



City of Richmond

900 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219
www.rva.gov/office-city-clerk

Meeting Minutes Public Safety Standing Committee

Tuesday, July 22, 2025

1:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor – City Hall

Committee Members in Attendance

The Honorable Reva Trammell – Chair
The Honorable Sarah Abubaker – Member

Absent

The Honorable Stephanie Lynch – Vice Chair

Staff and Others in Attendance

Greg Lukanuski, Deputy City Attorney
Nahdiah Muhammad, Assistant City Clerk
Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Steve Taylor, Council Policy Analyst

Call to Order

Chair Reva Trammell called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement and Public Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Chair's request, Assistant City Clerk Nahdiah Muhammad provided information on the appropriate way to evacuate the Council Chamber in an emergency along with public speaker guidelines.

Public Comment Period

Lee Williams, Advocacy Chair for the Sierra Club Falls of the James Group, spoke to the committee about gas leaks occurring in the city. She presented personnel data detailing the volume of emergency service calls and the resources required to dispatch fire, medical, and other emergency responses. Ms. Williams urged the council to take this information into account when planning for the upcoming fiscal year.

Member Abubaker asked Ms. Williams about her comments made to the committee regarding gas leaks and the impact on first responders.

Ms. Williams stated she provided the committee with more information regarding the environmental health and economic impact to residents and the city budget.

[CD.2025.249](#) July 22, 2025 - Public Comment Handout

Attachments: [20250722 Public Safety - Public Comment Handout](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of June 24, 2025, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2025.229](#) June 24, 2025 - Public Safety Standing Committee Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [20250624 Public Safety Minutes - DRAFT](#)

Board Vacancies

Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst, reviewed board vacancies and applications for consideration by the committee.

[CD.2025.236](#) July 22, 2025 - Public Safety Board Vacancy Report

Attachments: [20250722 - Public Safety Board Vacancy Report](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Chair Reva Trammell moved to forward the following appointment and reappointment applications to Council with a recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Trammell, Abubaker. Noes None.

Advisory Board for the Assessment of Towing Fees and the Storage of Vehicles:
Tabitha Shearin

Community Criminal Justice Board:
Tracey Paner (reappointment)
David Smith (reappointment)

Richmond Ambulance Authority:
Julia Hammond (reappointment)
Mark Hickman (reappointment)
Kirk Roberts (reappointment)
Andrew Walker (reappointment)
Marilyn West (reappointment)

Presentation(s)**Emergency Planning for Upcoming Hurricane Season**

Stephen Willoughby, Director of Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response (DECPR), presented the committee with a presentation regarding emergency planning for the upcoming hurricane season, hurricane season 2025 outlook, city departments' preparation for hurricane season, public communication and Richmond Ready alerts.

[CD.2025.240](#) July 22, 2025 - Emergency Planning for Upcoming Hurricane Season

Attachments: [20250722 Emergency Planning for Upcoming Hurricane Season Presentation](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

The committee requested information regarding the following items concerning 2025 hurricane season emergency planning:

- Emergency management liaisons
- Timeline for enhancements
- Protocol alignment
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) objectives
- Richmond Ready alerts

Director Willoughby responded that administrative regulations require each department depending on its size to designate three emergency management liaisons that are authorized to act on behalf of their department leadership during an emergency. Mr. Willoughby provided the committee with additional information regarding training for emergency management liaisons.

Director Willoughby stated that each department will need to assess its essential functions in order to determine appropriate operational protocols in the event of an emergency. He noted that the city had previously relied on emergency protocols from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM), but found them insufficient to meet the city's emergency operations needs. Mr. Willoughby emphasized that the City's goal is to align 60% of its emergency protocols with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) standards in the next year. Mr. Willoughby provided the committee with additional information regarding forthcoming updates and initiatives within DECPR.

Director Willoughby reported that DECPR hired a contractor using grant funding to assist in strengthening CERTs. He also stated that he will provide the committee with additional information regarding the total number of active CERTs.

Director Willoughby stated that about 8,000 residents receive Richmond Ready alerts. He noted that many are unaware of the alerts or lack the resources to sign up, but residents can also register using a paper application. Mr. Willoughby stated that geofencing will not allow residents to receive Richmond Ready alerts if they are not signed up through the system.

Director Willoughby continued to discuss DECPR preparations for the 2025 hurricane season with the committee.

Water Crisis Incident Response Assessment Follow-Up Discussion

Stephen Willoughby, Director of Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response (DECPR), presented the committee with water crisis incident response assessment strengths, areas for improvement, recommendations, operational coordination/communication, situational assessment, public information and warning, logistics/supply chain management, economic recovery, long-term vulnerability and current efforts.

[CD.2025.238](#) July 22, 2025 - Water Crisis Response Assessment Follow-Up

Attachments: [20250722 Water Crisis Response Assessment Follow-Up Presentation](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

The committee requested the following regarding water crisis response assessment follow-up:

- Improvements regarding notifications to Council during emergencies
- Departmental budget
- Adaptability of Richmond Ready alerts
- Comprehensive recovery plan
- Departmental milestones
- Implementation of Haggerty Consulting study
- Location of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- Which departments are notified of emergencies
- DECPR staffing

Director Willoughby responded that previous limitations within DECPR did not allow the department to expand its resources. Mr. Willoughby provided the committee with additional information regarding the Haggerty Consultant report findings and improvements in DECPR.

Director Willoughby stated that DECPR currently has two vacant positions. Mr. Willoughby provided the committee with additional information regarding the location of the EOC.

Director Willoughby continued to discuss the water crisis response assessment with the committee.

Shockoe Bottom Update

The committee rescheduled the Shockoe Bottom update to its September 23, 2025 meeting.

Paper(s) for Consideration

There were no papers for consideration.

Discussion Item(s)

There were no discussion items.

Staff Report

Council staff provided the committee with the July Public Safety staff report.

[CD.2025.246](#) July 22, 2025 - Public Safety Staff Report

Attachments: [20250722 Public Safety Staff Report](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:11 p.m.