

September 7, 2021

The Regular September meeting of the Danville City Council was held on September 7, 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., and City Attorney W. Clarke Whitfield Jr., City Clerk Susan M. DeMasi was absent.

Mayor Jones announced that the community lost another dear friend over the weekend; Nick from Nick's Towing passed away. Mayor Jones noted he had spoken with Nick's wife, and Council has been praying for the family. Nick did a lot for the Danville Life Saving Crew and for the City of Danville.

INVOCATION

The Invocation was given by L.G. "Larry" Campbell, Jr., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Tunstall High School students attending tonight's meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM VISITORS

Mayor Jones recognized Steve Barrow, 1311 Stokes Street. Mr. Barrow stated he wanted to introduce himself and his business, Hammermill Computers; he started his business about 10 months ago. He moved here from Ft. Lauderdale, stated he loves Danville and believes that it was a good City; his team was there if anything was needed. Mayor Jones thanked Mr. Barrow for introducing himself, noting he has seen him in the community several times and asked where his business was located. Mr. Barrow stated his business was located at 3633 Franklin Turnpike; they do everything from computer repair to network and voiceover IP and low voltage wiring. Mr. Barrow stated he also believed in giving people second chances, there were people here in Danville that needed a second chance, and he was looking to hire those people who needed a second chance. He currently had two employees and a few contractors, but as business picks up he will have more opportunities posted on Facebook or on the company's website. Councilman Mayo thanked Mr. Barrow for reaching out to those that need a second chance. Mr. Barrow stated that he has done similar things with other municipalities in the Fort Lauderdale, Palm Beach and Broward County areas, working with at risk youth and homelessness. He urged Council to reach out to him for anything.

Mayor Jones recognized Deborah McKague, 12 Holcomb Street. Ms. McKague explained she was the local person for the Virginia School for the Deaf and was also here for the National Association of the Deaf. Ms. McKague noted she wanted to give Council kudos for making this town amazing; she moved here in 2007 and has seen many improvements, and thanked Council for what they have done. The National Association of the Deaf and the ADA talk about public hearings. Ms. McKague noted the City has had many Public Hearings and she does not attend every meeting, only those that impact the whole town, things that she feels were important. She also believes that an interpreter for communication of the public hearings, public places like hospitals, restaurants, bars, movies or other events it would be nice to have captioning available or maybe an interpreter available; there were several different options. Sometimes it was difficult to get a live interpreter or a video interpreter. Last year, the City had the online meetings, and provided the video interpreter; it was difficult to see her on the small computer screen, so she ended up backing out of that meeting. Ms. McKague encouraged Council to think about finding a way to make these meetings accessible to everyone who was deaf or hard of hearing. Ms.

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McKague requested to leave her notes with Council; she has highlighted information to give them ideas of what she was talking about, also to feel free to contact her at any time. Mayor Jones thanked Mrs. McKague for being there and taking the time to thank them, it was not often that Council had people coming to Council to thank them.

Mayor Jones recognized Katrina Gregory, 5532 US HWY 29 Blairs, VA 24527, 434-489-3968. Ms. Gregory stated Mr. Mayo encouraged her to come to a meeting. Her son committed suicide in 2018 in front of her and her husband. From that, she started "Pay It Forward for Jarrell" to keep his legacy and name remembered. They decided to pay it forward with anything from Starbucks cards, to gas, anything a person could do for someone else, whatever someone needs. They asked others to step forward and help do something to impact someone else's life. The first year they did it, they had people in New York, Florida, Washington D.C., Pittsylvania County, Gretna, Martinsville that put up videos of what they did. She then started a non-profit organization, Paving the Way; last Sunday was their non-profit launch. Their mission was to assist families that experienced sudden loss, in the process of healing, through grief education and peer support. Mayor Jones noted his condolences for her loss and asked that she give out her information again: Katrina Gregory, president of Paving the Way, 5532 US HWY 29N Blairs, VA 24527, 434-489-3968, pavingtheway.org. Mayor Jones thanked them again for being there. Councilman Mayo noted he had attended the event and it was wonderful. He stated that what they were doing was a very integral part of the community and he thanked them again.

MEETING MINUTES

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Buckner and **second** by Council Member Whittle, Minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on August 5, 2021, were approved as presented. Draft copies of the minutes had been distributed prior to the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

PUBLIC HEARING – CONSIDERATION OF REZONING 180 AMERICAN LEGION BOULEVARD

Mayor Jones opened the floor for a Public Hearing regarding Rezoning 180 American Legion Boulevard. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Danville Register & Bee* on August 24, 2021 and August 31, 2021.

Mayor Jones recognized Mark Johnson from LED Professionals in Danville, who stated he wanted to thank Council for everything they do, and he represents D&R Jones for this rezoning request. This property was for multifamily development and the first thing they had to do was get it rezoned before anybody moves forward. Mr. Johnson noted he does have the owner's representative here; if Council had any questions please feel free to ask. Council had no questions; no one further desired to be heard and the Public Hearing was closed.

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-09.01

REZONING 180 AMERICAN LEGION BOULEVARD (PARCEL ID# 73227) FROM T-R THRESHOLD RESIDENTIAL TO M-R, MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

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

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

PUBLIC HEARING – CONSIDERATION OF REZONING 212 JEFFERSON AVENUE

Mayor Jones opened the floor for a Public Hearing regarding Rezoning 212 Jefferson Avenue. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Danville Register & Bee* on August 24, 2021 and August 31, 2021. No one present desired to be heard and the Public Hearing was closed.

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-09.02

REZONING 212 JEFFERSON AVENUE (PARCEL ID# 24689) FROM OT-R OLD TOWN RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICT TO M-R, MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICT.

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

Councilman Buckner explained this was the big brick six plex on the right-hand side going down Jefferson. People would be absolutely amazed at the work going on there, and encouraged Council to stop in and take a look if they have the chance. This was going to be a very nice addition to the neighborhood. Mr. Buckner noted he was in support of this, it was a great project.

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

PUBLIC HEARING – CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE REGARDING SHORT-TERM RENTALS

Mayor Jones opened the floor for a Public Hearing regarding Amending the Zoning Ordinance. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Danville Register & Bee* on August 24, 2021 and August 31, 2021. No one present desired to be heard and the Public Hearing was closed.

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-09.03

REPEALING AND REORDAINING CERTAIN ARTICLES AND SECTIONS OF CHAPTER 41, ENTITLED "ZONING ORDINANCE" OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF DANVILLE, VIRGINIA, MORE SPECIFICALLY REMOVING AND UPDATING PORTIONS OF ARTICLE 2. ENTITLED "GENERAL REGULATIONS" AND REMOVING AND UPDATING PORTIONS OF "ARTICLE 15 ENTITLED "DEFINITIONS.

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

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

CONSIDERATION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2022 AVIATION PROMOTION GRANT

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ACCEPT A GRANT AGREEMENT FROM THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION TO PROMOTE AVIATION AWARENESS AT THE DANVILLE REGIONAL AIRPORT

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-09.01

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ACCEPT A GRANT AGREEMENT FROM THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION TO PROMOTE AVIATION AWARENESS AT THE DANVILLE REGIONAL AIRPORT

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

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

CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR A STATE DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION GRANT TO PROMOTE AVIATION AWARENESS AT THE DANVILLE REGIONAL AIRPORT

Upon **Motion** by Vice Mayor Miller and **second** by Council Member Buckner, an Ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-09.04

AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR A STATE DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION GRANT FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING FUNDING TO PROMOTE AVIATION AWARENESS AT THE DANVILLE REGIONAL AIRPORT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$7,500 AND FOR THE LOCAL SHARE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$7,500 TO BE PROVIDED BY THE GENERAL FUND SUPPORT OF GRANTS FOR A TOTAL APPROPRIATION OF \$15,000 AND APPROPRIATING SAME.

was presented by its **First Reading**, as required by City Charter, to lie over before final adoption.

Councilman Saunders stated this talks about grants in the amount of \$15,000, and read about taking young people for rides. Mr. Saunders questioned if staff had any idea how many young people will be able to take the flight, and will the pilots be local or from out of town; Mayor Jones asked what the age limits were. Director of Transportation Marc Adleman explained the age limits were ages 8 to 17. The number of children allowed to participate will depend on the number of pilots available. Most of the pilots that will be flying that day, on October 30, were primarily from the Apex, North Carolina Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter near Raleigh, North

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Carolina. Two years ago, the City had about 135 students that completed a free flight, and have done almost as many as 200 in the past. It depends a lot on the pilots available to fly that day.

CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR A VIRGINIA COMMISSION OF THE ARTS GRANT - \$9,500

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Vogler and **second** by Council Member Whittle, an Ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-09.05

AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR A VIRGINIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$4,500 AND LOCAL SHARE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$5,000 FOR A TOTAL OF \$9,500.

was presented by its **First Reading**, as required by City Charter, to lie over before final adoption.

CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$660,000

Upon **Motion** by Council Member Buckner and **second** by Council Member Mayo, an Ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-09.06

AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR ONE TOBACCO REGION OPPORTUNITY FUND GRANT FROM THE VIRGINIA TOBACCO REGION REVITALIZATION COMMISSION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$330,000 AND ONE TOBACCO REGION OPPORTUNITY FUND LOAN FROM THE VIRGINIA TOBACCO REGION REVITALIZATION COMMISSION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$330,000 FOR A TOTAL OF \$660,000 AS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES FOR TAXABLE CAPITAL INVESTMENTS AND JOB CREATION IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

was presented by its **First Reading**, as required by City Charter, to lie over before final adoption.

COMMUNICATIONS

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

Vice Mayor Miller noted the City lost another citizen to COVID, the owner of Me's Burgers. Last Thursday night he had a patient come into the Cath lab, his arteries were full of clots; this was what COVID does to people, it just clots the arteries all over. Dr. Miller implored people to get the vaccination. It's not just a "me" thing, citizens were endangering countless numbers of others. The emergency room departments were overwhelmed, people were dying every day and it was hitting the young people now; the delta variant was much more deadly on young people. On a good note, the American Heart Association walk will be September 25th at Angler's Park; if anyone wanted to join his team, he needed some people. Contact him or show up at 10:00am at Angler's Park on September 25. You can contribute \$5.00, \$10.00, or \$50.00, it was for a good cause.

Councilman Saunders noted he wanted to echo what Vice Mayor Miller said with regard to the vaccination. He does not know anything different to say other than to encourage people to get it.

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Council has had it, and he was waiting for the booster when that comes out. It was really sad to lose a loved one and not be able to go to the funeral because of the health situation of the people. These were really sad times, but the more that citizens can minimize the spread the better.

Councilman Vogler noted in the last few weeks alone, this community has lost several people to COVID, many of whom were well known in the community. It was very real and he was at a loss for words because he felt like Council was repeating themselves. On a more positive note, he has seen vaccinations in this district up last month. More people were starting to get the vaccine, but the City had a long way to go. The delta variant was impacting a lot of people and it was worse than what was experienced last year. Looking at the data from a few weeks ago, in Virginia 99.3% of the cases reported were nonvaccinated people, and imagined that the hospitalization and death numbers were also very much in line with those numbers. Mr. Vogler encouraged citizens to talk to their doctors and ask them about the vaccine, and stated he does not believe people should be forced to get the vaccine, but encouraged people to think about getting it. Tomorrow morning there will be another good economic development announcement for the City and region, and encouraged citizens to watch River City TV. The City has had many positive announcements for economic development; it was a good time for economic growth and positive things happening in Danville. Danville was the comeback city.

Council Member Buckner noted his thanks to all the Council Members; his mother passed away recently and instantly, he received phone calls and messages, and there hasn't been one day he hasn't heard from a council member. He and his family will remember the support Council gave him and he was very grateful for all they have done for him in the last couple of weeks. Mr. Buckner noted there was a big event happening this weekend in Blairs, the Blue Ridge Rock Festival. If citizens were traveling on 29, Piney Forest or around town, give themselves a little more time and be patient. There will be 40,000 people attending the event this weekend and it will make traveling a little more difficult.

Council Member Campbell noted there was a good representation of people speaking before Council tonight, Danville was special, in a good state, and moving forward. The future was looking bright, he wants to make sure all areas of the community will see prosperity, and asked citizens to remember those who have lost someone recently.

Council Member Hood gave a special thanks to the students from Tunstall High School for leading Council in the Pledge today. Mr. Hood acknowledged the City being placed on the TEDx platform. TEDx Danville's theme was Demonstrating the Resilience of Danville, Transitioning from a Milltown without a Mill. This platform reaches 32,000 people and the speakers who presented that Ted Talk were Corrie Bobe, Diana Schwartz and Warrick Scott. Mr. Vogler noted Mr. Hood was very active in making that happen and deserved the recognition for it.

Council Member Mayo thanked Mr. Barrow for appearing before Council, as well as the students from Tunstall High School. The Paving the Way event was phenomenal, seeing their staff helping the community; it was source people could reach out to. The accident that happened on Piney Forest hit home when he found out it was someone he knew, a member of his church, and asked citizens to keep that family in their prayers. Mr. Mayo encouraged citizens to get their vaccine.

Mayor Jones acknowledged the Tunstall students for attending the Council meeting, and encouraged them to continue attending. He and Mr. Bennett had an opportunity to thank Pastor Emmet Young who was leaving Danville, and noted his appreciation for his serving on City boards, being a pastor and the work he does. Mayor Jones thanked the City Manager, Deputy City Manager, City Attorney and all the city employees for all they do. Mayor Jones noted Council

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moved education to their number one priority, there were a lot of signs out to “Vote yes for DPS,” and there were a lot of questions about the 1% tax. City Manager Ken Larking explained the school system demonstrated capital needs to the City and presented a request to City Council to allow a referendum for a local option sales tax to pay for capital improvements within Danville Public Schools. The City Council approved a referendum to go to the voters where they would consider whether or not to vote for or against the 1% local option sales tax. There were two measures, one related to the 1% sales tax and one related to allowing debt to be incurred. Both would be needed to be able to meet the need demonstrated by the school system; it would generate \$141M through debt service. There have been some questions about other ways of funding the capital needs of the school system. There were other options, the most common was real estate tax; that would also require a referendum by the voters, and would be a significant increase. The other question that comes up was whether or not the casino could pay for the schools capital improvements. The City would not be able to borrow money on what they might anticipate as revenue from the casino. Because there was no casino currently, there was no track record of what kind of revenue it would generate. No bank would lend the City money on a tax revenue source that has no track record. Mr. Larking noted he has reviewed the website on the Mayor’s sign and there was a frequently asked question list with questions and answers citizens can review.

Mayor Jones noted Council recently heard about the fights at George Washington High School; Council does not interfere with the School Board. But when it comes to violence, they will not tolerate it. They contacted the Police Chief, Robert David, the City Manager and they got right on it. Mr. Larking noted violence in the schools was rare, but it does happen. As a partner with the school system, they do what they can to assist them when issues like that happen. Usually it was minor and could be handled by school staff and dealt with by DPS; if it was bigger than that then the police department can be involved. Robert David was the City’s Gang Prevention Coordinator; his role was to work with any age to intervene and prevent issues before they happen. He has been in the school system to help whenever an issue has come up. He was able to provide advice, guidance and assistance; they will always focus as much as they can as a City on intervention and prevention before suppression. Anytime you can prevent a crime from happening or intervene before it happens, that was the best way forward. Mayor Jones noted there were many wonderful things going on in the school system, and when these incidents occur, they need to focus on the bigger picture and good things that were going on. Vice Mayor Miller noted the public does not need to wait until November 2nd to vote, early voting starts on September 17th

Mayor Jones thanked everyone for attending tonight’s meeting.

ADJOURNED: 8:00 P.M.

APPROVED:

s/Alonzo L. Jones
MAYOR

ATTEST:

s/Susan M. DeMasi, CMC
CITY CLERK