

April 16, 2024

A Regular Work Session of the Danville City Council convened on April 16, 2024 at 9:04 p.m. in the Conference Room 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 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.

Vice Mayor Miller presided.

## **WORK SESSION ITEMS**

### **PLAN DANVILLE PRESENTATION**

Division Director of Planning Renee Burton noted she had provided Council with a handout that outlined the top eight topics staff was looking at for the Comprehensive Plan for PLAN Danville. The eight policies were what they heard from the citizens, from which they developed their policies and principles. Ms. Burton stated this was the first draft, and asked Council to review them; if they had any concerns to let her know. They were going to move forward with writing the first section, which was Chapter 2, Transportation. The reason for that was that the transportation chapter must be approved by VDOT and they have a ninety day review period; staff was going to get that out first.

Mayor Jones asked why Community wasn't Chapter 1; he would like that to be the first chapter, and Ms. Burton noted that can be changed. City Manager Ken Larking stated his agreement with the Mayor; Danville was a finalist for the All American City Award this year because of its community engagement related to this plan in particular; having Community first fits with that. Council Member Vogler questioned where billboards would fall into this, and Ms. Burton stated it would ultimately go into the Land Use section which will talk about the zoning code; the updates would be included in the zoning code. Council Member Campbell questioned affordable housing, how much it costs to build, and Ms. Burton stated it was about \$200 per square foot right now. Rev. Campbell asked what affordable housing was, and Ms. Burton noted she would get Rev. Campbell more information on that.

Ms. Burton explained this document will be available to the public beginning May 22<sup>nd</sup>, which will be their next big, community event; it will be an all-day event, with office hours during the day as well as a block party in the evening from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Union Street. This was almost exactly a year since they did their kickoff.

Council thanked Ms. Burton for the information.

### **CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION DECLARING CERTAIN CITY-OWNED PROPERTY TO BE SURPLUS TO THE NEEDS OF THE CITY AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO CONVEY SUCH PROPERTY TO THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

Assistant City Attorney Ryan Dodson explained this and the next item both relate to a project staff had been working on in partnership with the Federal Department of Veterans Affairs. There was some land on Lee Street directly across the street from the Veterans cemetery. The City had been working for several years to get ownership of it after doing demolitions of blighted houses.

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The goal was, if the City donates it to them, they intend to construct a parking lot to provide off street parking on Veterans Day and Memorial Day when they have ceremonies there. Veterans Affairs in Washington stated if the City passed these resolutions they would construct a parking lot and permanently maintain it. Mr. Vogler noted he was in favor of this, and during events, there were very few places to park. Mr. Dodson stated they were looking at four lots, the City owns two, a third will be donated to them if the City does the other proposal which was to release the tax liens to allow this, and the fourth they were buying outright. Mr. Saunders thanked Mr. Dodson for doing this, it was very helpful for parking.

Council agreed to put this on an upcoming agenda.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF THE RELEASE OF LIENS AND TAXES AGAINST PARCEL 22973 LEE STREET TO FACILITATE ITS TRANSFER TO THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

Council agreed to put this on an upcoming agenda.

#### **PROGRAM UPDATES**

City Manager Ken Larking noted he emailed council members about the scoreboard at the American Legion Baseball stadium; the cost was \$310,000 which does not include running electrical and fiber for communication purposes. Currently, the City would have to have a budget amendment because there was not enough money in contingency to pay for it within the current year. There were multiple revenue categories that were coming in better than expected, if that was something Council wanted to accomplish this current year, so that it could get installed hopefully before the season starts. Mr. Vogler noted he would like Council to do this now; the current scoreboard was the original and was over thirty years old. The City was looking at other improvements at the ballpark, there has been a lot of excitement over the last few years, the video board would give something new and exciting for people coming into the ballpark this year while they were still working on the long-term items. Mr. Vogler noted he would vote in favor of it.

Council agreed to put this on an upcoming agenda.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Council Member Whittle questioned the status of the budget, was there a final mockup of it and Mr. Larking noted he sent an email with suggested revisions and had asked for feedback. Mr. Whittle questioned when Council would vote on it and Mr. Larking explained the next version of the budget was supposed to be out by April 30<sup>th</sup>, but does not get voted on until June. The city manager recommends a budget in March; there was a version that comes out by the end of April which was the Council Budget to the Public, that was there for people to comment on. There were public hearings for the school budget, and the city's budget. Mr. Vogler noted once the Council gets presented it gets hard to change anything significantly from that point. Mr. Whittle noted he believed the budget they had was good, and just thinks they were missing one little spot, it would be tax cuts straight across the board. Mayor Jones suggested Mr. Vogler and Mr. Whittle meet with the City Manager and discuss this.

#### **CLOSED MEETING**

At 9:18 p.m., Mayor Jones **moved** that this meeting of the City Council of the City of Danville, Virginia be recessed and that Council immediately reconvene in a Closed Meeting for the following purpose: discussion, consideration or interview of prospective candidates for

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employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, salaries, disciplining of specific public employees or appointees as permitted by Subsection (A)(1) of Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended and more specifically to consider: the performance reviews of the City Clerk City, Manager and City Attorney.

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 (0)

Upon unanimous vote at 10:01 p.m., Council reconvened in open session and Mayor Jones **moved** for adoption of the following Resolution:

**CERTIFICATE OF CLOSED MEETING**

WHEREAS, the Council convened in Closed Meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.1-344.1 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, requires a Certification by the Council that such Closed Meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council hereby certifies that, to the best of each Member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements of Virginia Law under Section 2.2-3711 were heard, discussed or considered, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the Motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered by the Committee.

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

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

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:02 P.M.

APPROVED:

s/Alonzo L. Jones  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

s/Susan M. DeMasi, CMC  
CITY CLERK