

December 19, 2023

The Second December meeting of the Danville City Council was held on December 19, 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: L.G. "Larry" Campbell Jr., Mayor Alonzo L. Jones, Barry Mayo, Vice Mayor Gary P. Miller, and Sherman M. Saunders (5). The following Council Members were absent: James B. Buckner, Bryant Hood, J. Lee Vogler, Jr., and Madison J.R. Whittle (4).

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 Sherman M. Saunders gave the Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

Mayor Jones yielded to City Manager Ken Larking who announced the new Police Chief for the City of Danville was Chris Wiles. Mr. Larking reviewed the procedure for hiring a new police chief and discussed the celebration held earlier at police headquarters. Chief Wiles was then sworn in by the City Clerk, Susan DeMasi.

Chief Wiles addressed the Mayor, Council, City Manager, Deputy City Manager, City Staff, and citizens in the audience and on River City TV, thanking his parents, wife, son, Chief Neal Morris, Chief Philip Broadfoot, Deputy Chief Dean Hairston, Chief Scott Booth, and Ken Larking for their roles throughout his career. He also thanked the City of Danville employees who provided outstanding service to the community and the Police Department. He thanked City Council for working collaboratively for the best interest of the community and for their support of the men and women in the Police Department. He thanked the outstanding community members who have been supportive of the department and for all the words of encouragement. Chief Wiles thanked everyone for allowing the Danville Police Department the privilege and awesome responsibility to protect and serve them. Chief Wiles noted, most importantly, the men and women of the Danville Police Department because him standing there today was a direct result of the incredible work that they do. Council members congratulated Chief Wiles on his past accomplishments, his professionalism, and the continued success of the department.

Mayor Jones recognized Chasta White, Community Development, who discussed the Harry Johnson Holiday Classic on December 27 through December 29 at Bonner Middle School.

CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Campbell **moved** to **POSTPONE** the following Consent Agenda item until the next scheduled meeting:

Consideration of Amending the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Appropriation Ordinance for the 2022 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant in the amount of \$83,740 with local funding of \$8,374.

ORDINANCE NO. NO. 2023-12.17

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR A GRANT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND

December 19, 2023

SECURITY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$83,740.22 AND A LOCAL SHARE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$8,374.03 FOR AN AIR COMPRESSOR/CASCADE/FILL STATION FOR A TOTAL APPROPRIATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$92,114.25 AND APPROPRIATING SAME.

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

VOTE: 5-0-4
AYE: Campbell, Jones, Mayo, Miller, and Saunders (5)
NAY: None (0)
ABSENT: Buckner, Hood, Vogler, and Whittle (4)

Council Member Campbell **moved** for adoption of the following Consent Agenda item:

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

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

VOTE: 5-0-4
AYE: Campbell, Jones, Mayo, Miller, and Saunders (5)
NAY: None (0)
ABSENT: Buckner, Hood, Vogler, and Whittle (4)

APPOINTMENTS

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

Resolution No. 2023-12.05 - A Resolution Reappointing Helm Dobbins to the Employee Retirement System Board.

Resolution No. 2023-12.06 - A Resolution Reappointing Edgar Love to the Employee Retirement System Board.

Resolution No. 2023-12.07 - A Resolution Reappointing Ann Evans to the Planning Commission.

Resolution No. 2023-12.08 - A Resolution Reappointing Pierre Jones to the Planning Commission.

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

VOTE: 5-0-4
AYE: Campbell, Jones, Mayo, Miller, and Saunders (5)
NAY: None (0)
ABSENT: Buckner, Hood, Vogler, and Whittle (4)

NEW BUSINESS

REVIEW OF GENERAL FUND FINANCIALS AS OF NOVEMBER 30, 2023

Chief Financial Officer Michael Adkins stated this update was through November, marking the fifth month of this fiscal year, or 42% of the fiscal year completed. Revenues from the General Fund

December 19, 2023

were just under \$52M for the first five months and a \$7M dollar increase from last year at this time. This increase was coming from three major places: interest earnings of \$1.2M over last year, casino taxes, both from the state and direct from Caesars was \$4.4M of that increase, and the rest of the increase was primarily found in other local taxes, about \$1.3M increase over last year. Sales taxes were at \$5.2M, 46% of budget and an increase of \$545,000 over last year. Meals taxes were at \$5M at the end of November, 46% of budget and an increase of \$511,000 over last year. Lodging taxes were at \$1.5M which was 60% of budget, running ahead of budget and an increase of \$285,000 over last year. Property tax bills went out in November, were due December 5 and the City continues to collect those taxes throughout this month; at this point in the budget the City should be about 50% collected. Real Estate taxes were at \$9.7M and 51% of budget. Personal property taxes, the local portion, were \$5M, right at 50% of budget. State and federal funding were both being received as anticipated with no concerns there. Under Expenditures, the Department level spending was 40% of budget, a little behind and where they like to see that. The only Expenditure they have been watching and were concerned about was the group health insurance; that has improved slightly at 43% of budget, just a percentage point above budget at this time. The City has extended 88% of the school's funding at this point. The schools received a capital grant from the State and it was a reimbursable grant; they have to spend the money and then turn the receipts into the State to get reimbursed. The City had helped front some of those expenses as they started those construction projects; those were well underway and the City has started receiving reimbursement from that grant in December. That percentage will start to go back down as that line item was reimbursed with those grant proceeds. The Audit was done for Fiscal Year 2023; they were proofreading the annual report now and hoped to have that published next week. Mr. Adkins noted he had hoped Brown Edwards would be there tonight but it took them a little longer to get to this point, and pushed that out to January 16th. The City was in the midst of coordinating another public auction of abandoned parcels; that was planned for Friday, January 12th at noon in chambers.

In response to Mayor Jones, Mr. Adkins confirmed that revenues were \$7M over last year at this time. A little over half of that was casino revenues, but the other half was growth in local taxes and interest. Council Member Campbell noted it seemed like the City will end up being over \$40M in reserves, and Mr. Adkins stated there was a very strong chance they will be there. The City ended Fiscal Year 2023 at \$37M, if the City can hold onto the surplus this year, it could reach \$40M.

Council Member Saunders stated the City was doing so well and a special appreciation to the Council, staff and citizens of the City; \$7M was a good trajectory and hope there was more. Mr. Saunders noted that he hopes City Council and the citizens understand that while Danville was doing great, there was a plan to invest, and would like Council to take some of this money and that some priority be given to plan to invest in children, in school age children from Head Start all the way through to include students at DCC and Averett. Vice Mayor Miller noted his agreement with Council Member Saunders, even though projections look good, looking around the country there were some things that were not so good. Inflation was crazy and things were costing more; the City needs a buffer saved up. They need to invest in their children, to catch up with other school systems; the City needs to spend more on the children and schools.

City Manager Ken Larking commended Mr. Adkins for his role as Finance Director and for Danville receiving the Government Finance Officers Association Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 37th year. Mr. Adkins and his team do a phenomenal job of putting together these reports and keeping the records in compliance.

December 19, 2023

CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST TO AMEND CHAPTER 41 ENTITLED “ZONING ORDINANCE” OF THE CITY OF DANVILLE, 1986 AS AMENDED.

Mayor Jones opened the floor for a public hearing. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Danville Register & Bee* on December 7, 2023 and December 14, 2023. No one present desired to be heard and the Public Hearing was closed.

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-12.18

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 41 ENTITLED, “ZONING ORDINANCE” OF THE CODE OF THE PAGE 2 OF 99 CITY OF DANVILLE, VIRGINIA, 1986, AS AMENDED, MORE SPECIFICALLY, TO AMEND ARTICLE 2, SECTION Y, ENTITLED “SHORT TERM RENTALS”, ARTICLE 3.A, ARTICLE 3.B, ARTICLE 3.C, ARTICLE 3.D, ARTICLE 3.E, ARTICLE 3.F, ARTICLE 3.G AND ARTICLE 3.I.

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

VOTE: 5-0-4
AYE: Campbell, Jones, Mayo, Miller, and Saunders (5)
NAY: None (0)
ABSENT: Buckner, Hood, Vogler, and Whittle (4)

CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP OF THIRTY SURPLUS VACANT LOTS THROUGHOUT THE CITY TO THE DANVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY

Council Member Campbell **moved** to **POSTPONE** this Resolution until the next regularly scheduled Council meeting:

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-12.09

AN ORDINANCE GRANTING SPECIAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION PZ23- 00375, FILED BY KELLY REAL ESTATE, REQUESTING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT TO CONVERT A SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLING TO A DUPLEX AT PARCEL ID 24051 (411 WEST MAIN STREET) IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 3.E., SECTION C, ITEM 2.

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

VOTE: 5-0-4
AYE: Campbell, Jones, Mayo, Miller, and Saunders (5)
NAY: None (0)
ABSENT: Buckner, Hood, Vogler, and Whittle (4)

CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE RELEASE OF TWENTY-THREE NUISANCE ABATEMENT LIENS AFFECTING NINE PARCELS OF LAND

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

December 19, 2023

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-12.10

A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE RELEASE OF CITY-HELD LIENS AGAINST REAL PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS PARCELS #01033, #21281, #21283, #21284, #22754, #22755, #73086, #73087, AND #73088 TO FACILITATE THEIR DONATION TO THE DANVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY.

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

VOTE: 5-0-4
AYE: Campbell, Jones, Mayo, Miller, and Saunders (5)
NAY: None (0)
ABSENT: Buckner, Hood, Vogler, and Whittle (4)

CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE RELEASE OF FOUR NUISANCE ABATEMENT LIENS AFFECTING PARCEL NO. 04500 ON BRADLEY ROAD

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-12.11

A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE RELEASE OF CITY-HELD LIENS AGAINST REAL PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS PARCEL #04500 (BRADLEY ROAD) TO FACILITATE ITS DONATION TO THE DANVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY.

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

VOTE: 5-0-4
AYE: Campbell, Jones, Mayo, Miller, and Saunders (5)
NAY: None (0)
ABSENT: Buckner, Hood, Vogler, and Whittle (4)

CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE RELEASE OF SEVEN NUISANCE ABATEMENT LIENS AFFECTING SEVEN PARCELS

Council Member Saunders **moved** for adoption a Resolution entitled:

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-12.12

A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE RELEASE OF CITY-HELD LIENS AGAINST REAL PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS PARCELS #00344, #03106, #03243, #03442, #04259, #73570, AND #74077 TO FACILITATE THEIR DONATION TO THE DANVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY.

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

VOTE: 5-0-4
AYE: Campbell, Jones, Mayo, Miller, and Saunders (5)
NAY: None (0)
ABSENT: Buckner, Hood, Vogler, and Whittle (4)

December 19, 2023

CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE RELEASE OF NUISANCE ABATEMENT LIENS AFFECTING PARCEL #04205 ON BRADLEY ROAD

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-12.13

A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE RELEASE OF CITY-HELD LIENS AGAINST REAL PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS PARCEL #04205 (BRADLEY ROAD) TO FACILITATE ITS DONATION TO THE DANVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY.

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

VOTE: 5-0-4
AYE: Campbell, Jones, Mayo, Miller, and Saunders (5)
NAY: None (0)
ABSENT: Buckner, Hood, Vogler, and Whittle (4)

CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE RELEASE OF A NUISANCE ABATEMENT LIEN AFFECTING PARCEL #03482 ON BRADLEY ROAD

Council Member Saunders **moved** for adoption a Resolution entitled:

RESOLUTION NO. NO. 2023-12.14

A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE RELEASE OF CITY-HELD LIENS AGAINST REAL PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS PARCEL #03482 (BRADLEY ROAD), TO FACILITATE ITS DONATION TO THE DANVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY.

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

VOTE: 5-0-4
AYE: Campbell, Jones, Mayo, Miller, and Saunders (5)
NAY: None (0)
ABSENT: Buckner, Hood, Vogler, and Whittle (4)

City Attorney Clarke Whitfield explained what Council had done was pave the way for those donations. Staff will be coming back at a subsequent meeting at which time they will be donating those to the Housing Authority.

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications from the City Manager, Deputy City Manager or City Clerk. The City Attorney wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Council Member Campbell wished everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. This was the time of the season to celebrate life, and this was a new year for him without his dad here. Rev. Campbell reminded citizens about the PLAN Danville event in February with George Mason

December 19, 2023

University, and asked the City Manager to investigate the City Armory and the City's options for the building.

Council Member Mayo wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and a Happy New Year. Mr. Mayo commented on the Green Book plaques at the Yancey House, the dedication, and the history behind that. Mr. Mayo noted there was so much happening around Danville and it was exciting; Danville was on the move. Mr. Mayo encouraged citizens to come out and watch the Harry Johnson Classic, it was going to be a great time.

Vice Mayor Miller noted he attended the dedication of the plaque; he knew about the Green Book, it originated in 1937 like a travel atlas for African-Americans but did not realize a couple of houses in Danville were in the Green Book. Dr. Miller noted there was still a chance to see the holiday light show for \$10 a carload, and wished everyone a Happy Holiday, Merry Christmas, and Happy Hanukkah.

Council Member Saunders congratulated Chief Wiles and his family on his promotion. The event in the Westmoreland neighborhood was a great event; Council was very proud of that community. Also, thanks to the Danville Fine Arts Museum for everything they were doing for the City. God Bless the children, they were the future. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone. Please remember those who are experiencing difficulty no matter what it may be.

Mayor Jones noted this was the last Council meeting of the year; it has been an exciting year, hearing the financial report and being \$7M over last year at this time. Thanks to the City Manager for all that he and his staff do. To Council Members Campbell and Whittle, they have lost some family members, Council Member Campbell's father and Council Member Whittle's mother. Mayor Jones asked citizens to continue to keep them in their prayers this holiday season. Mayor Jones wished everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 pm.

APPROVED:

s/Alonzo L. Jones
MAYOR

ATTEST:

s/Susan M. DeMasi, CMC
CITY CLERK