

May 18, 2021

The Second Regular May meeting of the Danville City Council was held on May 18, 2021, 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., Bryant Hood, Mayor Alonzo L. Jones, 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

The Invocation was given by J. Lee Vogler, Jr., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Jones introduced Robert David, Youth and Gang Prevention Coordinator for the City of Danville. Mr. David stated they received a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention last year for \$500,000. That grant was to expand Project Imagine, and part of the expansion was the hiring of three new outreach workers. Mr. David introduced Shekeva Frazier, Curtis Artis and Mr. Chad Martin. Mr. David explained their program, who they were trying to reach, and matching people and families with resources. Council Members thanked Mr. David for his work, his leadership and the impacts he has created in Danville.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM VISITORS

Mayor Jones recognized Joseph Carbone, 351 Hawthorne Circle who appeared before Council regarding the noise levels from 2 Witches; Dr. Carbone distributed a handout to Council regarding this. Dr. Carbone noted he appeared before Council several years ago when they were considering approval for the outdoor music venue at 2 Witches, and then approved the outdoor amphitheater without appropriate sound barriers or constraints to control the noise. Mayor Jones noted the City Manager and Deputy City Manager will look into this and bring a report back to Council.

CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Vogler **moved** to approve the following Consent Agenda items:

Approval of Minutes from Regular Council Meeting and Regular Work Session held on April 20, 2021. Draft copies of the Minutes had been distributed prior to the meeting

Budget Amendment – Consideration of Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance for the Recreation Enrichment Program in the Amount of \$186,102

An Ordinance entitled, Ordinance No. 2021-05.07, Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance to Provide for Funds in the Amount of \$55,220 for a Recreation Enrichment Program and the Local In-Kind Share of \$130,882 for a Total Appropriation of \$186,102 and Appropriation of Same.

Budget Amendment – Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance for Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Funds in the Amount of \$150,000

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An Ordinance entitled, Ordinance No. 2021-05.08, Amending the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Appropriation Ordinance for a Project to be Undertaken within the City of Danville and to be Financed Anticipating Revenues from Federal Emergency Management Agency in the Amount of \$150,000.

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

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

OLD BUSINESS

APPROVING THE FISCAL YEAR 2022 DANVILLE SCHOOL BOARD BUDGET

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-05.04

APPROVING THE BUDGET OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF THE CITY OF DANVILLE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2022

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

Vice Mayor Miller questioned School Superintendent Dr. Hairston regarding concerns of several Council Members about the track; they are putting \$3M into it and want to make sure it was first rate. The concern was there would be a track and it would not be certified. Dr. Hairston noted it would be certified; right now the final plans were in the hands of one of the architects and it will be approved by the Virginia High School League. It has an eight lane feature, and all the field events will be held at the school. There were some drainage concerns that came up that have been mitigated. They were getting input from the current track coaches and AAU coach as well.

Council Member Vogler thanked Dr. Hairston and all the teachers and staff for what they have done this past year. Mr. Vogler noted he has a son who was in Danville Public Schools in elementary school and questioned if she anticipated when they come back in the fall will they be able to go outside to play. Dr. Hairston explained they were planning for a five day school week, face to face; part of the budget includes sixty plus teachers to reduce class sizes which will help teachers have a more traditional setting for movement. They anticipate eating in the cafeteria again and allowing the children to go outside.

Council Member Campbell asked if she saw virtual learning as being an advantage or disadvantage for the children and Dr. Hairston stated she believed the children needed to be in school face to face, however, she cannot discount the number of students who have been successful with virtual learning. Dr. Hairston noted this more than likely will be a way of educating students, offering choice. Most students benefit from face to face but some were very successful with virtual.

Council Member Mayo commended Dr. Hairston for doing a tremendous job, and questioned what has been her most difficult task with virtual learning. Dr. Hairston noted keeping the children engaged. Their budget has additional social workers and additional support staff because they

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will have to work to re-engage the children and feel these staff members will help keep them engaged.

Council Member Saunders noted he was hearing different guidelines about masks and questioned whose guidelines they followed. Dr. Hairston explained the Governor's mandates were interpreted by the Superintendent of Instruction, Dr. Lane, and at this time, they have a mask mandate for schools through May 28th; on May 28th they will receive further guidance. Dr. Hairston noted they will continue to have safety precautions until they receive further instructions.

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

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

APPROVAL OF THE BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF DANVILLE, THE CAPITAL AND SPECIAL PROJECTS PLAN AND THE BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE

Approving the Budgets of the Various Funds of the City of Danville for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-05.05

APPROVING THE BUDGETS OF THE VARIOUS FUNDS OF THE CITY OF DANVILLE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2022

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

Approving the Fiscal Year 2022 Capital and Special Projects Plan for the City of Danville, Virginia.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-05.06

APPROVING THE FISCAL YEAR 2022 CAPITAL AND SPECIAL PROJECTS PLAN FOR THE CITY OF DANVILLE, VIRGINIA

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

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

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Approving the Budget Appropriation Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2022

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-05.06

BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022

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

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

City Manager Ken Larking announced that the City's Budget Director, Cynthia Thomasson will be retiring near the end of this year. Mr. Larking expressed how much he appreciated working with her over the past several years; she has had 32 years' experience working in the City, 22 as the Budget Director. Each budget year she makes sure everyone was prepared, the City Council has the information they need, if there were questions, she provided the answers, and was able to address the City Manager's questions and concerns. Ms. Thomasson noted the past 32 years have been 32 of the best years she has ever had; she loves the City and has enjoyed working here. The City Manager was great to work with and the City Departments were incredible; they have always been responsive to her and appreciates all the City employees she has been able to work with. Council Members thanked Ms. Thomasson for her work, hoped she enjoyed her retirement and stated she will be missed.

City Manager Ken Larking introduced Taylor Shelton, she will be an intern with the City Manager's office this year. She will be working on a project in conjunction with the Economic Development Department, going out into the field, documenting all the commercial buildings in the City. She will take a picture, and answer a few questions which goes into a data base that IT and Economic Development developed. Ms. Shelton thanked everyone for the opportunity.

APPOINTMENTS

Vice Mayor Miller noted the Committee on Appointments met earlier this evening and make the following recommendations:

Airport Commission:	Reappoint:	Jessie Barksdale William Allgood Philip Hall
Dan River ASAP	Appoint:	Johnny West
DCC Board	Reappoint:	Sheila Baynes
Danville CPMT	Reappoint:	Tammy Warren Demetrius Crews
DDC	Reappoint:	RJ Lackey
Commission on Architectural Review:	No recommendation at this time.	
DP Community Service Board	Reappoint:	Shelby Irving
Danville Utility Commission	Reappoint:	Anna Kautzman
	Appoint:	Steven Merricks
IALR	Appoint:	Mark Holland

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Social Services Advisory Board
Transportation Advisory Board

Reappoint: Ty'quan Graves
Reappoint: Alexis Ehrhardt

Council had no objections to the recommendations and they will be presented at an upcoming agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

REVIEW OF GENERAL FUND FINANCIALS AS OF APRIL 30, 2021

Director of Finance Michael Adkins reviewed the financial results of the General Fund through the end of April, the tenth month or 83% through the fiscal year. Revenues were performing as expected. Real Estate and Personal Property tax bills went out the first week of May, due on June 7th, so for the next few reports he will be able to comment on the City's collection progress on property taxes. Interest earnings were operating under budget because rates were so low, near zero at this time. The City did budget for a drop in interest rates; the deficit for the budget should not be too material, around \$250,000 at the end of the year, but there were some things that will cover that. Under the Local Consumer Taxes, the City has experienced a surge in Sales Tax primarily because of on line purchases being taxed now consistently. However, the payment the City received last week, which represented sales tax from March retail sales, was over \$1M for that one month. This has only happened one other time and that was back in February when the City received its December retail sales from the holiday season. At the end of May, the City will be at about \$105,000 over budget in sales tax; they typically collect on average \$845,000 per month, so by the end of this fiscal year, they will be close to \$1M over budget for sales tax revenue. Meals Tax also showed a good rebound for the month of April, they received nearly \$900,000 for that month alone; that brings it to 82.5% of budget, at 83% through the year. Meals tax has rebounded nicely, and Mr. Adkins noted he believed they will find themselves close to their budgeted number by the end of the fiscal year. Lodging Taxes have rebounded some, they will probably not meet budget; they were at 74% at the end of April and will probably fall short about \$150,000. The overage in sales tax should take care of any of these underperforming items.

On the Expenditure side, Departmental Expenses were at 76% and tracking behind budget with 83% of the fiscal year complete. Non Departmental expenses basically included debt service and group health insurance. Under Debt Service, the City knows what that was from year to year, so that was tracking well with budget. Group Health has been right on budget up until this point, it did creep above budget a little this past month; they were at 88%, but nearing the end of the fiscal year so it cannot go too far in the last two months. Unassigned Fund Balance at the end of April was about \$680,000 over where they were last year. Mr. Adkins noted he was hopeful that even though they budgeted to use some fund balance, the use of it will be minimal if it occurs at all.

APPROVING THE TRANSFER OF REAL PROPERTY FROM THE IDA AT 500 MAIN STREET

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-05.07

APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF REAL PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS PARCEL 22901 FROM THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF DANVILLE, VIRGINIA TO THE CITY OF DANVILLE, VIRGINIA

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

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City Attorney Clarke Whitfield explained this was the HOME sign lot downtown and believes the IDA was transferring it to the City on the condition that if a commercial or industrial use is needed in the future, the City will transfer it back to them so it can become an income producer again.

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

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

Mayor Jones recognized Tommy Bennett who shared that as of today, through the Danville Health Department, Danville had 15,355 people who have had one dose, and 12,374 fully vaccinated citizens. For Pittsylvania County, 22,340 have received one dose and 18,366 were fully dosed.

COMMUNICATIONS

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

Council Member Saunders recognized the Interim President of Danville Community College, Dr. Muriel Mickels; she came from Central Virginia Community College, filling in for Dr. Gill Powell. Mr. Saunders noted last Saturday he attended a Gala hosted by the Danville Museum on the roof of the Bee Hotel; it was a wonderful event. Mr. Saunders thanked the Board of Directors and staff members at the Museum, they were doing a great job. Mr. Saunders thanked Mr. Bennett for the great job he does, as well as the City Manager, Deputy City Manager and all city employees for what they do every day.

Council Member Vogler noted the event Saturday on the roof of the Bee was a great event, there were several speakers and Rick Barker made an excellent speech as well, outlining what has gone on in the last ten years in Danville. Mr. Vogler noted he wanted to let citizens know Youth League Baseball was in the City of Danville, organized by Danville Parks & Rec; they have sign ups going on right now for children ages 5-13. Mr. Vogler noted he would like to see baseball in Danville built back up again, especially at the youth levels. Citizens can go to www.PlayDanvilleVA.com for information.

Council Member Buckner noted the City of Danville and Pittsylvania County lost a really good man today, Mr. Roger Gillespie passed away; he was the President of Virginia Bank & Trust for many years and BMW racecar driver. He will be greatly missed and their thoughts and prayers go out to his family. Mr. Buckner thanked the staff with all the new businesses and the ribbon cuttings that have been happening lately, and thanked the Economic Development Department for working with everyone in the City and region to push the City forward. The Bridge Street Food Truck Rodeo will be June 5th, all day long, it will be a great time.

Council Member Campbell noted he wanted to speak about Caesars Entertainment and contracts, and his concern for Danville and opportunities going forward for minorities. On May 25, 2021, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. there will be a webinar at www.eventbrite.com in which they will be explaining the process that citizens will be able to apply for contracts for building the casino. If they were not certified, there was a process of becoming certified. This was important for the community; Caesars has indicated they want 25% of the contracts to go to minorities, and Reverend Campbell encouraged people register for the webinar. Mr. Larking noted on the Economic Development's

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Facebook page, there was a link for people to sign up.

Council Member Hood gave a special thanks to the citizens for expressing their concerns, and being supportive of the process and progress in the City. Mr. Hood encouraged city employees, essential workers, first responders and citizens to stay uplifted, and gave a special thanks to the mental health professionals; mental health was key in these times and thanked them for helping everyone out.

Council Member Mayo also welcomed Interim President of DCC, Dr. Mickels, he had a chance to speak with her today; she has had a lot of experience in the area and they look forward to working with her. Dr. Gill Powell will be missed and commended her for the work she has done. Mr. Mayo noted Community Action Awareness Day will be Friday in Chatham, from 11:00 to 7:00 p.m., and encouraged citizens to come out and support Pittsylvania Community Action for all they have done.

Vice Mayor Miller noted from the beginning, one of the things that impressed many of them with Caesars was they promised minority involvement; their casino in Baltimore has over 40% minority employees. This fall, the citizens of Danville will vote on a referendum for a one cent sales tax. The General Assembly passed this in certain localities, including Pittsylvania County and Danville; it will go explicitly to school construction which the City was in dire need of. Dr. Miller encouraged citizens to vote for it. Memorial Day was May 31st, it was for the memory of those who died in service to the country, and encouraged people to celebrate with honor.

Mayor Jones thanked Dr. Carbone for coming to Council this evening, for his report, and he looks forward to City staff working with Dr. Carbone with regards to that. To the Superintendent and School Board members, this has been one of the best budgets they have had, the process flowed very smoothly. Mayor Jones acknowledged all the City staff and thanked them for what they do, and thanked Council Members for what they do.

ADJOURNED: 8:23 P.M.

APPROVED:

s/Alonzo L. Jones
MAYOR

ATTEST:

s/Susan M. DeMasi, CMC
CITY CLERK