

September 15, 2020

The Second Regular September meeting of the Danville City Council was held on September 15, 2020, 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 Alonzo L. Jones, Samuel A. Kushner, Barry P. 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.

INVOCATION

Mr. Vogler asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of Mrs. Gail Gunn, a wonderful lady, always filled with joy and smiles. Following the moment of silence, the Invocation was given by J. Lee Vogler, Jr., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

Mayor Jones read a Proclamation entitled Constitution Week.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM VISITORS

Mayor Jones recognized Tommy Bennett, President of the Danville Branch of the NAACP who noted he had with him the youth branch of the NAACP. When he took over in July they had a total of 93 members, now they were at 250 and people were still joining. Mr. Bennett invited City Council to their Family and Friends Day at Westmoreland playground on September 26th at 2:00 p.m. There will be non-profit organizations, food, and a tent for COVID testing. The guest speaker will be Senator Louise Lucas, as well as Cameron Webb and Torrey Dixon. Mr. Bennett introduced the members of the Youth Council in attendance, Youth Coordinator Rebecca Campbell, Youth Director Darius Johnson, Shawn and Alia Ferrell, Secretary Michella Glass, Treasurer Mariah Edmonds, as well as Vice President of the NAACP, Norma Brower.

Mayor Jones invited Darius Johnson to speak about the youth events; Mr. Johnson noted they will make sure they attend the events that their youth participate in throughout the City so they can have a collective of unity. They will try to make sure that it stays safe and was inclusive for all young people. Mr. Johnson noted they were trying to push the importance of voting to the young people and get their children active and involved in the community.

Council Members thanked Mr. Johnson and Mr. Bennett for the work they were doing.

Mayor Jones recognized James Dalton, Dryfork, VA, a landlord in the City. Mr. Dalton noted he has been having an issue with the Inspections Division and a citation he received on one of his rental properties.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Jones opened the floor for a Public Hearing regarding the Budget Appropriation items on the Consent Agenda. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Danville Register & Bee* on September 8, 2020. 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:

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Minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on August 18, 2020. Draft copies of the minutes had been distributed prior to the meeting.

Budget Amendment - Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance for Toyota USA Grant Funds in the Amount of \$30,000

An Ordinance Entitled, Ordinance No. 2020-09.01 Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance by Increasing Revenue from the Toyota USA Grant Program in the Amount of \$30,000 and Appropriating Same.

Budget Amendment - Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance for DMV Alcohol Grant Program Funds in the Amount of \$19,222

An Ordinance Entitled, Ordinance No. 2020-09.02 Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance by Increasing Revenue from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles Highway Safety Selective Enforcement – Alcohol Grant Program in the Amount of \$19,222 and Appropriating Same.

Budget Amendment - Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance for the DMV Occupant Protection Grant Program - \$5,250

An Ordinance Entitled, Ordinance No. 2020-09.03 Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance by Increasing Revenue from Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles Highway Safety Office Selective Enforcement – Occupant Protection Grant Program in the Amount of \$5,250 and Appropriating Same.

Budget Amendment - Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance for DMV Speed Grant Program Funds in the Amount of \$9,100

An Ordinance Entitled, Ordinance No. 2020-09.04, an Ordinance Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance by Increasing Revenue from Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles Highway Safety Office Selective Enforcement – Speed Grant Program in the Amount of \$9,100 and Appropriating Same.

Budget Amendment – Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance for CSA Funds in the Amount of \$4,780,388

An Ordinance Entitled, Ordinance No. 2020-09.05, Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance by Appropriating Comprehensive Services Act Funds and Providing Local Matching Funds for a Total Amount of \$4,780,388 and Appropriating Same.

Budget Amendment – Consideration of Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance for Virginia Department of Aviation Airport Maintenance Funds

An Ordinance Entitled, Ordinance No. 2020-09.06 Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance to Provide for State Department of Aviation Maintenance Grant Funds Related to the Maintenance of Certain Airport Properties in the Amount of \$70,208 and for the Local Share in the Amount of \$17,552 for a Total Appropriation of \$87,760 and Appropriating the Same.

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Budget Amendment – Consideration of Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance for Title III-B Older American Act Grant Funds for Senior Citizen Transportation Services

An Ordinance Entitled, Ordinance No. 2020-09.07 Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance by Increasing Certain Revenues to Provide for Title III-B Grant Funds and Local Share for Senior Citizen Transportation Services and Appropriating the Same.

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

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

NEW BUSINESS

APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-09.04

PROVIDING FOR THE ISSUANCE, SALE, AND AWARD BY THE CITY OF DANVILLE, VIRGINIA, OF GENERAL OBLIGATION PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT AND REFUNDING BONDS, HERETOFORE AUTHORIZED, PROVIDING FOR THE FORM, DETAILS, AND PAYMENT OF SUCH BONDS AND PROVIDING FOR THE REFUNDING OF CERTAIN OUTSTANDING BONDS OF THE CITY.

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

Council Member Whittle noted there was \$3M included for the School system to do repairs and does not understand why that was not in their budget. Also, there were several million dollars included for electric work or working with the utility company, and asked if they had their own budget. City Manager Ken Larking explained they do have their own budget. The City does this all in one group under one motion but repayment of those electric fund projects will be through the electric fund. If a project was related to a particular fund, then it will be paid back in that fund. Mr. Larking noted the School budget was approved through the City's budget process, the operational budget, plus \$2M in capital funds, which were funded by bond proceeds.

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

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

ACCEPTING PROPOSED DONATIONS FROM THE DANVILLE SCIENCE CENTER

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

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RESOLUTION NO. 2020-09.05

APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A DONATION OF FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS AT DANVILLE SCIENCE CENTER/TRAIN STATION

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

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

COMMUNICATIONS

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

Council Member Kushner noted it was good to have people attending Council meetings again, and to the young people from the NAACP in attendance, good luck on their upcoming event on the 26th.

Council Member Mayo noted it was good to see the youth and Tommy Bennett from the NAACP in attendance, they were doing a great job. This Saturday, there will be COVID testing at Main Street Baptist church. They were partnering with PATHS, this was one of many testings they were doing, and there would be one every third Saturday. Citizens will also be able to get a food box.

Vice Mayor Miller noted his congratulations to Tommy Bennett on his increased membership; he was a member of the NAACP and of the Westmoreland Community Group, and will be attending the event. The dedication for Mr. Saunders was great, with a lot of people attending, and it was covered by the Washington Post. Dr. Miller noted he was out at Dan Daniel Park and one the maintenance people from the City was cleaning up the trash on the ground; Dr. Miller asked citizens of the City to please don't throw trash out the window. It makes the City look bad, please don't litter. Dr. Miller noted cities don't need to defund the police, but need to fund the change, better train the police and help them deal with the stress.

Council Member Saunders noted his congratulations to Tommy Bennett and the young members of the NAACP, he was proud of them, encouraged them to do keep on doing great things and congratulated them on the growth in membership. The City Manager did an excellent job with the State of the Region address. To the public safety workers, first responders, fire and rescue, all the employees, thank you so much for what they do every day. He also wanted to thank everyone for the recognition last week; a special thanks to the housing authority, City Council, the Mayor and everyone attending.

Council Member Vogler thanked Tommy Bennett for being at Council this evening and for the work they were doing. Mr. Vogler thanked the Police Department, the Chief and the rest of the City employees for the work they do. Mr. Vogler congratulated Mr. Saunders, noting the dedication was a wonderful event, and welcomed Mr. Whittle back to Council. Mr. Vogler noted Council was hearing from citizens about their utility bills, the rates were concerning, and moving forward, Council needs to have a conversation about utility revenues. If the casino referendum passes, there will be an influx of revenue into the City, he wants to have a conversation about possibly having a percentage of that revenue allocated to lowering utility rates for the citizens.

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Council Member Whittle noted his congratulations to Tommy Bennett and stated he was sorry he missed the event for Council Member Saunders. Mr. Whittle noted when it comes to defunding the police department, it was not something he would vote for. Mr. Whittle noted in the Special Session, Delegate Carter on the House Budget Amendments would reduce House Bill 599 funding by ten percent. HB 599 was the funding for the police, part of that was 482,204.3, if it passes it will cut Danville's funding by \$700,000. Mr. Whittle encouraged citizens to call their delegates.

Council Member Buckner asked citizens to let their delegate know how they feel about supporting the police departments. Mr. Buckner noted it was a sad day in Danville, they lost Ms. Gail Dunn, she was an outstanding person, with positive and bright things to say about the City. She was a Danville by choice person and loved the City. Mr. Buckner noted his congratulations to Mr. Bennett, they are doing a great job, and looks forward to the many things he will do in the future.

Council Member Campbell stated the recognition for Mr. Saunders was wonderful event, and he deserved it. Reverend Campbell noted he was proud of Tommy Bennett and what he was doing and welcomed Mr. Whittle back to Council. Reverend Campbell noted his concern about schools possibly opening back up and the COVID virus.

Mayor Jones asked Danville School Board Member Tyrell Payne to address Council; Mr. Payne noted Mr. Campbell's concerns were all their concerns, not only keeping the children safe, but keeping the teachers, administration, custodians, everyone working in Danville Public Schools safe. The School Board was working daily to make the right decisions that best fit the City of Danville. Mr. Payne noted they were working on the process of hiring a new superintendent and wants to keep the community involved. Mr. Payne thanked the parents dealing with virtual learning.

Mayor Jones noted Council Member Vogler mentioned utilities, he had called the City Manager and Deputy City Manager and asked for an extension on the utility bills. Today, he, the City Manager, and Deputy City Manager received several calls thanking them, the city staff, social services and finance department. That extension gave people an opportunity to put their finances in order. Mayor Jones noted the City Manager did a great job on the State of the Region, and thanked the City staff for what they do.

The meeting adjourned at: 7:41 p.m.

APPROVED:

s/Alonzo L. Jones
MAYOR

ATTEST:

s/Susan M. DeMasi, CMC
CITY CLERK