



City of Richmond

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

Draft Meeting Minutes Education and Human Services Standing Committee

Thursday, February 13, 2025

2:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Committee and Other Council Members in Attendance

The Honorable Stephanie Lynch - Chair
The Honorable Andrew Breton - Vice Chair
The Honorable Nicole Jones - Committee Member (late arrival)

Staff in Attendance

Janet Palmer, Deputy City Attorney
Kimberly Morris, Assistant City Clerk
Will Perkins, Council Senior Legislative Services Manager
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Stephanie Lynch called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Announcement and Public Speaker Guidelines

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

Public Comment Period

Nancy Williams, Three Gifts to You Director, addressed the committee about unhoused veterans, and she stated concerns that the unhoused are provided shelter but not provided food.

Member Nicole Jones arrived at 2:04 p.m., and was seated.

Rhonda Sneed, Blessing Warriors Executive Director, stated her concerns about the possibility of families separated at the shelter. She also stated her concerns about security at the shelter.

Bridgette Whitaker addressed the committee regarding security at the shelter and the lack of mental health care professionals for the unhoused.

LaRon Gibson addressed the committee about the security at the shelter and the lack of mental health professionals to assist the unhoused.

Presentation(s)

Richmond Resilience Initiative

Derrick Wadley, Program and Operations Supervisor for the Office of Community Wealth Building (OCWB), provided the committee with a presentation regarding the Richmond Resilience Initiative.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

[CD.2025.045](#) Richmond Resilience Initiative Presentation

Attachments: [Richmond Resilience Initiative Presentation](#)

Member Nicole Jones asked how has the community will support the new fourth cohort and if the city is leading the recruitment.

Mr. Wadley stated partners and organizations in the community will help with recruitment. He also stated OCWB will provide paper copies and a website for applicants who would like to apply.

Member Jones asked how the program is aligned with broader goals like economics and social justice.

Mr. Wadley stated they will provide participants with the understanding and knowledge of broader goals.

DCAO Traci DeShazor provided additional information about the Richmond Resilience Initiative, and addressed local, state and federal levels of supporting and guaranteed income.

Member Jones asked if there is data to support the financial stability of the initiative.

DCAO DeShazor stated the partnership with the University of Pennsylvania supported the first cohort, and Virginia Commonwealth University Research Institute for Social Equity supported the second and third cohort.

Mr. Wadley stated he will provide financial information on the first cohort.

Vice Chair Andrew Breton asked if the city is supporting the initiative.

Mr. Wadley stated the city will support the fourth cohort with \$500,000.00 approved by Council.

Vice Chair Breton asked what fraction of the total funding will go to participant stipends versus operating costs.

Mr. Wadley stated five percent will go to a financier, who will then distribute the remainder of the funds as stipends to the participants.

Vice Chair Breton asked what the benchmark number is to determine success and possibly future funding.

Mr. Wadley stated its is more about policy and sustainability than numbers.

Lashawnda Singleton, Help Me Help You Foundation Case Manager, stated her support for the initiative, and that she has witnessed the successes of the participants.

Vice Chair Breton asked what is the vision and goals of the initiative.

Mr. Wadley stated the goal is to achieve state and federal support.

Chair Stephanie Lynch noted that states have started guaranteed income pilots and then transitioned to meeting housing needs. She also stated she would like to see that happens in Richmond.

Early Childhood and Education Trust Fund

Eva Colen, Senior Policy Advisor and Manager of the Office of Children and Families, provided the committee with a presentation regarding early childhood education and the Education Trust Fund.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

[CD.2025.044](#) Early Childhood Care and Education Trust Fund Presentation

Attachments: [Early Childhood Care and Education Trust Fund Presentation](#)

Chair Stephanie Lynch asked how Richmond Public Schools (RPS) is under enrolled in Head Start, if the number of slots is determined by needs based data. She also stated that the information will need to be submitted to the Education and Human Services Standing Committee.

Ms. Colen stated that RPS will need to address enrollment to the committee, and that the declining school population numbers are due to fewer child births.

Chair Lynch inquired if data has been pulled from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) caseloads to account for children ages 0 to 5 years old, to obtain the penetration rate for Head Start enrollment and the Department of Social Services subsidy voucher utilization.

Ms. Colen stated their priority is to get clear on effective saturation rates. She also stated that no data has been pulled for Head Start.

Chair Lynch requested that the Department of Social Services provide the referenced data at the next meeting to have an idea of the eligible population.

Vice Chair Andrew Breton asked about any unused funding. He also asked if there are similar enrollment issues with pre-school.

Ms. Colen stated that there are unused slots in RPS pre-school and Head Start programs because of declining enrollment.

Chair Lynch noted that the state projects how much money they will need, and that Head Start is predicated from the previous cycle.

Ms. Colen stated RPS can submit how many slots they will need for Head Start and the Virginia Preschool Initiative.

Vice Chair Breton asked if it is universal that schools administer the Head Start program.

Ms. Colen explained the difference between Head Start and the Virginia Preschool Initiative.

Chair Lynch asked if there are other localities that use both school districts and outside partners.

Ms. Colen stated RPS sends slots to community providers.

Ms. Lynch requested the number of Department of Social Services applications that have been submitted, and how many active vouchers are distributed.

Discussion Item(s)

Update from the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) for Human Services

DCAO Traci DeShazor provided the committee with an update regarding the 3rd Annual Teen Summit RVA, the Underground Kitchen (UGK) pilot, the Community Health Improvement Plan, Fiscal Year 2024 Non-Departmental Grants Program Annual Impact Report, and resident recovery.

Tiffany Ford, Director of Neighborhood and Community Services, provided an update on the inclement weather shelter.

Member Nicole Jones stated there is no sustainable system in place for the inclement weather shelter.

DCAO Deshazor stated regional partners Henrico, Hanover and Chesterfield Counties are assisting Richmond with shelters.

Vice Chair Andrew Breton asked about the status of Family Crisis Fund applications for assistance as a result of the January 6, 2025 thru January 11, 2025, water outage.

DCAO DeShazor stated the applications are still in the process of being reviewed.

Town Hall Stakeholders Meeting

Chair Stephanie Lynch stated there will be a round table stakeholders meeting to address homelessness on March 20, 2025.

Paper(s) for Consideration

There were no papers for consideration.

Board Vacancies

There were no board vacancies.

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of December 12, 2024, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2025.001](#) December 12, 2024 - Education & Human Services Standing
Committee
Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [20241212 EHS Minutes DRAFT](#)

Staff Report

Will Perkins, Council Senior Policy Analyst, stated he will verify the accuracy of data requested from the Department of Social Services. He also stated coordination is taking place for the requested meeting by Chair Stephanie Lynch with community partners and organizations.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:44 p.m.