



City of Richmond

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

Meeting Minutes Organizational Development Standing Committee

Tuesday, September 5, 2023

4:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Members Present

The Honorable Michael Jones – Chair
The Honorable Kristen Nye – Vice Chair
The Honorable Katherine Jordan – Member
The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert – Member
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch – Member
The Honorable Ellen Robertson – Member
The Honorable Reva Trammell – Member

Absent

The Honorable Andreas Addison – Member
The Honorable Cynthia Newbille – Member

Others in Attendance

Laura Drewry, City Attorney
LaTasha Holmes, Council Chief of Staff
Tabrica Rentz, Deputy City Attorney
Candice Reid, City Clerk
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk
Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst

Call to Order

Chair Michael Jones called the meeting to order at 4:13 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement and Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Chair's request, Deputy City Clerk RJ Warren provided information on the appropriate manner in which the Council Chamber is to be evacuated in the event of an emergency along with citizen speaker guidelines.

Approval of Minutes

There were no corrections or amendments to the minutes of the Monday, June 5, 2023 Organizational Development Standing Committee meeting, at 4:00 p.m., and the minutes were approved as presented.

[CD.2023.280](#) June 5, 2023 Organizational Development Standing Committee Meeting Minutes

Consideration of Appointments to Boards, Commissions and Similar Entities

Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst, reviewed board vacancies for the committee's consideration.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

[CD.2023.274](#) Quarterly Board Vacancy Report - Organizational Development Standing Committee

Member Ellen Robertson moved to forward the following appointment and reappointment applications to Council with the recommendation to approve:

Affordable Housing Trust Fund Supervisory Board:

Madelyn Peay (reappointment)

Colby Kay

Ethics Reform Commission:

William Harrison

Maggie L. Walker Initiative Citizens Advisory Board:

Eric Brown (reappointment)

The motion was seconded and approved: Ayes 7, Jordan, Lambert, Robertson, Lynch, Trammell, Nye, Jones. Noes None.

Reports from City Administration, Council Staff and Other Parties

2022 City Charter Review Commission

Thad Williamson, 2022 City Charter Review Chair, and Rachael Deane, 2022 City Charter Review Vice Chair, provided the committee with a summary of the 2022 City Charter Review Commission final report.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

[CD.2023.278](#) 20230605 2022 Charter Review Commission Recommendations Summary

Chair Michael Jones stated his appreciation for the work of the 2022 Charter Review Commission.

Member Ann-Frances Lambert discussed with Chair Williamson and Vice Chair Deane the 2022 Charter Review Commission recommendations regarding changes to the city's form of government.

Commission Chair Williamson recommended Council engage in an extensive public engagement process if it decides to move forward with changing the form of city government.

Member Katherine Jordan discussed the steps necessary for Council to initiate staggered terms for Councilmembers.

Member Ellen Robertson inquired if the commission had a select group of recommendations that it believed Council should move forward with implementing. Member Robertson also requested a copy of the commission's report and for further discussions between the commission and Council.

Commission Chair Williamson recommended that Council and city administration review all proposed changes to the City Charter to identify and avoid any unintended outcomes. Chair Williamson also stated that certain recommendations could be implemented within a year, however certain recommendations required additional engagement with the public that may require additional time.

Virginia Retirement System

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Lincoln Saunders and Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) for Finance and Administration Sabrina Joy-Hogg provided the committee with a presentation that addressed the potential transition of the city's employee retirement plan from the Richmond Retirement System (RRS) to the Virginia Retirement System (VRS).

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

[CD.2023.282](#) Explore VRS Transition OD Committee

Member Ann-Frances Lambert inquired about the risks of the city issuing pension obligation bonds.

DCAO Joy-Hogg stated that pension obligation bonds should only be issued in accordance with a financial strategy. DCAO Joy-Hogg also stated that city administration recommended issuing the bonds only if the city moved forward with the planned financial strategies to increase employee contributions to retirement plans.

Roland Kooch, Davenport & Company Senior Vice President, stated that Davenport & Company was serving as the city's financial advisor. Mr. Kooch informed members that Davenport & Company recommended following the financial strategies of the city related to pension obligation bonds. Mr. Kooch also stated that the strategy would help increase the rate of contribution to retirement plans.

Vice Chair Kristen Nye stated her concerns with the city proposing that a transition from RRS to VRS begin on January 1, 2024. Vice Chair Nye stated she believed that was an aggressive timeline, and she noted that a possible July 1, 2024 implementation date would provide more time for city leadership and employees to analyze and understand the transition.

CAO Saunders informed the committee about the process of changing the proposed transition date from January 1, 2024 to July 1, 2024. CAO Saunders stated the date change was possible, but that it would require additional financial analysis for the transition to occur. CAO Saunders also stated that city administration would provide Council with a proposed timeline of steps necessary for a July 1, 2024 transition date.

Member Katherine Jordan discussed and confirmed that moving forward with pension obligation bonds would not impact the city's current debt capacity.

Chair Michael Jones stated it was important that city administration explain the process clearly to city employees. Chair Jones also stated it would be Council's decision to transition from RRS to VRS. Chair Jones further stated that the city's current retirement plan was impacting the city's ability to hire certain candidates.

Member Ellen Robertson stated Council and city employees needed to review the potential transition, but she noted that the proposed January 1, 2024 transition date might be too soon. Member Robertson also discussed with city administration, its financial strategy to increase employee retirement plan contributions.

DCAO Joy-Hogg informed members that city employees will have a full year to decide about transferring from RRS to VRS once the city's retirement system plan transition is effective.

Tax Delinquent Properties Update

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Lincoln Saunders provided members with information regarding city administration's process for addressing tax delinquent properties in the city. CAO Saunders recommended that Council and city administration have a work session to review and strategize how the city should address tax delinquent properties and its impact on property owners.

Member Ellen Robertson stated her concerns with equity and tax delinquency. Member Robertson also stated that she believed certain groups and neighborhoods were being the most impacted by taxes, and that the city needed to provide more services and options to address discriminatory processes and policies creating tax payment difficulties for certain property owners.

Member Stephanie Lynch stated that she believed the Family Crisis Fund or a new special fund could be used to help families alleviate financial burdens related to tax obligations.

Member Reva Trammell stated that rising real estate assessments should be a concern for Council, and she suggested that Council lower the city's real estate tax rate to help alleviate financial burdens on property owners.

CAO Saunders informed members that the city had not scheduled any property auctions of tax delinquent properties in the city. CAO Saunders stated that the city had no plans to start auctions and that it would work with property owners to satisfy tax obligations.

Chair Michael Jones stated it was important tax delinquent properties be reviewed in an equitable process regardless of location in the city.

Homelessness/Emergency Shelter Update

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Lincoln Saunders provided members with a presentation that detailed city administration's plans for providing emergency shelter in the city.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

[CD.2023.281](#) 20230605 Emergency Shelter Presentation

Member Stephanie Lynch stated the initial access to emergency shelters needed improvement to help assist families and individuals with locating available shelter.

CAO Saunders provided the committee with an update regarding the costs of the Family Crisis Fund and operating emergency shelters in the city.

Member Reva Trammell stated her concerns with the location of the emergency shelter sites. Member Trammell inquired why she was not made aware of the proposed shelter sites in her district and she also inquired why shelters were not located in other Council districts.

Chair Michael Jones stated his concerns that zoning policies in the city unfairly protected some neighborhoods from certain zoning uses.

Reports of Standing Committees

It was the consensus of the committee to continue reports from standing committees to the October 2, 2023 Organizational Development Standing Committee meeting.

Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinance was considered:

1. [ORD. 2023-152](#) To repeal City Code §§ 11-190-197, concerning a commercial property assessed clean energy financing program, and to amend ch. 11, art. VIII of the City Code by adding therein new §§ 11-190.1-11-197.1, concerning a commercial property assessed clean energy financing program, for the purpose of aligning the City Code with state law pertaining to commercial property assessed clean energy financing programs. (As Amended)

Patrons: Mayor Stoney, Vice President Nye, Ms. Jordan, President Jones, Ms. Lynch, Ms. Lambert, Ms. Robertson and Ms. Trammell

Vice Chair Kristin Nye provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance.

Laura Thomas, Department of Sustainability Director, was available to address any questions regarding the proposed ordinance.

Members Katherine Jordan, Stephanie Lynch, Ann-Frances Lambert, Ellen Robertson, Reva Trammell, and President Michael Jones requested to be added as co-patrons of ORD. 2023-152.

There were no further comments or discussions and Member Katherine Jordan moved to forward ORD. 2023-152 to Council with a recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 7, Jordan, Lambert, Robertson, Lynch, Trammell, Nye, Jones. Noes None.

The following ordinance was considered:

2. [ORD. 2023-188](#) To amend ch. 2, art. V of the City Code by adding therein a new div. 21, consisting of §§ 2-1202.6-2-1202.8, for the purpose of establishing a Public Utilities and Services Commission.

Patrons: Mr. Addison, Ms. Jordan, Ms. Lambert and Ms. Lynch

Member Katherine Jordan provided an introduction regarding ORD. 2023-188, and she noted possible amendments to be made to the proposed ordinance.

Public Hearing

Kevin Cianfarini, ElectrifyRVA member, spoke in support of ORD. 2023-188, and stated the commission would help regulate the city's utilities. Mr. Cianfarini also stated that the commission's work would help address the impact of the city's utilities on climate change.

Member Katherine Jordan moved to continue ORD. 2023-188 to the October 2, 2023 Organizational Development Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 7, Jordan, Lambert, Robertson, Lynch, Trammell, Nye, Jones. Noes None.

The following resolution was considered:

3. [RES. 2023-R024](#) To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause the preparation of a study to identify a location in the Shockoe Bottom area of the city of Richmond for the National Slavery Museum.

Patrons: Ms. Newbille, Ms. Lambert and President Jones

Member Ellen Robertson moved to continue RES. 2023-R024 to the October 2, 2023 Organizational Development Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 7, Jordan, Lambert, Robertson, Lynch, Trammell, Nye, Jones. Noes None.

Discussion Item(s)

There were no discussion items.

Closed Session

At 6:50 p.m., Member Katherine Jordan moved that the Organizational Development Standing Committee go into a closed meeting pursuant to subdivision A)(1) of section 2.2-3711 of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act to discuss and consider the performance of the Inspector General and subdivision (A)(8) of section 2.2-711 of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act to consult with legal counsel employed by the City regarding a matter involving the Securities Exchange Commission requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel and to consult with legal counsel retained by the City regarding collective bargaining requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel.

The motion seconded and approved: Ayes 7, Jordan, Lambert, Robertson, Lynch, Trammell, Nye, and Jones. Noes None.

Member Katherine Jordan motioned to exit closed session. The motion was seconded and approved: Ayes 7, Jordan, Lambert, Robertson, Lynch, Trammell, Nye, and Jones. Noes None.

Members reconvened in open session at 8:31 p.m.

Certification of Closed Meeting

WHEREAS, the Organizational Development Standing Committee has convened in closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Organizational Development Standing Committee that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law:

NOW, THEREFORE,
BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Organizational Development Standing Committee hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge (i) only public matters lawfully exempt from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certifying resolution applies; and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Organizational Development Standing Committee.

WITNESS the following vote of committee members, as recorded by Candice D. Reid, City Clerk:

CERTIFYING:

Michael J. Jones, Chair
Kristen M. Nye, Vice Chair
Katherine A. Jordan
Ann-Frances Lambert
Ellen F. Robertson
Stephanie A. Lynch
Reva M. Trammell

DECLINING TO CERTIFY:

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.