, 2023

The Second Regular March meeting of the Danville City Council was held on March 21, 2023, 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, Bryant Hood, Mayor Alonzo L. Jones, Barry Mayo, Vice Mayor Gary P. Miller, Sherman M. Saunders, J. Lee Vogler, Jr., and Madison J.R. Whittle (8). L.G. "Larry" Campbell Jr., was absent. (1)

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

Council Member J. Lee Vogler, Jr., gave the Invocation. Mayor Jones recognized Danville Public School Superintendent Dr. Angela Hairston, Tyrell Payne, Vice Chair of the Danville School Board, as well as school board members Keisha Averett and Keisha Walker, and asked them to approach the podium to lead the pledge of allegiance. Dr. Hairston introduced Andrea Gillus, Chief Financial Officer for Danville Public Schools, who has worked diligently on the school's budget since she came on board last year. Mayor Jones welcomed Mrs. Gillus, the rest of the school board members and thanked them for attending tonight's meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

Update: SOVAH Danville

Presented by: Steve Heatherly, CEO SOVAH Danville

Mr. Heatherly thanked City Council for having him and stated his number one job was to immerse himself in the community and understand SOVAH Health, and the community where patients were served. He has conducted more than 100 in-depth interviews with hospital leaders, staff, community leaders, and physicians on the medical staff. One thing that drew him to this area was the passion for growth and economic development, as well as how the hospital can play a role in that. In rural areas, a hospital should be central to life, as a place to go for high quality health care, a major employer, and in economic development, as a reliable partner to key stakeholders as they work together to make sure people have all the care and services they need.

The hospital itself has significant opportunities for growth in specialties like GI, Cardiology, General Surgery, and Orthopedics. They want the people who have a choice to choose them for health care so that they were better positioned to serve those who have limited choices and may not get the care they need otherwise. Mr. Heatherly reviewed projects for 2023 including the emergency room renovation and expansion; while this was taking place, the emergency department will be temporarily housed on the second floor. This project should start in late June or early July and take about fifteen months to complete. The Cath Labs will also be replaced in May, and the linear accelerator in the cancer center. Mr. Heatherly discussed the perception problems of SOVAH in the community and was something he hoped can be handled one patient at a time, and partnering with the community to help improve this perception. He discussed the growing relationship with the Danville Life Saving Crew and how they hoped to collaborate on more services in the future.

Council Member Saunders thanked Mr. Heatherly for coming, and stated that health care was extremely important in a community, and Danville was no different. There have been some challenges in the City with the hospital. Mr. Saunders noted he understood the hospital was owned by Life Point, he was glad that the hospital was here, and that people can get some assistance.

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There were situations where people go to the hospital and sometimes the wait time was very long; long wait times for people in the emergency room can be very discouraging. Mr. Saunders discussed several experiences he had with long wait times, and his concerns for services as growth happens and people come into the City. He hoped Life Point would put forth the necessary resources to address these issues. Vice Mayor Miller stated it was a tough job in tough times, and Mr. Heatherly stepped into it, but was sure he knew the challenges. The emergency room was about to be renovated; the result was going to be a state-of-the-art facility.

Council Member Vogler thanked Mr. Heatherly for his presentation, and stated that the most complaints he received over his eleven years on Council have been from the hospital. One issue may be people going to the ER for care that does not need to be addressed in the ER; what was Mr. Heatherly looking to do to address those factors. Mr. Heatherly explained every emergency room in America treats patients that do not need to be treated in the emergency room. One solution was to make sure primary physicians in the community have easy access to their practice. The second strategy was to evaluate was urgent care that was fully integrated into the hospital somewhere in the community. They also try to educate the community about urgent care versus emergency care. Mr. Vogler stated Council was there to help in any way that they can.

Council Member Whittle asked what was Mr. Heatherly's strategy to change, and Mr. Heatherly stated gaps in medical specialties needed to be filled. They have to continue to be focused on competitive wages so they can put themselves in the best possible position to hire staff. Lastly, they must be fully engaged in the community. Mr. Saunders stated he hoped Life Point saw a copy of tonight's meeting, and that all of Council was there to help in any way possible. Mr. Saunders discussed his experience as a patient in the hospital. Council Member Buckner shared his experience in the Cath lab back in 2019 and stated it was an amazing experience and he looked forward to working with Mr. Heatherly. Council Member Hood welcomed Mr. Heatherly, thanked him for speaking tonight and that he has the full support of the Council.

Mayor Jones noted his agreement with what other Council Members stated, and introduced him to the Ministerial Alliance, Danville firefighters, individuals from Danville Public Schools, City staff and Tommy Bennett, who were in attendance. Mr. Heatherly thanked Council and everyone for the support; he truly believes that hospitals only succeed if they were fully engaged with their community. Engagement can be pleasant and then sometimes it's not, but it was still engagement. He concluded by giving out his cell phone number 828-508-0096.

Presentation of the City Manager's Proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Budget
Presented by: Ken Larking, City Manager

Mr. Larking began his presentation of the City Manager's Proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Budget, stating he believed that everyone would agree that a successful community was one that does a great job educating their children, has career opportunities available that help people live the lifestyle that they want, has quality adult education to help make sure people are competitive for the jobs the City was recruiting, has the type of quality-of-life amenities that make people want to live there, and was also safe. This budget attempts to invest in those areas so Danville can be the kind of community they want it to be. The theme of this year's budget was *Investing in Our Young People* through lifelong learning through the K12 education system and workforce development, through quality-of-life amenities and economic opportunity for all.

This was a balanced budget with no tax increases, and current revenues pay for ongoing expenses. The General Fund will see the first year of casino gaming revenue in the amount of \$4.1M in guaranteed revenue; a temporary casino will be open in July and staff was confident that

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would generate about \$8M in state-collected local gaming tax revenue. In the Utility Fund, the budget and rate study were approved by the Utility Commission. All utility funds were Enterprise Funds, so the cost of utilities was paid through the rates; there were some minor rate adjustments included in the Utility Fund. They also want to have quality services provided by competitively paid employees, and there were investments in infrastructure as well.

General Fund highlights include a budget of \$138,000,000 which was a \$15.4M increase from the current budget. Major revenue increases included the \$12.1M in casino gaming revenue, and most of the other revenue sources were based on growth of the city. Economic Development that has been successful in Danville has produced that growth in one year; they based those revenues on trends. There was just over \$7M in additional funds that would be a recurring revenue source that doesn't have to be reserved for one time purchases. The Expenditures relate to rising personnel costs, those were being paid for with recurring revenue sources. Those personnel related expenditures added up to a little over \$5M; there was \$7M in additional revenue of that total \$15.4M that could safely be used for recurring expenses. What was making up the rest of the \$7M were things like debt service that was \$865,000 higher this year, and the Comprehensive Services Act budget needs an additional \$600,000; inflation makes up the rest. There was \$1.3M available to implement the results of the pay study; staff will not know what the pay study tells them until the end of March. That leaves plenty of time to make adjustments if necessary once they have that information.

The highlights of the Utility Fund show the budget was about \$20M higher than the current year, it was not unusual for the Utility Fund to fluctuate by millions of dollars each year because it depends on a lot of things, such as the cost of energy, which has gone up, and the City also has some large customers coming on line that use electric and gas. Aerofarms and Tyson were heavy utility users and in order for the City to be able to provide them with the energy they need, they have to buy it off the market which increases the expenses, and the revenues. The Biennial Rate Study goes into effect this year and the goal was to have each customer class cover their cost for services as much possible, and every year they include funds to improve the reliability of their utility infrastructure. This year included continued implementation of the substation upgrade plan, waterline reconstruction, sewer line maintenance, and right-of-way clearance.

Mr. Larking noted the Investing in Danville report recommended how the City should use the casino revenue, as much as possible, with the goal of investing in the community, producing more economic opportunity, producing more businesses, more tax base and with that, get additional revenue that enables the City to support ongoing needs to provide services to the community. Mr. Larking reviewed the items that account for about \$8.4M of casino gaming revenue, out of the \$12.1M, including \$2.8M for Economic Development initiatives, \$2.5M for Danville Public Schools, \$845,000 for Police Headquarters for debt and lease payments, \$800,000 for blight removal, \$467,250 for gang prevention program, \$251,000 for summer internship program, \$105,000 to complete the Plan Danville comprehensive plan effort, and \$96,900 for rental inspection districts.

City Council has three categories of focus which were education, economic development, and public safety. Over \$4.4M has been budgeted for economic development projects and initiatives, \$2M for Phase 1 of the Ballou Park Splash Pad, \$905,000 for neighborhood revitalization efforts, \$625,000 for Riverwalk Trail improvements, \$251,850 for Experience Works summer internship program, and \$566,240 for tourism marketing efforts. These were being paid for with funds that are not reoccurring, and were part of the Capital and Special Projects budget. Under education, there was a net increase of \$553,000 and a reduction in the capital request of the school system of \$2M, but the operational budget went up \$2.5M. That \$2.5M will be going toward \$275,429 for three behavioral specialist positions, \$1.4M to pay for the local match associated with the state's

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5% increases for teachers, and an additional \$861,124 to pay for implementation of the \$14 per hour minimum wage in the school system.

Public safety will continue implementation of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Comprehensive Gang model. There was \$806,000 in the Special Projects budget for police equipment which includes additional closed circuit television cameras and police personnel equipment. There was \$845,000 for Police headquarters lease/debt payments, and they want to continue their focus on youth and community engagement programming through the Police Department. And as usual, they have the purchase of new fire apparatus for the Fire department. Under Infrastructure, there were some capital budget items related to the Airport including \$664,178 for a fuel farm expansion, \$350,000 for terminal building roof repair, and \$4.1M for the south ramp rehabilitation. Most of that was paid for with state and federal grant funds; the City does have to provide a local match. Under streets, the City wants to improve neighborhood and the downtown streets, so there was \$1M for neighborhood street resurfacing, and \$500,000 for River District streetscape improvements.

Mr. Larking reviewed the next steps and stated the goal of this year's budget was to focus on the success of the youth; the City needs to educate the children the best they can while they were here. Also to have opportunities for them to come back and work if they go off to school or to have a job after high school here in the community. Today, young people were choosing where to live based on the quality of life of that community, so the City has to focus on quality of life, have great neighborhoods, great parks, and give people reasons to want to live in the communities; they were going to focus on that. Citizens also want to have a community that was safe. This budget works to continue all their efforts in those areas and was recommended for Council's consideration.

Mayor Jones thanked Mr. Larking and the budget team. One of the biggest items was employee pay, which was \$5.2M with an additional \$1.3M increase; Council was looking at their personnel. Mayor Jones also noted he loved the theme of the budget this year.

Council Member Vogler stated he would like to see more details on the \$800,000 for blight removal. As far as the \$1.3M that was budgeted for the recommendation off the pay study, which based on the number of employees was roughly \$1300, this was not going to be an across the board implementation, but thinks it does show everyone that they have a starting point. Mr. Vogler noted this was his tenth budget he has been a part of as a Council Member, and cannot remember one that was passed exactly as it was presented. It was always the beginning of a conversation; the Council makes changes based on priorities they have, and knows this year the Council has stated time and again that employee pay was their top priority. He looks forward to continuing this conversation and to finding more money to improve the pay; he doesn't want to lose any more good people. Mr. Vogler stated he would like Council to discuss setting a policy on how much annual revenue from the casino must be placed in the reserve funds to ensure that the City does not deplete the reserves, to grow the reserve fund to grow the City's bond rating.

Vice Mayor Miller stated that personnel costs were the highest in any business and regarding other communities it looked like Danville was lacking in that area. It was expensive to train someone including firemen and policemen, and then find out they were leaving because they can get more money. The City has good employees, and they want to keep them here; it will save the City money if they can retain the employees they have. They need to make sure they were in the game as far as competitive salaries. Council Member Saunders commended the City Manager, budget team staff, and all City staff for all they were doing. They appreciate the budget presented tonight and Danville should be proud of the way their finances were being watched and managed. Danville was getting all kinds of awards for their budget presentation, management, and expenditure of

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such funds. Mr. Saunders thanked the City Manager and staff, and looked forward to moving on from here. Mr. Larking thanked everyone on the budget team for the work they have done, and the department directors who took presenting budgets to represent what they needed to operate and no more. This budget was a budget that meets the needs of the community.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Jones opened the floor for a Public Hearing regarding Budget Items on the Consent Agenda. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the Danville Register & Bee on March 14, 2023. No one present desired to be heard and the Public Hearing was closed.

Council Member Vogler **moved** for adoption of the following Consent Agenda items:

Minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on February 21, 2023. Draft copies of the minutes had been distributed prior to the meeting.

Amending the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Appropriation Ordinance for Appropriation of Opioid Settlement Funds

An Ordinance entitled, Ordinance No. 2023-03.02, Amending the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Appropriation Ordinance by Increasing Revenues from the National Opioids Settlement Trust and Opioid Abatement Authority in the Amount of \$1,087,500 and Appropriating the Same.

Consideration of State Aviation Capital Grant Funding

An Ordinance entitled, Ordinance No. 2023-03.03, Amending the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Appropriation Ordinance to Provide for Additional State Aviation Funding in the Amount of \$260,409 with a Local Share in the Amount of \$129,774 for a Total Amount of \$390,183 and Appropriating Same.

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

Council Member Whittle asked about the opioid funds, it was \$80 billion that CVS was paying on the four settlements and City Attorney Clarke Whitfield stated he believed so, and noted in the agenda there was a resolution where the City filed suit against them, and a number of companies that were distributors. Staff will be asking Council for its consideration tonight on a settlement in those as well. Mr. Whittle stated they can't move any further past that if they settle that tonight, and Mr. Whitfield noted, not with regard to these companies. Mr. Whittle asked Mr. Whitfield to explain again to the folks how much money that was and Mr. Whitfield stated it was \$1,087,500 over a period of about 19 years. Mr. Whittle stated he guessed that was around \$30 a life for everyone that was lost in Danville due to opioids, and noted he disagreed with it, and felt like there would be enough funding coming down the line to fight it. Mayor Jones reminded Council that was a total of \$8 billion dollars spread out over almost all localities in the United States.

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

VOTE:	7-1-1
AYE:	Buckner, Hood, Jones, Mayo Miller, Saunders, and Vogler (7)
NAY:	Whittle (1)
ABSENT:	Campbell (1)

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NEW BUSINESS

Review of General Fund Financials as of February 28, 2023

Chief Financial Officer Michael Adkins gave a review of the General Fund financial results through the end of February, that was eight months into the fiscal year, or 67% complete. Revenues continue to perform well, and have received \$73.8M by the end of February which represents 60% of the budget; this was about 1% ahead of where the City was last February, and an increase of \$4.5M over last year at this time, primarily from consumer taxes and some property related taxes. Current real estate collections were at 54% of budget; the City was between billing cycles right now, the next billing statement for taxes will go out the first week of May. The collection of delinquent real estate taxes was still performing well, the City has received over \$770,000 at this point which accounts for 86% of the budget.

Local consumer taxes were outperforming budget and up from last year. Overall, the City has exceeded last year by \$2.4M. Sales tax was \$7.7M, up \$365,000 over last year and slightly ahead of budget at 68%. Meals tax was at \$7.3M, up \$730,000 over last year and currently on target with budget at 67%. Lodging taxes were at \$1.7M, up \$351,000 from last year, trailing budget a little, but that was typical going through the winter months with less travel going on; typically it will pick up in the spring. The bulk of Business Licenses were due in March, and Mr. Adkins noted he was looking ahead today, for the 1st through 21st of March, and the City has received a total of \$5.7M; the budget was \$5.4M so it has already exceeded budget. Some of the larger companies can choose to pay their installments quarterly, so the City will still be collecting some business licenses. All state revenues were being received as expected with no concerns. On the Expenditure side, overall the City was at 69% of budget and always runs a little ahead because some of the expenditure line items were paid in full very early in the year, such as transfers for capital projects. Departmental Spending was at 63% of budget, trailing budget and typical. Under non-departmental costs, the biggest one was group health insurance, and as mentioned in the past, the City was running ahead of budget at about 10%, but there were other employee benefit line items that were performing under budget and will help offset that. Also as mentioned in previous months, the employee premium went up January 1st, the City was just beginning to see that come in, and that will help offset those costs as they go through the end of the year; however, it was all based on claims and will have to wait and see how that turns out.

Mayor Jones noted Item B would be moved to another agenda.

CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING DANVILLE CITY CODE REGARDING ELDERLY AND DISABLED REAL ESTATE TAX EXEMPTION

Mayor Jones opened the floor for a Public Hearing regarding Amending Danville City Code. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Danville Register & Bee* on March 7, 2023 and March 14, 2023.

Chief Financial Officer Michael Adkins noted last year, Council asked staff to look at the income threshold for qualifying for these taxes; staff did so, and increased the threshold from \$20,000 to \$30,000 for fiscal year 2023. Staff noted they would continue to look at this item for future increases and the item on the agenda tonight was staff's recommendation to further increase that threshold from \$30,000 to \$35,000. Mr. Adkins stated he also placed a corrected copy of the Ordinance for this item at Council's seats; the one included in the agenda was an early draft. Tonight was the first reading, at the next meeting when Council takes action, they will have the corrected ordinance in the agenda.

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Mr. Adkins explained with regard to real estate taxes, the City does have some programs that allow for the abatement or the elimination of the real estate tax. This particular one was for elderly and permanently disabled citizens, if their income was below the threshold; they were currently talking about raising that to \$35,000. There was also a form that had to be filled out, and was based on the number of assets they have as well; they can qualify for either 50% abatement or half of their tax bill, or possibly 100% abatement which means their entire real estate tax bill. Mr. Adkins explained they also have a program for veterans that were permanently disabled in the line of duty. Mr. Vogler thanked Mr. Adkins for doing this.

Mayor Jones recognized Katherine Wall, who thanked Council, they were doing a great job helping citizens and questioned what was the consideration of a disabled person, was it disabled person per Social Security Disability, or SSI. Mayor Jones asked Ms. Wall to take the City Manager's card and call his office for this information.

No one further desired to be heard and the public hearing was closed.

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-03.04

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ARTICLE IV, ENTITLED "REAL ESTATE AND MOBILE HOME TAX EXEMPTION AND DEFERRAL FOR CERTAIN ELDERLY AND DISABLED PERSONS," OF CHAPTER 37, ENTITLED "TAXATION," OF THE DANVILLE CITY CODE TO ALLOW FOR REVISIONS TO THE REAL ESTATE EXEMPTION AND DEFERRAL PROGRAM.

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

CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION TO ISSUE REVENUE BONDS FOR ELECTRIC AND WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-03.03

RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE ISSUANCE AND SALE BY THE CITY OF DANVILLE, VIRGINIA, OF A TAXABLE UTILITY SYSTEM REVENUE BOND, SERIES 2023, IN A PRINCIPAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$7,500,000, HERETOFORE AUTHORIZED, AND PROVIDING FOR THE FORM, DETAILS AND PAYMENT OF SUCH BOND.

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

VOTE: 7-1-1
AYE: Hood, Jones, Mayo, Miller
Saunders, Vogler, and Buckner (7)
NAY: Whittle (1)
ABSENT: Campbell (1)

CONSIDERATION OF NEW NATIONAL OPIOID SETTLEMENTS

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

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RESOLUTION NO. 2023-03.04

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DANVILLE, VIRGINIA AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING OF THE CITY'S PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF OPIOID-RELATED CLAIMS AGAINST TEVA, ALLERGAN, WALMART, WALGREENS, CVS, AND THEIR RELATED CORPORATE ENTITIES, AND DIRECTING THE CITY ATTORNEY AND/OR THE CITY'S OUTSIDE COUNSEL TO EXECUTE THE DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO EFFECTUATE THE CITY'S PARTICIPATION IN THE SETTLEMENTS.

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

Vice Mayor Miller stated that these companies made a lot of money off these prescription refills by turning a blind eye; that was why they have been entered into the suit. City Attorney Clarke Whitfield stated that was correct because they were the distributors, and they did not take care to evaluate things as they come in, and did not do their duty to their patients or the duty under the law.

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

VOTE: 6-2-1
AYE: Jones, Mayo, Miller, Saunders
Vogler and Buckner (6)
NAY: Whittle and Hood (2)
ABSENT: Campbell (1)

CONSIDERATION OF AN ORDINANCE EXTENDING A TEMPORARY AMBULANCE OPERATOR'S PERMIT TO FAB'S FAMILY MEDICAL TRANSPORT

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-03.02

AN ORDINANCE EXTENDING A TEMPORARY AMBULANCE OPERATOR'S PERMIT TO FAB'S FAMILY MEDICAL TRANSPORT.

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

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

COMMUNICATIONS FROM VISITORS

Mayor Jones recognized Katherine Wall, 127 Fairway Drive, who spoke to Council about the beautification of the City. She inquired as to who owned the rights-of-way going into the City and coming from the City near the Visitor's Center. She believed there was ample space there to make it more inviting for people coming into Danville. She also asked if there were companies or people who could donate money to make that happen. She suggested that Economic Development look into getting some restaurants on the other side of Rt. 29. She stated the utility give back program

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was excellent, and she hoped that did not go away. She asked Mr. Heatherly from SOVAH about the possibility of getting a diabetic specialist at the hospital, and thanked all the city workers and especially those who pick up trash to help keep the City beautiful.

COMMUNICATIONS

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

City Manager Ken Larking thanked Julie Brown at the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research for helping with the paid internship program, and the people who were willing to take in the interns participating in the program.

Vice Mayor Miller noted that the Lifesaving Crew has a program to assist those in the community who were considered frequent flyers in the emergency room. They go into their home and provide care and education, so they do not go to the emergency room for services not needed. This past Saturday Council Members Campbell, Jones, Mayo, and he went to the Westmoreland event at the park; they were raising funds for the Westmoreland grounds. John Newman was the speaker, and he got his start on those basketball courts, does a lot of youth work and has youth basketball camps. He spoke about other athletes from the community that were there and how much they were doing to better the community and raise funds for the park.

Council Member Saunders thanked Mr. Heatherly for being there tonight and that he looked forward to working with him. He thanked Chief Coffey for coming to Danville and for all that he does, and thanked the firefighters for all that they do for the city every single day; Council does understand their job was very important. He thanked Dr. Hairston for all that she does and stated he was looking forward to working with the new CFO as well. He stated that the Mayor was doing an excellent job and thanked him for what he does every day.

Council Member Vogler stated the theme of the budget presentation and the theme for his closing comments were both about the youth in the city. He reminded everyone that Parks and Recreation youth baseball, softball, and teeball signups are extended through this week. Interested individuals can call 434-799-5214 to sign up their child. The Kinder Jump Start program was going on from June 26 to July 1, children need to be registered by April 28th; this was a great way to prepare a child for kindergarten. There were a number of summer camps through DPS, and April 7 was the deadline to register for those. The paid summer intern program will host an information session at Bonner this Thursday, March 30 at 5:30pm. This past Friday the City broke ground on the River Front Park, and the Third Ave splash pad was being built and should be ready by early summer.

Council Member Buckner thanked the Mayor for everything he does for the city. Council attended the Vantage Lofts ribbon cutting yesterday, and the groundbreaking for the River Front Park was phenomenal. Mr. Buckner noted he would be traveling to Norfolk, VA to be with their friend Britain "Heart" Beltran who was defending her title in the bare-knuckle boxing arena this week.

Council Member Hood gave a shout out to all those who attended Cruising for Levi last Saturday at the River Church parking lot, and asked that everyone please keep the family in their prayers. Mr. Hood noted a citizen, Tia Johnson, talked about a vision to come up with a community Easter event, so she reached out to the community, small businesses, and organizations and put it together. On April 8 at Johnson Elementary school, 680 Arnett Boulevard, from 1pm to 5pm she was hosting a community Easter event. There will be an egg hunt, face painting, raffles, pictures with the Easter bunny, music, sack races, bag lunches, cotton candy and more.

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Council Member Mayo noted his agreement with Council Member Vogler on getting youth signed up to participate in sports to keep them engaged. He thanked Steve Heatherly for coming and presenting tonight, thanked the Mayor for all he does and how he leads by example. Danville has so much going on this week, there was a Family Reunification event at DCC in the Foundation Building at 5:30 pm in the Silverman Auditorium, with vendors, agencies, and support groups and information presented by The Department of Corrections. There will be a HBU expo at G.W. High School on March 23 from 11:00am to 2:00pm for students and then from 5:00pm to 7:00pm for the public. On March 30 the church based tutorial Better Together, will hold a luncheon to recruit more churches to open their doors to church-based tutorial programs. The event will be hosted at the Stratford Conference Center at 12:00pm; for more information contact Kenny Lewis or Barry Mayo.

Mayor Jones thanked everyone in chambers and everyone watching on River City TV, and welcomed Steve Heatherly and Andrea Gillus to the community. Mayor Jones thanked Council for all their kind words and encouragement. The Danville Public School job fair was a huge success and a wonderful event. Mayor Jones thanked the City staff for the work they have done on the budget.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

APPROVED:

s/Alonzo L. Jones
MAYOR

ATTEST:

s/Susan M. DeMasi, CMC
CITY CLERK