



# City of Richmond

900 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
[www.rva.gov/office-city-clerk](http://www.rva.gov/office-city-clerk)

## DRAFT Meeting Minutes Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee

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Wednesday, January 21, 2026

2:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor – City Hall

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### Committee Members in Attendance

The Honorable Ellen Robertson – Chair  
The Honorable Nicole Jones – Vice Chair

### Absent

The Honorable Stephanie Lynch – Member

### Staff in Attendance

Tori Cotman, Assistant City Attorney  
Maria Garnett, Council Policy Analyst  
Kiley Kesecker, Deputy City Clerk  
Nahdiyah Muhammad, Assistant City Clerk  
Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst  
Candice Reid, City Clerk  
RJ Warren, Council Chief of Staff

### Call to Order

Chair Ellen Robertson called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m., and presided.

### Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement and Public Speaker Guidelines

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

### Public Comment Period

There were no public comment speakers.

## Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of October 15, 2025, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2026.016](#) October 15, 2025 Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee Meeting Minutes

## Board Vacancies

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

[CD.2026.010](#) January 21, 2026 - Finance and Economic Development Board Vacancy Report

*A copy of the material provided has been filed.*

Chair Ellen Robertson inquired about the committee's previous recommendations concerning the appointment of a city resident to the Economic Development Authority Board of Directors who is a member of the banking, lending, or financial services community.

Ms. Nichols stated that the current vacancy for the city resident to the Economic Development Authority Board of Directors who is a member of the banking, lending, or financial services community, exist because the previous member termed-out. She further noted that the committee provided its recommendation for appointment to this vacancy during the October 2025 meeting.

**Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward the following board appointment applications to Council with a recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.**

Economic Development Authority Board of Directors:

Jeron Crooks (Resident of the city who is a certified public accountant)(reappointment)

Nathan Hughes (Resident of the city who is a member of the residential, commercial or mixed-use development) (reappointment)

Local Finance Board for Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust:

Letitia Shelton

Participatory Budgeting Steering Commission:

Abigail Delaney (reappointment)

Peter Berry

Lacey Hancher (non-voting alternate member)

Jamaal Mitchell (non-voting alternate member)

Quawneisha Peoples (resident of public housing)

Richmond Region Tourism:  
Kimberly Love Lindsey

Richmond Retirement System:  
Regina Elbert (reappointment)

Angie Rodgers, Director of the Department of Economic Development, provided the committee with additional information regarding appointments to the Economic Development Authority Board of Directors. She stated that a request was made to continue all other board appointments so applicants can be interviewed.

**Vice Chair Nicole Jones made a motion to continue consideration of appointment applications for the Economic Development Authority Board of Directors (Resident and member of the banking, lending or financial services community) to the April 16, 2026, Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting. The motion was seconded approved: Ayes 2, Jones and Robertson. Noes None.**

## Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinances were considered:

1. [ORD. 2026-008](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept funds in the amount of \$619,950.00 from the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority; to amend the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Special Fund Budget by creating new special funds for the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services called the "VCU Operation STOP Special Fund" and the "Operation STOP Special Fund;" to appropriate a portion of such increase to the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Special Fund Budget by increasing estimated revenues and the amount appropriated to the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services' "VCU Operation STOP Special Fund" by \$25,000.00 to fund a government to government purchase with Virginia Commonwealth University; and to appropriate a portion of such increase to the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Special Fund Budget by increasing estimated revenues and the amount appropriated to the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services' "Operation STOP Special Fund" by \$594,950.00 to provide sub-grants in the amount of \$594,950 to eligible entities, all for the purpose of implementing the Authority's Operation Specifically Targeted Overdose Prevention program to combat the opioid crisis.

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

2. [ORD.  
2026-010](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute an Atlantic Outreach Grant Contract between the City of Richmond and Atlantic Outreach Group for the purpose of providing bed fee scholarships for clients with opioid use disorder in their recovery residences.

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

3. [ORD.  
2026-011](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a ChildSavers Grant Contract between the City of Richmond and ChildSavers - Memorial Child Guidance Clinic for the purpose of providing trauma informed clinical counseling services to youth whose caregiver or family member has experienced overdose in the City of Richmond.

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

4. [ORD.  
2026-012](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Daily Planet Grant Contract between the City of Richmond and Daily Planet Inc. for the purpose of providing bed fee scholarships and referrals for clients with opioid use disorder in accredited recovery residences.

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

5. [ORD.  
2026-013](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Daily Planet Health Services Grant Contract between the City of Richmond and Daily Planet Inc. for the purpose of developing and presenting prevention and education services to law enforcement and policy makers addressing the opioid crisis in the City of Richmond.

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

6. [ORD.  
2026-014](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Health Brigade Grant Contract between the City of Richmond and Health Brigade for the purpose of supporting harm reduction and outreach efforts for residents suffering from opioid use disorder in the city of Richmond.

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

7. [ORD. 2026-015](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Richmond Behavioral Health Foundation Grant Contract between the City of Richmond and Richmond Behavioral Health Foundation for the purpose supporting quarterly community events and harm reduction supplies in designated “safe zones.”

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

Anna Jones, Opioid Response Strategist for the Office of Opioid and Substance Use Response, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinances, stating that the proposed legislation authorizes the acceptance and appropriation of opioid abatement funds, establishes special funds, approves multiple grant agreements to support overdose prevention, treatment, recovery, harm reduction, and education initiatives.

### **Public Hearing**

There were no public hearing speakers.

Vice Chair Nicole Jones requested a list of the designated safe zone locations referenced in the proposed legislation.

Anna Jones stated that the Trauma Healing Response Network had established dedicated safe zones in areas with the highest rates of fatal and non-fatal overdoses and further noted that she would provide the committee with a list of those locations.

**There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2026-008, ORD. 2026-010, ORD. 2026-011, ORD. 2026-012, ORD. 2026-013, ORD. 2026-014, and ORD. 2026-015 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.**

### **The following ordinance was considered:**

8. [ORD. 2026-016](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Coliseum Parking License Agreement between the City of Richmond, as licensor, and Virginia Commonwealth University, as licensee, for the purpose of leasing 200 parking spaces at the City-owned parking facility located at 501 North 7th Street. (6th District)

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

Lynne Lancaster, Department of General Services, provided an introduction and a brief overview of the proposed ordinance, stating that the proposed legislation authorizes the execution of a parking license agreement with Virginia Commonwealth University for the leasing of 200 parking spaces at the city-owned Coliseum parking facility.

### **Public Hearing**

There were no public hearing speakers.

**There were no comments or discussions and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2026-016 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.**

**The following ordinance was considered:**

9. [ORD. 2026-017](#) To amend City Code §§ 12-242, concerning the disposition of calculated general fund surplus and reporting, to require that ten percent of each year's surplus amount go to a special purpose reserve to support the Richmond Retirement System Total Retirement Fund to fund bonuses for retired members of the Richmond Retirement System and 12-265, concerning special purpose reserves to establish a special purpose reserve fund to support the Richmond Retirement System Total Retirement Fund.

**Patrons:** Ms. Trammell and Ms. Robertson

RJ Warren, Council Chief of Staff, provided an introduction and a brief overview of the proposed ordinance, stating that the proposed legislation amends the City Code to dedicate a portion of the annual general fund surplus to a new special purpose reserve to support the Richmond Retirement System and fund bonuses for retired members.

Vice Chair Nicole Jones inquired about how the ten percent allocation would be used to support the Richmond Retirement System and how the funding would be maintained.

Mr. Warren stated that the full ten percent allocation from the annual general fund surplus would be dedicated to the special purpose reserve supporting the Richmond Retirement System. He further explained that the one-time payment would be based on the total surplus, with higher surpluses resulting in greater allocations and lower surpluses resulting in reduced allocations.

Chair Ellen Robertson requested information on the number of retirees who are not receiving a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) and the average bonus retirees would receive.

## Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

**There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2026-017 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.**

**The following resolution was considered:**

10. [RES. 2026-R004](#) To request that the Mayor (i) propose an annual budget for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 that recommends \$1,131,800 in funding to increase wages and benefits for contracted janitorial workers and (ii) pursue an amendment of the City's Janitorial Services contract during Fiscal Year 2026-2027 to add a requirement that the City's janitorial services contractor pay its employees at least the City's minimum wage and to request that the Chief Administrative Officer, upon the approval of the aforementioned budget appropriation, pursue an amendment of the City's janitorial services contract to include a requirement that the City's janitorial services contractor pay the City's minimum wage to its employees who are performing services under the City's janitorial services contract beginning Jul. 1, 2026.

**Patrons:** Ms. Lynch and Ms. Robertson

## Public Hearing

Priscilla Peebles, contracted city employee, and SEIU 32 BJ member, expressed support for the proposed legislation, stating that increasing wages and benefits for contracted janitorial workers would help ease financial burdens caused by missed work while providing meaningful benefits and greater economic stability.

**There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward RES. 2026-R004 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.**

Chair Ellen Robertson inquired about the implementation strategy for the proposed legislation.

Rene Almaraz, Director of Procurement Services, requested a 30-day continuance to allow sufficient time to complete discussions and develop an appropriate implementation strategy, noting that contract negotiations are typically addressed during the renewal process and that the next contract renewal is scheduled to take place in April.

**The following ordinance was considered:**

11. [ORD. 2025-282](#) To amend ch. 26, article V, div. 2 of the City Code by adding therein a new section 26-370, concerning a deferral program for certain real estate taxes pursuant to and in accordance with Code of Virginia § 58.1-3219.

**Patrons:** Ms. Abubaker, Ms. Trammell, Mr. Breton and Ms. Lynch

**There were no comments or discussions and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to continue ORD. 2025-282 to the March 18, 2026, Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.**

**The following ordinance was considered:**

12. [ORD. 2025-283](#) To amend City Code § 12-11, concerning the deadline for submission of budget to Council, for the purpose of changing the deadline for submission from March 27 to March 11.

**Patrons:** President Newbille

RJ Warren, Council Chief of Staff, provided an introduction and a brief overview of the proposed ordinance, stating that the proposed legislation amends the City Code to move the deadline for submitting the proposed budget to Council from March 27 to March 11.

**Public Hearing**

There were no public hearing speakers.

**There were no comments or discussions and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2025-283 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.**

**The following ordinance was considered:**

13. [ORD. 2025-286](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept funds in the amount of \$127,032.00 from the Commonwealth's Development Opportunity Fund, to amend the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Special Fund Budget by creating a new special fund for the Department of Economic Development entitled "PPD Special Fund," and to appropriate the increase to the Fiscal Year

2025-2026 Special Fund Budget by increasing estimated revenues and the amount appropriated to the Department of Economic Development's PPD Special Fund by \$127,032.00, for the purpose of providing PPD Development L.P. with incentives to establish a bioanalytics laboratory facility at 737 North 5th Street in the city of Richmond. (6th District)

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

Katie McConnell, Deputy Director of the Department of Economic Development, provided an introduction and a brief overview of the proposed ordinance, stating that the proposed legislation authorizes the acceptance and appropriation of state funds to create a special fund providing economic development incentives for PPD Development L.P., to establish a bioanalytics laboratory facility at 737 North 5th Street.

### Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

**There were no comments or discussions and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2025-286 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.**

**The following ordinance was considered:**

14. [ORD. 2026-007](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept funds in the amount of \$150,000.00 from the Commonwealth of Virginia, and to amend the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Special Fund Budget by creating a new special fund for the Department of Economic Development entitled "Capital Access Special Fund" and appropriating the increase to the Department of Economic Development's "Capital Access Special Fund" by \$150,000.00 for the purpose of providing funding to the Metropolitan Business League and Bridging Virginia for the Capital Access Program.

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

Katie McConnell, Deputy Director of the Department of Economic Development, provided an introduction and a brief overview of the proposed ordinance, stating that the proposed legislation authorizes the acceptance and appropriation of state funds to create a Capital Access Special Fund to support the Metropolitan Business League and Bridging Virginia in administering the Capital Access Program.

Floyd Miller, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Metropolitan Business League (MBL), provided the committee with additional information regarding funding to and from MBL and highlighted MBL's partnership with Bridging Virginia.

Leah Fremouw, President and Chief Executive Officer of Bridging Virginia, provided the committee with additional information regarding the partnership with MBL.

### Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

**There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2026-007 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.**

The following ordinance was considered:

15. [ORD. 2026-009](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept funds in the amount of \$2,704,000.00 from the Federal Railroad Administration, to accept funds in the amount of \$540,800.00 from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, to amend the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Special Fund budget by creating a new special fund for the Department of Public Works called the "Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) - Broad Rock Grade Separation Special Fund," and to appropriate the increase to the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Special Fund Budget by increasing estimated revenues and the amount appropriated to the Department of Public Works' "Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) - Broad Rock Grade Separation Special Fund" by the total amount of \$3,224,800.00 to provide funding for the feasibility analysis, environmental clearance, and preliminary engineering of a grade separation project on Broad Rock Boulevard.

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

Dironna Moore Clarke, Deputy Director of Equitable Transit and Mobility for the Department of Public Works, provided an introduction and brief overview of the proposed ordinance, stating that the proposed legislation authorizes the acceptance of state and federal funding and establishes a new special fund to support preliminary planning and engineering for a railroad grade separation project on Broad Rock Boulevard.

### Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

There were no comments or discussions and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2026-009 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.

The following ordinances were considered:

16. [ORD. 2025-284](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a First Amendment to Coliseum Parcel Redevelopment Cooperation Agreement between the City of Richmond, Virginia and the Economic Development Authority of the City of Richmond for the purpose of facilitating the development of a mixed-use City Center.

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

17. [ORD. 2025-285](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Cooperation Agreement between the City of Richmond and the Economic Development Authority of the City of Richmond for the purpose of facilitating the redevelopment of the City-owned property located at 500 North 10th Street. (6th District)

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

Angie Rodgers, Director of Economic Development, presented to the committee on the proposed ordinance, including activation of the City Center development pipeline, an overview of City assets, Coliseum activation, the Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC) transit hub activation, and other near-term initiatives.

*A copy of the material provided has been filed.*

### Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

Chair Ellen Robertson requested the following:

- Timeline on consultants' work
- New revenue projections from Economic Development
- Fiscal impact
- Info on financial strategy
- Project schedule

Ms. Rodgers stated that significant resources may be available through the Greater Richmond Convention Center Authority (GRCCA) and that additional cost analysis is needed for the demolition of the Coliseum and required infrastructure improvements. She further noted that these estimates are necessary to determine funding sufficiency and that, given the scale of the upfront public investment, a bimonthly update schedule would be more appropriate, with ongoing coordination in the interim.

Dironna Moore Clarke, Deputy Director of Equitable Transit and Mobility for the Department of Public Works, stated that additional analysis is needed to understand the costs of key infrastructure improvements. She also noted that the Build America Bureau grant includes asset valuation, financing, and scheduling, along with engagement from federal partners.

**There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2025-284 and ORD. 2025-285 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.**

### **Presentation(s)**

There were no presentations.

### **Discussion Item(s)**

There were no discussion items.

### **Staff Report**

Council staff provided the committee with the January Finance and Economic Development staff report and the proposed 2026 presentation schedule through July.

Chair Ellen Robertson stated that the proposed presentation schedule, has been approved; however, it remains subject to change if necessary.

The committee discussed adjusting the March and April Finance Committee meeting dates to accommodate the 2026–2027 budget schedule and reached a consensus to reschedule the meetings from Wednesday, March 18, 2026, to Thursday, March 19, 2026, and from Wednesday, April 15, 2026, to Thursday, April 16, 2026.

[CD.2026.020](#) January 21, 2026 - Finance and Economic Development Staff Report

[CD.2026.021](#) Finance and Economic Development Proposed Presentation Schedule

*Copies of the materials provided have been filed.*

Chair Ellen Robertson requested a presentation of CAO Odie Donald's initial report on agency level budget submissions in accordance with adopted Ord. No. 2025-100.

Maria Garnett, Council Policy Analyst explained that once the mayor submits the FY 2027 budget on March 11, city administration will have to report to council the differences between agency budget submissions and the mayor's submission.

## **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.