

August 19, 2025

A Regular Work Session of the Danville City Council convened on August 19, 2025, at 8:13 p.m. in the City Council Conference Room located on the Fourth Floor of the Municipal Building, 427 Patton Street. The following Council Members were present: Vice Mayor James B. Buckner, L.G. "Larry" Campbell Jr., Bryant Hood, Mayor Alonzo L. Jones, Barry P. Mayo, Dr. Gary P. Miller, Sherman M. Saunders, and Madison J.R. Whittle (8). J. Lee Vogler, 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.

WORK SESSION ITEMS

MEETING MINUTES

Upon **Motion** by Vice Mayor Buckner and **second** by Council Member Campbell, Minutes of the Regular Work Sessions held on June 17, 2025, and July 15, 2025, were approved as presented. Draft copies were distributed to Council Members prior to the Meeting.

CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Vice Mayor Buckner noted the Committee on Appointments met earlier and make the following recommendations:

Krystal Farmer	-	Danville Community Policy and Management Team
Frank Shanks	-	Danville Utility Commission

Council agreed to put these on an upcoming business agenda.

COMMUNITY FOREST REVITALIZATION PROGRAM (CFRP) UPDATE

Jessica Smith, City of Danville's Horticulturist, noted the City applied for a grant for technical services through the Forestry Department; Green Infrastructure Center will update the City. Jessica Huang, the Community and Forestry Planner and Kendall Topping, Community Forester, from Green Infrastructure Center presented an update to Council

Ms. Huang reviewed the outline of their PowerPoint and thanked their funders, the USDA Forest Service and the Virginia Department of Forestry. Ms. Huang explained they have been working with the City for the past year, and were part of the non-profit, Green Infrastructure Center. As part of this program, they have monthly workshops with the Tree Canopy Committee, made up of city staff members and community partners. This has been a joint effort and collaborative process.

Mr. Topping explained this program was to help improve the value and quality of Danville's urban forest. Trees add a huge value to the City of Danville, as well as contributing to the beauty of the City. They want to promote trees for economic growth, especially downtown; those trees provide a lot of benefits. Shoppers claim they will spend 12% more on goods and services and often more likely to stay around to shop where there was shade. Mature trees raise property values by 10%. They can save up to 30% on air conditioning just by covering the A/C unit and also protect the central heating by acting as a wind buffer for the winter. Ms. Topping stated another important part of the initiative was community health; it was important to the City and the community to help

August 19, 2025

improve the health of the citizens. Walking around trees helps reduce symptoms of stress and depression and green spaces promote exercise which improves cardiovascular health and mental health.

Ms. Topping noted flooding would always be a problem, especially in heavy storms. National studies indicate that land conserved for stormwater retention and flood prevention shows an 8 to 1 dollar savings ratio versus man-made flood control structures. Trees help slow rainwater so it was not just rushing off, it goes below ground.

Ms. Topping stated they did a surface temperature analysis for the City; the River District surface temperatures for the pavement was 152 degrees; at Ballou Park, it was 90 degrees. The reason was the trees and grass; they take the sunlight first. Currently the City was at eight days at about 95 degrees; as the climate gets warmer, it was projected to be sixty-six days by the year 2070, of over 95-degree temperatures.

Ms. Huang noted Danville's tree canopy was at 50% citywide coverage and through their mapping they found there was 11% of potential planting area in the City, or about 3,000 acres. Ms. Topping noted this project was in line with the work being done by PLAN Danville. The Grow in Danville initiative consistently evaluated and managed the green assets to maximize ecology, economy and culture. As part of this program, there were multiple projects under their umbrella including Bee City Pollinator Habitats, Danville Interchange Gardens (DIG), Tree City USA, Street Tree Program, Tree Health Care and Maintenance, Greener Schools for Danville, and Danville Landscaping and Stormwater Management. Danville's goal was to maintain the tree canopy at 50% over the next ten years, by planting more trees to replace the ones that were lost. Trees were constantly dying from old age, disease, and development; replanting was important.

The Strategic Tree Canopy Plan will include the Tree Canopy Goal, Objectives and Action Items, Tree Canopy Analysis, the heat tracking maps and the tree canopy maps. They hosted an event at Ballou Park, to invite the community to share feedback on where they would like to see trees planted across the City and show them maps staff was working on. The open house launched the Grow in Danville initiative, recording community input about where to plant the trees, receiving feedback on plan objectives and sharing resources to the community. Currently, they were launching the Grow Greener Together, Your Voice, Your Green Space. They will be hosting four workshops across the northside; they want people to come and bring ideas about tree planting projects, gardens and green space projects. They will share the work they were doing to get people to get involved, and get input on where people would like to see where these additional projects take place.

Ms. Topping noted that they will have the four workshops and will be creating the Northside Community Greening Plan as a result of those workshops. They will be working with the City to update their tree and zoning ordinances and work on the tree planting projects. Ms. Huang stated the Northside Community Greening Plan was a pilot; once it was successful they will start trying to create this plan for other areas of the City.

Council members thanked Ms. Huang and Ms. Topping for the presentation.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Director of Information Technology, Inez Rodenburg noted staff needed to have Council in compliance with the rest of the City for security policies. First, Council will need to move from an eight to a fifteen-character password. Council passwords currently do not expire, but they need

August 19, 2025

to expire every 180 days; every 180 days, Council will have to go in and reset their password. The second part was multi-factor authentication; if they have not, they will need to authenticate to the City services; staff will help them set that up.

Mr. Larking noted at the last Council meeting a group spoke during Communications about a petition to add an hour to Main Street for parking. As an update, the City used Pivot Parking to manage the parking downtown; they were analyzing people's parking habits and over two months they have come up with data and recommendations. They were now at the point where they were recommending that Main Street be changed from one hour to two hours, from Memorial up to a little beyond Ridge Street, also another street which was one hour to two hours. In response to Mr. Saunders, Mr. Larking noted they expect the parking deck to be completed about 18 months from now; there will be a kickoff meeting in the next week or two for construction of the parking deck and they should start seeing activity after that.

Mr. Larking noted several weeks ago, the Danville Life Saving Crew had a request for additional funds for the East Side Station, it was in the \$500,000 range. Tonight, Mr. Adkins gave an estimate on what the surplus would look like, and if the Council wishes, they can have a budget amendment appropriating fund balance to the Danville Life Saving Crew to cover that.

Mayor Jones took a straw poll and Council members agreed to the additional funding.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Director of Economic Development and Tourism Corrie Bobe noted they had two updates, a news release went out today that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency awarded the Dan River Falls Project the People's Choice Award for Region 3. Ms. Bobe thanked Council because without their support, the project would not have taken place. It was a true public private partnership that took a lot of commitment from the City of Danville.

Assistant Director of Economic Development and Tourism, Kelvin Perry noted last week they had their first cohort of eight industrial manufacturing clients to participate in their Lean Six Sigma Black Belt Training. This allows individuals in their companies to come to learn how to do efficient projects that they can take back to the company.

CLOSED MEETING

At 8:49 p.m., Vice Mayor Buckner **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 purposes: discussion or consideration of the acquisition or disposition of real property for a public purpose where discussion in an open meeting would adversely impact the bargaining position of the City as permitted by Subsection (A)(3) of Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended and more specifically to consider discussion regarding the sale and/or potential purchase of a specific parcels of property for use by the City of Danville and/or specific parcels of property for prospective industrial, commercial, and mixed use projects looking to locate to the City, and an Economic Development discussion and update concerning a prospective business or industry where no previous announcement has been made and/or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made as permitted by Subsection (A)(5) of Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended and more specifically to consider an update on multiple prospective commercial, mixed use, hospitality, and industrial projects considering locating within the City and/or within the region in cooperation with the City's regional partners.

August 19, 2025

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

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

Mr. Campbell left the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Upon unanimous vote at 9:40 p.m., Council reconvened in open session and Vice Mayor Buckner **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 Mayo and carried by the following vote:

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

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:41 P.M.

APPROVED:

s/Alonzo L. Jones
MAYOR

ATTEST:

s/Susan M. DeMasi, CMC
CITY CLERK