



City of Richmond

Minutes

Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee

Thursday, July 16, 2020

1:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor – Virtual Meeting

Committee Members and Others in Attendance

The Honorable Michael Jones – Chair
The Honorable Kristen Larson – Vice Chair
The Honorable Ellen F. Robertson – Committee Member
The Honorable Andreas Addison – Council Member (late arrival and early departure)
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch – Alternate Member (late arrival and early departure)
Lawrence Anderson, Council Chief of Staff
Samson Anderson, Council Budget Analyst
Meghan Brown, Deputy Council Chief of Staff
Bill Echelberger, Council Budget Analyst
Allison Miessler, Boards and Commissions Administrator
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Tabrica Rentz, Acting Deputy City Attorney
Dominique Thaxton, Assistant City Clerk
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Electronic Meeting Announcement

Assistant City Clerk Dominique J. Thaxton, in accordance with Ordinance No. 2020-093, adopted April 9, 2020, announced the meeting would be held through electronic communication means. Assistant City Clerk Thaxton stated notice of the meeting was provided to the public through a public information advisory issued on July 9, 2020, and through Legistar on the city website in accordance with usual practice. She also stated members of the public were encouraged to provide comments in writing prior to the meeting and all comments received prior to 10:00 a.m., on Thursday, July 16, 2020, were provided to committee members. Ms. Thaxton indicated that members of the public who signed up to speak and provide comment would be called to speak at the appropriate time.

Call to Order

Chair Michael Jones called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m., and presided.

Public Comment Period

There were no public comment speakers.

Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Chair's request, Assistant City Clerk Dominique J. Thaxton provided citizen speaker guidelines.

Approval of Minutes

There were no corrections or amendments to the meeting minutes of the Thursday, June 18, 2020 committee meeting, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

Board Vacancies

Allison Miessler, boards and commissions administrator, reviewed board applications for consideration by the committee.

Vice Chair Kristen Larson moved to forward the following board appointment applications to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved:

<u>Board Name</u>	<u>Criteria for Appointment</u>	<u>Applicant Name</u>
Board of Directors of the Economic Development Authority (7 directors)	Resident of the city*	Neil Millhiser (2 nd District Resident)
	Certified Public Accountant *	Marquia Gunn (7 th District Resident)

**Applicants must reside or work in the city*

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Chair Michael Jones requested information on how long boards and commissions vacancies have been without mayoral nominees. Chair Jones also requested that the appropriate staff reach out to the Office of the Mayor regarding nominations for appointment.

Papers for Consideration

Member Ellen Robertson moved to amend the agenda as follows:

ORD. 2019-275

To amend ch. 6 of the City Code by adding therein a new art. XII (§§ 6-596-6-602) to establish a technology zone program in accordance with Va. Code § 58.1-3850, for the purpose of facilitating the development and location of technology businesses in the city of Richmond, capital investment, and job creation.

Patron: Mr. Addison

To be continued to the September 17, 2020 Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting

ORD. 2019-276

To amend City Code §§ 26-872, concerning definitions related to license taxes, and 26-989, concerning licenses taxes for personal services businesses, and to amend ch. 26, art. XV, div. 2 of the City Code by adding therein a new section numbered 26-1003.1, concerning the license tax for technology businesses, for the purpose of creating a new business, profession, and occupation license category called “technology business” and imposing a new license tax on such businesses.

Patron: Mr. Addison

To be continued to the September 17, 2020 Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting

The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinance was considered:

ORD. 2020-147

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to enter into the Twenty-Third Commercial Area Revitalization Effort Program Cooperation Agreement between the City of Richmond and the Economic Development Authority of the City of Richmond for the purpose of providing for the operation of the Commercial Area Revitalization Effort ("CARE") Program.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney

Leonard Sledge, Department of Economic Development director, provided an overview of ORD. 2020-147, and informed the committee that the proposed ordinance would require an amendment by Council, if recommended for approval.

Member Ellen Robertson requested information on the designation and locations of the Commercial Area Revitalization Effort (CARE) areas referenced in ORD. 2020-147.

Mr. Sledge stated that the CARE areas are various commercial corridors in the city and the CARE program provides reimbursement costs to businesses for reinvesting in facades and equipment.

Member Robertson inquired if there are certain economic indicators used to identify CARE areas. Member Robertson further asked if the proposed amendment to ORD. 2020-147 would remove CARE program funds to support business recovery for damages due to the civil unrest in the city, and if businesses would still be required to be in CARE areas.

Mr. Sledge stated that it is not the intention to divest funds that are appropriated on an annual basis for the CARE program. Mr. Sledge further stated over the years that program funds have been underspent and additional funds have been identified. Mr. Sledge also stated that the intention is to continue the traditional program operation and use the identified additional funds to assist, through a one-time grant program, businesses damaged due to civil unrest. Mr. Sledge provided the committee with an overview of the current CARE area locations.

Member Robertson requested information on the funding source for the CARE program. Member Robertson stated that interest in expanding the CARE area designations to those areas experiencing divestment and blight was generally met with resistance due to lack of available funding to service any expansion. Member Robertson expressed concern regarding the sudden identification of excess funds when so many areas have been in need of assistance.

Vice Chair Kristen Larson stated the importance of the work indicated in ORD. 2020-147, but expressed the need to see the proposed amendments in writing before recommending approval. Vice Chair Larson also stated that if there is a pressing timeline, that an appropriate option may be to forward the proposed legislation to Council with no recommendation.

Chair Michael Jones inquired if the businesses slated to receive assistance through this program are located in the CARE area. Chair Jones further inquired if the recently identified additional funds are within the CARE program funds. Chair Jones also inquired if there is potential for businesses to use this program in addition to their business insurance policy claims.

Mr. Sledge stated that the businesses that stand to receive assistance through the one time grant program are both within and outside of CARE areas. Mr. Sledge also stated that the recently identified funds are indeed within the CARE program funds. Mr. Sledge further stated that a part of the program vetting process includes a review of any insurance claims to verify assistance needed for partial acceptance, denial and deductible costs.

Member Robertson inquired if beyond reimbursement, there are any other criteria for acceptance into the proposed grant program and if the criteria differ from the guidelines currently in place for the CARE program.

Mr. Sledge provided an overview of the preliminary guidelines for the proposed grant program and an overview of the current CARE program guidelines.

Chair Jones expressed his concern for the potential depletion of excess funds in areas outside of the designated CARE zones and the need for improved distribution of information on the current CARE program.

Member Robertson expressed concern for the reimbursement aspect of the program and businesses not being able to afford the upfront costs.

Chair Jones inquired if there is a way to prioritize businesses in need who have not received any prior assistance from insurance or otherwise.

There were no further comments or discussions and **Vice Chair Larson moved to forward ORD. 2020-147 to Council with no recommendation, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

The following ordinance was considered:

ORD. 2020-148

To amend ch. 26, art. V of the City Code by adding therein a new div. 10 (§§ 26-590-26-599) for the purpose of providing for the partial exemption of certain rehabilitated commercial or industrial structures from real estate taxation.

Patron: Ms. Robertson

Member Ellen Robertson provided an overview of ORD. 2020-148, and stated the proposed ordinance would require additional amendments.

Alternate Member Stephanie Lynch joined the meeting at 1:49 p.m.

Vice Chair Kristen Larson requested clarification on the amendments proposed for ORD. 2020-148.

Member Robertson stated that the proposed amendments as requested from the administration are to include the Commercial Area Revitalization Effort (CARE) areas and to change the administrative language of the paper from the director of Housing and Community Development to the director of the Economic Development Authority.

Vice Chair Larson inquired if the committee has the power to move ORD. 2020-148 forward with the proposed amendments.

Tabrica Rentz, acting deputy city attorney, affirmed that the committee has the authority to forward the paper for approval with an amendment. Ms. Rentz expanded that changing the administrative language of the paper will require amendment but the addition of CARE areas will not require an amendment.

Chair Michael Jones stated that recent studies have shown the current tax abatement program has had a detrimental impact on the city's tax revenue. Chair Jones questioned the necessity to instill another tax abatement program if it is shown to be unbeneficial for the city.

Member Robertson stated that the purpose of introducing ORD. 2020-148 is to address the desperate need for jobs in the city. Member Robertson underscored that the abatement for business development is in the interest of industry and jobs creation in the city.

Chair Jones expressed his understanding of the need for jobs in the city, but stated that there is no guarantee the abatement program would provide the necessary jobs. Chair Jones inquired if the Economic Development Authority (EDA) can handle abatement requests on an individual application basis.

Member Robertson stated that ORD. 2020-148 does not propose a blanket acceptance and that a rigorous application process is still in place. Member Robertson explained that Council has to grant the

administration with the authority to abate through legislation because they do not have the authority at will to abate real estate taxes.

Chair Jones expressed his concern that an abatement program may cause certain demographics of citizens to be priced out of their communities.

Member Robertson concurred with the need for affordable housing in the city and provided additional information on the administration of the abatement program.

There were no further comments or discussions and **Vice Chair Larson moved to forward ORD. 2020-148 to Council with the recommendation to approve with an amendment, which was seconded and approved:** Ayes 2, Larson, Robertson. Noes 1, Jones.

Chair Jones requested that ORD. 2020-148 be considered on Council's Regular Agenda at the September 14, 2020 Formal Council meeting. Chair Jones also requested that City Assessor Richie McKeithen be available to discuss the ordinance at that meeting.

The following resolution was considered:

RES. 2020-R039

To request that the Mayor introduce such budget amendments to the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget as may be necessary to restore funding for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the Eviction Diversion Program to the amounts proposed in the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget introduced on March 6, 2020, in the event that City revenues exceed current projections for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.

Patron: Ms. Robertson

Member Ellen Robertson provided an overview of RES. 2020-R039.

Councilor Andreas Addison joined the meeting at 2:10 p.m.

Public Hearing

Citizens were provided an opportunity to offer comments in writing regarding proposed legislation on the agenda, prior to the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting. All written citizen comments received by the Office of the City Clerk were provided to members of the committee prior to the meeting, and are included as an Appendix to the July 16, 2020 Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting.

Vice Chair Kristen Larson stated that Council previously adopted ORD. 2020-133 to request that any excess revenue accrued during fiscal year 2021 would be placed into a COVID-19 relief fund. Vice Chair Larson also stated that she cannot support any prioritizing efforts for the COVID-19 relief fund when the pressing needs of the city may not be apparent for some time.

Member Robertson expressed that the increased amount of pending eviction cases demonstrates the immediacy and importance of RES. 2020-R039.

Chair Michael Jones expressed that RES. 2020-R039 should not linger in committee. Chair Jones stated that due to the need for housing security in the city, Council should have an opportunity to deliberate on prioritizing efforts.

There were no further comments or discussions and **Member Ellen Robertson moved to forward RES. 2020-R039 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which failed for lack of a second.**

Vice Chair Larson moved to forward RES. 2020-R039 to Council with the recommendation to strike, which failed for lack of a second.

Member Robertson moved to forward RES. 2020-R039 to Council with no recommendation, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following resolution was considered:

RES. 2020-R046

To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause to be prepared and submitted to the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee a quarterly report that provides certain data relevant to the City's five civil asset forfeiture special funds for the purpose of increased oversight of the sources and uses of civil asset forfeiture special funds.

Patron: Ms. Lynch, Mr. Jones and Mr. Addison

Alternate Member Stephanie Lynch provided an overview of RES. 2020-R046.

Public Hearing

Citizens were provided an opportunity to offer comments in writing regarding proposed legislation on the agenda, prior to the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting. All written citizen comments received by the Office of the City Clerk were provided to members of the committee prior to the meeting, and are included as an Appendix to the July 16, 2020 Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting.

Allan-Charles Chipman spoke in support of RES. 2020-R046, and expressed that civil asset forfeitures can lead to incentivizing discrimination. Mr. Chipman stated that if civil asset forfeitures are to continue, that the funds should be reinvested in over policed communities in need.

Meghan Rickman Blackwood spoke in support of RES. 2020-R046.

Jarrold Blackwood spoke in support of RES. 2020-R046.

Chief of Police Gerald Smith, requested clarification on the dollar value of the forfeited assets referenced in RES. 2020-R046.

Member Ellen Robertson expressed support for RES. 2020-R046 and requested information on the current process for cataloging, processing and categorizing forfeited assets. Member Robertson requested to be added as a co-patron of RES. 2020-R046.

Vice Chair Kristen Larson expressed support for RES. 2020-R046, and requested to be added as a co-patron.

Chair Michael Jones expressed gratitude for the support and stated that the goal of the RES. 2020-R046 is to promote oversight and accountability in the city.

There were no further comments or discussions and Member Robertson moved to forward RES. 2020-R046 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following resolution was considered:

RES. 2020-R047

To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause to be prepared and submitted to the Council and the Mayor a report identifying funding in the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget and the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Special Fund Budget appropriated to the Department of Police for mental health, substance abuse, and social service functions and that provides recommendations, to the extent permitted by law, for the re-appropriation and transfer of such funding from the Department of Police to other City departments

and to community mental health, substance abuse, and social service programs designed to perform such functions.

Patron: Ms. Lynch and Mr. Jones

Alternate Member Stephanie Lynch provided an overview of RES. 2020-R047.

Public Hearing

Citizens were provided an opportunity to offer comments in writing regarding proposed legislation on the agenda, prior to the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting. All written citizen comments received by the Office of the City Clerk were provided to members of the committee prior to the meeting, and are included as an Appendix to the July 16, 2020 Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting.

Princess Blanding, sister of Marcus-David Peters, spoke in support for RES. 2020-R047, and the reinvestment of funds into the community. Ms. Blanding also requested an independent analysis of the Richmond Police Department (RPD) budget be conducted.

Allan-Charles Chipman spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047, and expressed the need to fund organizations that promote an end to community violence.

Mera Carle spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047, and expressed the need to redirect funds to mental health efforts. Ms. Carle also expressed that redistribution of funds can assist with reimagining affordable housing, public schools, and mental health services.

Josephe Jordan spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047, and stated that the funds can be better directed in building equity in the community.

Meghan Rickman Blackwood spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047, and addressed the various efforts that would serve the community if they received a portion of the RPD budget.

Jarrod Blackwood spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047, and expressed his concern for the disparity in salary and training time for police officers in comparison to paramedics.

Jasetyn Hatcher spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047, and advocated for a report of the entire RPD budget. Ms. Hatcher stated her concerns for the demonization of citizens using their first amendment rights and the harmful narrative used to describe demonstrators.

Lauryn Reese spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047 and outlined the effects of over policing on Black youth. Ms. Reese stated that over policing students leads to formal legal charges for minor infractions and children being held back in school.

Brandon Lowe spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047, and highlighted the intensive training required for him to become a licensed professional counselor in comparison to the training required of police officers. Mr. Lowe stated the need for increased training in areas of crisis intervention and non-harmful mediation.

Carson Parris spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047, and expressed support for the "Marcus Alert." Ms. Parris highlighted that the funds used to purchase riot gear for the police should have been directed toward affordable housing.

Marina Blough spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047, and noted that while overall crime has been declining, the RPD budget has steadily increased over the last decade. Ms. Blough stated that additional RPD funds should be redirected to community based programs, mental health efforts and affordable housing.

Thalia Hernandez spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047, and called for budget funds to be reallocated toward community resources. Ms. Hernandez expressed support for a public report of the RPD

budget.

Hillary Small spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047, and expressed that since police officers do not have comprehensive training in intervention of mental health, substance abuse or social services crises, they should not be performing such tasks.

Erika Misseri spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047.

Kenneth Farino spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047, and noted that in the past decade, there has been an increase in police brutality. Mr. Farino stated that while the matter of defunding the police and the reallocating of the RPD budget has become a widely argued political issue, instances of police brutality should not be an arguable point.

Michael Gilbert spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047, and expressed that the militarization of the police is not an effective use of police labor. Mr. Gilbert stated that by drastically paring down the focus of the police, the department will become more efficient and the funds saved can be directed to community services in need. Mr. Gilbert highlighted the economic advantages of investing in the community.

Jessica Shim spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047, and stated that the RPD budget far outpaces the budget of the Richmond Public Schools. Ms. Shim expressed that the funds would be better served in other areas of need.

Leigh Rossi spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047, and advocated for the redirecting of funds to community services. Ms. Rossi expressed that by funding community resources, the city begins to address the root cause of crime.

Inga Schunn spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047 and expressed the importance of reinvesting in community care services. Inga Schunn suggested Council research successful reallocation of police funding towards mental health first responders.

Case Mulroy spoke in support of RES. 2020-R047 and highlighted the need to reimagine public safety in the city.

Chief of Police Gerald Smith, expressed his concern for the divestment in the RPD budget. Chief Smith indicated that instances across the country where localities have defunded the police, have seen an increase in crime and injury. Chief Smith expanded that defunding has led to decreased morale in officers.

Vice Chair Kristen Larson inquired if a line item report of the RPD budget can be made available to Council and the public.

Chief Smith expressed that he will look into the procedure of making this information available to the public.

Vice Chair Larson stated that the requests mentioned in the public hearing were policy changes, while RES. 2020-R047 is related to a budget change. Vice Chair Larson expressed concern for reallocating funds from one department to another in the midst of a fiscal year.

Member Ellen Robertson underscored difficult decisions involved in determining the city's most pressing needs during the budget process. Member Robertson stated that the concerns of the citizens, especially direct service community programs, should be better addressed. Member Robertson requested a detailed plan of the current RPD budget and how the recommended budget reallocations in RES. 2020-R047 would translate into action plans for the various departments receiving the funds.

Chair Jones stated that RES. 2020-R047 is asking RPD to review its budget and identify where funds can be removed. Chair Jones expanded that RES. 2020-R047 also identifies the various departments that would be receiving the funds.

Councilor Andreas Addison highlighted the complexity of the budget process and advocated for a point in time budget that would track spending throughout a given fiscal year. Councilor Addison expressed the need for a participatory budget process that would allow for more public input and access. Councilor Addison underscored that the pandemic has deeply impacted city revenue projections and that every department should continuously refine its budget to meet changing priorities. Councilor Addison stated that RES. 2020-R047 offers true change towards equity.

Member Robertson inquired if the timeline of the requests outlined in RES. 2020-R047 is possible for the RPD.

Chief Smith stated that the collection of the information detailed in the requests may take some time but that he would work diligently to provide the information as efficiently as possible.

Chair Jones indicated that the timeline outlined in RES. 2020-R047 can be amended if an extension is needed beyond the stated October 1, 2020 deadline.

There were no further comments or discussions and **Member Robertson moved to forward RES. 2020-R047 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes 1, Larson.**

Alternate Member Stephanie Lynch departed the meeting at 3:59 p.m.

Discussion

Status Update on Tax Year 2021 Reassessment Notices - Richie McKeithen, City Assessor

City Assessor Richie McKeithen informed the committee that the assessment notifications for real property tax will be distributed in the first week of September 2020. Mr. McKeithen expanded by providing the committee with the timeline for the real estate tax appellate process. Mr. McKeithen stated that the Office of the City Assessor will be preparing a press release to circulate information on the assessments.

Councilor Andreas Addison departed the meeting at 4:03 p.m.

Vice Chair Kristen Larson inquired if there is an update on the tax assessments related to the housing market.

Mr. McKeithen expressed that he hopes to continue monitoring the assessments and meet with council members to discuss their respective districts.

Staff Report

Bill Echelberger and Samson Anderson, council budget analysts, provided the committee with the May staff report.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:09 p.m.

From: [Chris Ercolano](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Comments for today's City Council Meeting
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 9:59:43 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Councilmembers,

My name is Chris Ercolano. I am an elementary educator and I live in the 4th district. I hope you all are doing well today, and I'm enthusiastic that we will see positive steps forward in our city's fight for justice and equity.

Two resolutions up for vote today have my attention and are very important to the people of our community. Please do what's right for our city:

1. Vote to extend RES2020-039. We are living in an unprecedented time due to COVID-19. It is imperative for the peace and well-being of our neighbors that we fight against evictions and the housing crisis. Our people are in peril. It is a fundamental need for people to have access to shelter. During this time of uncertainty, the least you can do is work to ensure people can feel safe knowing there will be a roof over their heads. Please continue taking care of our city by extending RES2020-039
2. Approve RES2020-047. Police are to treat a symptom. They do not cure the disease. Inequality in access to nutrition, healthcare, education, and housing are all viral problems of an unjust system that disproportionately affect BIPOC communities. The police are spread too thin and expected to handle things they are simply not trained to handle. Reallocate these resources to support our communities from within. When basic needs are met, crime is reduced. Current police tactics and an over militarized police force are not safe. Reallocate these funds to meet community needs. Health and education are more important than brutal policing.

Thank you

From: [Katherine Malady](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comment for Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee - RES 2020 - R047 and RES 2020 R039
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 4:37:35 PM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon,

Please provide the following public comment to the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee member for the July 16, 2020 meeting -

My name is Katherine Malady. I live in Richmond's 5th District.

1. I ask that you vote in favor of Res 2020-R039 to restore **and increase** funding for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and Eviction Diversion Programs.

Richmond has the ***second highest eviction rate*** in the country, 11% annually from 2000 to 2016, based on the Princeton University Eviction Lab analysis of millions of eviction case court records. **Five** of the top ten cities in the US with the **highest eviction rates** are located in the State of Virginia. Obviously we are doing something wrong in Virginia.

Evictions disproportionately harm Black Virginians. And as such, there is inherent racism in allowing evictions to commence at the rate in which they do here in Richmond without providing adequate funding and programming support to those who need it. With thousands of Richmonders losing their jobs, we are in the midst of a massive eviction crisis. Housing is a human right. And it is one that we must prioritize, fund, and protect here in the capital city.

2. I ask that you vote in favor of Res 2020-R047 to identify and make recommendations for what funds appropriated to the Department of Police will be re-appropriated and transferred to other City departments and to community mental health, substance abuse, and social service programs. In the midst of a public health crisis, housing crisis, and community safety crisis, we must change our approach from one that is punitive to one that invests in true community care. Please support this resolution and continue to take steps to divest from a punitive system, rooted in centuries old racism, and invest in transformative and collective models for community care and racial justice.

Sincerely,
Katherine Malady

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [Eryn Alloway](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comments for tomorrow's Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 2:21:11 PM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Greetings Candice D. Reid and all City Council Members,

In advance of tomorrow's Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting, I am writing to convey my support for Resolutions 2020-R039, 2020-R046, and 2020-R047. These are critical and needed resolutions to support our community. I appreciate your time in considering these resolutions. (I have copied the briefs of the resolutions after my comments.)

I wish to express my support for Resolution 2020-R039, to restore funding to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the Eviction Diversion Program to the amounts proposed in the March 6th Budget. I also wish to express my support for these programs to be funded whether or not the city's revenue exceeds projections. These programs are even more crucial than ever during this time of COVID-19. The loss of projected income to the city should not mean that families who have lost their income must face housing insecurity. This is the time to support our citizens who need help during this crisis.

5. RES. 2020-R039

To request that the Mayor introduce such budget amendments to the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget as may be necessary to restore funding for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the Eviction Diversion Program to the amounts proposed in the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget introduced on March 6, 2020, in the event that City revenues exceed current projections for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.

Patrons: Ms. Robertson

I also wish to express my support for Resolution 2020-R046, to request that a report be submitted to identify detailed information regarding the civil asset forfeiture special funds and allow for increased oversight of the forfeiture process and special funds. I believe that allowing police to seize civil assets for profit provides an incentive for police to seize private assets for departmental monetary gain. I do not support our city's participation in the US Justice Department program to seize these resources. Please support this resolution to increase oversight of this program.

6. RES. 2020-R046

To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause to be prepared and submitted to the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee a quarterly report that provides certain data relevant to the City's five civil asset forfeiture special funds for the purpose of increased oversight of the sources and uses of civil asset forfeiture special funds.

Patrons: Ms. Lynch, Mr. Jones and Mr. Addison

And last but not least, I wish to express my heartfelt and enthusiastic support for Resolution 2020-R047. Our community needs funding and support for mental help, substance abuse,

and social service programs - and not through the police department. The police department is not equipped to provide these services. There are private and city programs designed to provide support in these areas, they should receive adequate funding to be able to function at the highest level possible and serve our community appropriately.

7. RES. 2020-R047

To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause to be prepared and submitted to the Council and the Mayor a report identifying funding in the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget and the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Special Fund Budget appropriated to the Department of Police for mental health, substance abuse, and social service functions and that provides recommendations, to the extent permitted by law, for the re-appropriation and transfer of such funding from the Department of Police to other City departments and to community mental health, substance abuse, and social service programs designed to perform such functions.

Patrons: Ms. Lynch and Mr. Jones

Best regards,
Eryn Alloway



I represent no organizations and am not affiliated economically or professionally with anything that would be affected by the adoption of these resolutions. These comments are my own as a City of Richmond resident.

Greetings Madam Speaker,

My name is Allan-Charles Chipman and I live in the 6th district and I am writing in support of Councilman Jones and Councilwoman Lynch's **RES. 2020-R047- Defund the Police** and **RES. 2020-R046- Asset Forfeiture Quarterly Report-**.

First I want to recognize the impact of community violence as someone on my street was shot and killed the other day leaving 7 children behind. I wish to send my deepest condolences to the families. More than condolences, I wish to fund the organizations that deal with the core issues of community violence. As a trustbuilder, I have had the pleasure to work with a lot of our community members that help to deal with and resolve community violence. Richmond Peace Education Center, 6Pic, Community 50/50, Dr. Ram Bhagat with Drums Not Guns Foundation. Last year, I was invited to speak at a vigil held at MLK Middle with the mayor and Delegate Bourne. I will never forget seeing rooms full of children and communities grieving those they have lost to community violence. But I also will remember meeting those who are committed to being the solution within their community without resorting to violence and the traditional model. I met with Richmond League for Safer Streets that found sports and youth engagement were a better model for engaging youth and preventing violence. However, we must also admit that our misguided citizens aren't the only ones creating violence within our communities. We cannot ignore the violence of police who teargassed peaceful clergy, children, protestors demanding change, those who help heal our community violence, and even members of this very body.

One of my favorite quotes says "True genius is not the answer to all questions, but the questions to all answers." Our communities have been told for so long that the best answer to crime, the best answer to addiction, the best answer to a mental health crisis has been police. Long before the protests but also well demonstrated in them and with the death of Marcus David Peters, the community has long seen this is not the case. The community has developed their own solutions but we have not funded all solutions equally. We have funded a violent institution whose current chief of staff murdered a black airforce veteran named Jeramy Gilliam and whose current police chief had a restraining order placed on him for brutalizing protestors in North Carolina, to solve the problem of community violence.

When all you have is a hammer, everything becomes a nail. Our community is tired of being beaten, violated, and brutalized by the hammer of policing, and being forced to have their tax dollars fund them as the only solution while their own community solutions struggle for funding.

While the police have a \$96 million dollar budget, our health and social services only have around \$54 million dollars (in the middle of a global health pandemic and economic crisis) we see community solutions going out of business. It is time to divest from police and invest in community systems of care. The police spent \$2 million dollars in 50 days to brutalize protestors and clergy. That is more than the entire budget of the Office of Community Wealth Building. Through actions such as asset forfeiture (who Obama's Department of Justice sought to greatly limit under Eric Holder, was reinvigorated under Trump's DOJ and Jeff Sessions) police have violated and received incentive to discriminate and fund their budget.

It is time to disincentivize discrimination and to divest from points of incarceration and invest in points of intervention. Vote Yes to these resolutions.

Thank you,
Allan-Charles Chipman

From: [Charlie Schmidt](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comments for Finance and ED committee
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 10:01:22 AM

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Hello. Below are my comments to the committee in regards to the meeting today at 1pm.

- Charlie Schmidt, Richmond resident

Honorable members of the committee,

My name is Charlie Schmidt and I am a Richmond resident. Thank you for your work to bring more accountability and oversight to policing in Richmond. I am writing in support of items 6 and 7 on the agenda - specifically the resolutions to provide more oversight to civil asset forfeiture funds and reallocation report on police funding. I fully support these resolutions and hope the full Council will eventually pass these and other critical ordinances and resolutions around police accountability. I thank the patrons for the introduction of these.

Briefly, to civil asset forfeiture, I and many other advocates have worked hard over the years at the General Assembly to reform Virginia's laws around Civil Asset Forfeiture. Plain and simple, Civil Asset Forfeiture promotes "policing for profit". It incentivises police to seek out property to seize, rather than seek justice and public safety. Police should not be allowed to keep funds generated by civil asset forfeiture. It creates a slush fund. I encourage members of the Council to read reports and information generated by the ACLU or the Institute for Justice to learn more about the many problems surrounding civil asset forfeiture.

As to the broader police budget, again, I commend the patrons for seeking to address the issue of bloated police budgets. For too long we have handled all public safety concerns, especially mental health and addiction crises through oppressive policing. Police should not be our front-line, first responder to simple instances that call for help. Police should be a last resort, not a first response to community concerns of public safety. My hope is that the council will support this resolution and ultimately invest in more support and social services. Less police, more help. Thank you.

From: [Eryn Alloway](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comments for tomorrow's Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 2:21:11 PM

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Greetings Candice D. Reid and all City Council Members,

In advance of tomorrow's Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting, I am writing to convey my support for Resolutions 2020-R039, 2020-R046, and 2020-R047. These are critical and needed resolutions to support our community. I appreciate your time in considering these resolutions. (I have copied the briefs of the resolutions after my comments.)

I wish to express my support for Resolution 2020-R039, to restore funding to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the Eviction Diversion Program to the amounts proposed in the March 6th Budget. I also wish to express my support for these programs to be funded whether or not the city's revenue exceeds projections. These programs are even more crucial than ever during this time of COVID-19. The loss of projected income to the city should not mean that families who have lost their income must face housing insecurity. This is the time to support our citizens who need help during this crisis.

5. RES. 2020-R039

To request that the Mayor introduce such budget amendments to the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget as may be necessary to restore funding for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the Eviction Diversion Program to the amounts proposed in the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget introduced on March 6, 2020, in the event that City revenues exceed current projections for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.

Patrons: Ms. Robertson

I also wish to express my support for Resolution 2020-R046, to request that a report be submitted to identify detailed information regarding the civil asset forfeiture special funds and allow for increased oversight of the forfeiture process and special funds. I believe that allowing police to seize civil assets for profit provides an incentive for police to seize private assets for departmental monetary gain. I do not support our city's participation in the US Justice Department program to seize these resources. Please support this resolution to increase oversight of this program.

6. RES. 2020-R046

To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause to be prepared and submitted to the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee a quarterly report that provides certain data relevant to the City's five civil asset forfeiture special funds for the purpose of increased oversight of the sources and uses of civil asset forfeiture special funds.

Patrons: Ms. Lynch, Mr. Jones and Mr. Addison

And last but not least, I wish to express my heartfelt and enthusiastic support for Resolution 2020-R047. Our community needs funding and support for mental help, substance abuse,

and social service programs - and not through the police department. The police department is not equipped to provide these services. There are private and city programs designed to provide support in these areas, they should receive adequate funding to be able to function at the highest level possible and serve our community appropriately.

7. RES. 2020-R047

To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause to be prepared and submitted to the Council and the Mayor a report identifying funding in the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget and the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Special Fund Budget appropriated to the Department of Police for mental health, substance abuse, and social service functions and that provides recommendations, to the extent permitted by law, for the re-appropriation and transfer of such funding from the Department of Police to other City departments and to community mental health, substance abuse, and social service programs designed to perform such functions.

Patrons: Ms. Lynch and Mr. Jones

Best regards,
Eryn Alloway



I represent no organizations and am not affiliated economically or professionally with anything that would be affected by the adoption of these resolutions. These comments are my own as a City of Richmond resident.

From: [Lindsey Franklin](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Support fo RES. 2020-R047 and RES. 2020-R046
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 6:09:08 AM

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Dear City Clerk,

I am writing to express my support for these two ordinances proposed by Councilman Jones, RES. 2020-R047 and RES. 2020-R046.

Thank you,

Lindsey Franklin
Richmond, VA

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From: [Carla Keyes](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Support for RES. 2020-R046 and 047
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 8:48:10 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support for the following ordinances:

RES. 2020-R047- Defund the Police - To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause to be prepared and submitted to the Council and the Mayor a report identifying funding in the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget and the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Special Fund Budget appropriated to the Department of Police for mental health, substance abuse, and social service functions and that provides recommendations, to the extent permitted by law, for the re-appropriation and transfer of such funding from the Department of Police to other City departments and to community mental health, substance abuse, and social service programs designed to perform such functions.

Our systems of community care are under-funded, and police departments are over-funded. This adjustment would help to rectify that problem.

RES. 2020-R046 - Asset Forfeiture Quarterly Report - To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause to be prepared and submitted to the Council Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee a quarterly report that provides certain data relevant to the City's five civil asset forfeiture special funds for the purpose of increased oversight of the sources and uses of civil asset forfeiture special funds.

We must provide oversight over unjust policing practices. I hope we will reinvest forfeiture funds in communities of color.

Thank you.
Carla Pratt Keyes



Greetings Madam Speaker,

My name is Allan-Charles Chipman and I live in the 6th district and I am writing in support of Councilman Jones and Councilwoman Lynch's **RES. 2020-R047- Defund the Police** and **RES. 2020-R046- Asset Forfeiture Quarterly Report-**.

First I want to recognize the impact of community violence as someone on my street was shot and killed the other day leaving 7 children behind. I wish to send my deepest condolences to the families. More than condolences, I wish to fund the organizations that deal with the core issues of community violence. As a trustbuilder, I have had the pleasure to work with a lot of our community members that help to deal with and resolve community violence. Richmond Peace Education Center, 6Pic, Community 50/50, Dr. Ram Bhagat with Drums Not Guns Foundation. Last year, I was invited to speak at a vigil held at MLK Middle with the mayor and Delegate Bourne. I will never forget seeing rooms full of children and communities grieving those they have lost to community violence. But I also will remember meeting those who are committed to being the solution within their community without resorting to violence and the traditional model. I met with Richmond League for Safer Streets that found sports and youth engagement were a better model for engaging youth and preventing violence. However, we must also admit that our misguided citizens aren't the only ones creating violence within our communities. We cannot ignore the violence of police who teargassed peaceful clergy, children, protestors demanding change, those who help heal our community violence, and even members of this very body.

One of my favorite quotes says "True genius is not the answer to all questions, but the questions to all answers." Our communities have been told for so long that the best answer to crime, the best answer to addiction, the best answer to a mental health crisis has been police. Long before the protests but also well demonstrated in them and with the death of Marcus David Peters, the community has long seen this is not the case. The community has developed their own solutions but we have not funded all solutions equally. We have funded a violent institution whose current chief of staff murdered a black airforce veteran named Jeramy Gilliam and whose current police chief had a restraining order placed on him for brutalizing protestors in North Carolina, to solve the problem of community violence.

When all you have is a hammer, everything becomes a nail. Our community is tired of being beaten, violated, and brutalized by the hammer of policing, and being forced to have their tax dollars fund them as the only solution while their own community solutions struggle for funding.

While the police have a \$96 million dollar budget, our health and social services only have around \$54 million dollars (in the middle of a global health pandemic and economic crisis) we see community solutions going out of business. It is time to divest from police and invest in community systems of care. The police spent \$2 million dollars in 50 days to brutalize protestors and clergy. That is more than the entire budget of the Office of Community Wealth Building. Through actions such as asset forfeiture (who Obama's Department of Justice sought to greatly limit under Eric Holder, was reinvigorated under Trump's DOJ and Jeff Sessions) police have violated and received incentive to discriminate and fund their budget.

It is time to disincentivize discrimination and to divest from points of incarceration and invest in points of intervention. Vote Yes to these resolutions.

Thank you,
Allan-Charles Chipman

From: [Kyle Cooley](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: ATTN: Finance Committee
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 1:35:58 PM

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Ladies and Gentlemen of the Finance Committee,

I am writing to inform you that I DO NOT approve of the proposed budget for the Richmond Police. On top of the \$96,104,575.00 for "Police Department" there is an additional \$37,464,575.00 for the "City Sheriffs", that accounts for \$133,569,150.00. Please explain thoroughly why the taxes that I pay from my paycheck, from buying anything in Richmond (Where I live), property taxes on my house (Which I own in Richmond), my two vehicles (Which are registered in Richmond) should go towards these two departments which together outspend every other agency except education and "other public services". That is just absurd.

On page 110 of the adopted biennial fiscal plan it states "Mission: Provide professional, compassionate and accountable government services to every citizen". When I see on the news that police are shooting tear gas at peaceful protestors, or arresting and then SPITTING ON THEM DURING A PANDEMIC, or unlawfully breaking up peaceful protests it is most definitely not professional or compassionate and no one has been held accountable for these unforgivable crimes against citizens and residents of this city.

On page 281 it states "To recruit, hire and train as many police recruits as possible in a fiscal and responsible way with a commitment to increase the size of the RPD to its authorized strength of 750 sworn officers". As many as possible? Why is the goal to get as many police as possible? Why is the goal not to try and fix the underlying issues that contribute to crime in the first place? Do we really need AS MANY POLICE AS POSSIBLE? What exactly is that going to fix? Is the goal really just to be able to boast about crime rate percentages as seen on pages 118-120 and 281-282? Same page it states, "To assign permanent personnel to the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) properties to focus on systemic neighborhood crime issues, implementing community policing strategies, and partnering with the residents and other governmental agencies to build strong, healthy, and crime-free communities". Again, why exactly are my tax dollars getting spent on personnel to protect property?

There is a lot more examples of ridiculous amounts of money that is being wasted on our police department and city sherrifs department. There are better ways to allocate the budget and I hope that you will reassess and reallocate funds.

Kyle Cooley

From: [Alexandra Sward](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Citizen Comment on Res. No. 2020-R047
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 1:19:34 PM

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As a resident of the Museum District and member of the LGBTQ community, I fully support the resolution to divert funding from the police department to social services that would address issues of mental health, homelessness, welfare checks, and similar. These issues stem from a lack of social safety nets, and disproportionately affect people of color (and especially LGBTQ people of color). There is no reason to send in armed police officers to deal with these incidents. America has an obscenely high number of fatalities due to police compared to other developed countries. In the former capital of the confederacy, Richmond has the chance to be the change and address this. Res. No. 2020-R047 is the start of a long process in reducing police brutality in America, starting here and now.

From: [Kendall Nordin](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Comment for finance committee meeting
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 12:23:23 AM

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Hello,

I would like to submit a comment regarding RES.2020-R047—

As a resident of Richmond I support RES.2020-R047. We must move money from the police department and reinvest in other necessary areas of community growth and support. I ask also for ongoing efforts to ensure that the resulting report point us in the direction of a more just and equitable city for all. We must be a blueprint for a better way, because if we can align our values and vision in the capital of the old confederacy, then it can happen without question in the rest of this country.

Thank you,
Kendall Nordin

From: [Kelly Gerow](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Cc: [Larson, Kristen N. - City Council](#)
Subject: Comment re: RES 2020-R047
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 8:16:52 PM

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I support Resolution 2020-R047 to move money from the RPD to other city departments and community groups for mental health, substance abuse and social service functions. Richmond needs to take a serious look at the resources given to the Police Department and determine where those funds can be better used to provide assistance to and improve the livelihood of Richmonders.

The recent displays of force against protestors by the RPD have been abhorrent and have shone a light on the RPD that we can't unsee. And that the taxpayers are paying for almost \$2 million in overtime for the RPD to act violently against Richmonders demanding justice is inexcusable.

I support this measure and any other action the City of Richmond can take to move resources and responsibility away from law enforcement, especially as it continues to abuse its power.

Thank you,
Kelly Gerow
4th District

From: [Chris Ercolano](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Comments for today's City Council Meeting
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 9:59:43 AM

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Dear Councilmembers,

My name is Chris Ercolano. I am an elementary educator and I live in the 4th district. I hope you all are doing well today, and I'm enthusiastic that we will see positive steps forward in our city's fight for justice and equity.

Two resolutions up for vote today have my attention and are very important to the people of our community. Please do what's right for our city:

1. Vote to extend RES2020-039. We are living in an unprecedented time due to COVID-19. It is imperative for the peace and well-being of our neighbors that we fight against evictions and the housing crisis. Our people are in peril. It is a fundamental need for people to have access to shelter. During this time of uncertainty, the least you can do is work to ensure people can feel safe knowing there will be a roof over their heads. Please continue taking care of our city by extending RES2020-039
2. Approve RES2020-047. Police are to treat a symptom. They do not cure the disease. Inequality in access to nutrition, healthcare, education, and housing are all viral problems of an unjust system that disproportionately affect BIPOC communities. The police are spread too thin and expected to handle things they are simply not trained to handle. Reallocate these resources to support our communities from within. When basic needs are met, crime is reduced. Current police tactics and an over militarized police force are not safe. Reallocate these funds to meet community needs. Health and education are more important than brutal policing.

Thank you

From: [elisa rios](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: concerned citizen
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 6:54:22 PM

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Hello,

I am a concerned citizen of Richmond VA

writing to express the immediate need for the city of Richmond to protect it's citizens by defunding the police and to give a report that shows the Richmond Police department's entire budget.

the public deserves transparency from the city and safety from the violent police department

thank you

Elisa

From: [shelby horner](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Defund police
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 7:55:43 AM

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I am writing to demand the defunding of the Richmond Police Department and ask for transparency from the department by making a report of the budget publicly available.

Thank you,

Shelby Horner

From: [jen.black](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Defund RPD City finance committee public comment
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 10:18:10 AM

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My name is Jen Black and I have lived in the City of Richmond for twenty years and am raising my family here. I call on you to defund the Richmond Police Department and reallocate those funds to housing and public transportation and our citizens physical and mental health, and to Richmond Public Schools. In the past few months we have witnessed how the RPD has spent our hard earned tax payer dollars, by brutalizing those of us defending Black Lives. Defund the RPD. Invest in our futures. Also, I request that you publish the RPD's entire budget so that we can see how they are spending our money. We must have transparency in that budget. Do the right thing.

Thank you for your service,
Jen Black

From: [Emily Bell](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Defund RPD
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 9:00:45 AM

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I would like to submit a public comment to the finance commit regarding the Richmond Police Budget.

I live in the city's 7th district, in Shockoe Bottom, and I would like to see the Richmond Police defunded and abolished.

In the past 6 weeks they have racked up over 2 million dollars in overtime and equipment which they have used to brutalize our BIPOC and queer youth. They are set to receive over \$96 million, and they didn't even meet their own goals of reaching the national average of clearance rate for Rape and murder. They are a terrorist organization and they don't even meet the basic functions of their job!

RPD has no place in our city and no place in our schools. They deserve to be financially gutted and abolished as we know it.

From: [Allison Cerie](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Defund RPD
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 1:31:06 PM

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Good afternoon,

I am a resident & tax payer of Richmond, VA, and the proposed budget for The Richmond Police Department for the upcoming year is far too high. This is not where taxes should be going. The police department should be defunded, especially considering that we have schools that are still lacking basic resources such as a full time nurse or working sinks for hand washing.

Additionally, police do not need money, they need accountability. I have witnessed first-hand police escalating situations unnecessarily; I have witnessed police CREATING crime where there was none. I demand transparency of a full detailed, PUBLIC report of how and where police funds are allocated.

Thank you for your service to the city of Richmond.

With Gratitude,
Allison Cerie

From: [Lindsay Parnell](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: DEFUND THE POLICE - INVEST IN BLACK FUTURES
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 5:01:04 PM
Attachments: [Screen Shot 2020-07-15 at 4.54.03 PM.png](#)

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Hello,

My name is Lindsay Parnell and I am a resident in Richmond, VA. I am reaching out in regards to the proposed \$96 million budget that RPD is set to receive in 2021. As a taxpayer, Richmond resident, and Virginia state employee, I am disgusted by this. The amount of anti-Black racist police brutality we've seen is unacceptable to say the least, and it must end. The first step to making this happen is defunding the police. We should be investing in Black futures – affordable housing (or better yet, housing relief during a pandemic), public education, mental health services, social workers, etc. – NOT the police. Please see this graphic by Ben and Jerrys to visualize what I am referring to.



As a taxpayer, I also have a right to see where my tax dollars are going. Please release a detailed report that shows RPD's entire budget. And I'd like to emphasize again, to defund

RPD in this upcoming budget cycle.

Thank you,
Lindsay Parnell

--

Lindsay Parnell

[here is my site](#)

From: [Haleh Pedram](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Cc: [Lynch, Stephanie A. - City Council Office](#)
Subject: Do not increase RPD budget
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 9:49:24 AM

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Good Morning,

My name is Haleh Pedram and I am a resident of the 5th district in Richmond. I am calling to demand that the Richmond Police Department does NOT receive a 96 million in taxpayer funds for 2021.

This money needs to be distributed to programming that will help Richmonders succeed, not oppress them!

I'm concerned as to where the 2 million dollars came from that was used to terrorize protestors in our beautiful city over the last two months and I'd like to see to it that public funds are never again used in this way.

Can we use some of the budget to present a city budget that is easier for the average citizen to consume? That would be helpful as I'm having trouble making sense of this nearly 700 page document that has pages formatted in landscape and portrait. This is very difficult to look at on a computer and the average person can not print this length document at home.

Let's work together to serve the people of Richmond's needs. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Haleh



Haleh Pedram



From: [Ian Flatt](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee Comment
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 6:58:02 PM

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I am writing to comment on Resolution 2020-R047 (reallocating RPD budget to other social services providers in Richmond). I am supportive of this resolution but I do not believe it goes far enough - the Council should immediately provide full transparency into the Richmond Police Department's budget and begin the process of defunding the police.

Over the past few months (and for many residents, much longer), we have seen the Richmond Police Department exercise excessive force upon residents of the City of Richmond. Even recently when RPD knew it was under a microscope, they continued to use rubber bullets and tear gas against Richmond residents. Essentially, we were paying people to inflict harm upon ourselves, and our neighbors, while underfunding the services the support and uplift Richmonders.

The Council needs to completely defund RPD and reinvest that money into Richmond communities and into organizations that provide needed services (e.g., education, housing, social services, drug rehabilitation).

Thank you for your time.

Best,
Ian Flatt

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Ian Flatt


From: [Aili Chatfield-Taylor](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee - Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 8:50:10 PM

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To the members of the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee,

I, Alexandra Chatfield-Taylor, of Richmond, Virginia, wish to provide public comment on RES. 2020-R047. I represent no organizations, nor would any of my economic or professional relationships be affected by the adoption of the legislation.

I support adoption of RES. 2020-R047, which requests that, to the extent permitted by law, the Special Fund Budget appropriated to the Department of Police for mental health, substance abuse, and social service functions be re-appropriated to other City departments and to community mental health, substance abuse, and social service programs designed to perform such functions.

A 2018 report by the Urban Institute "Public Investment in CommunityDriven Safety Initiatives: Landscape Study and Key Considerations" evidences crime reduction among cities that prioritize community needs and services.

“Research shows that community organizations play an integral role in public safety and community health”. "Recent work by Sharkey, Torrats-Espinosa, and Takyar (2017) found that cities with a higher concentration of organizations focusing on addressing crime and increasing community well-being experienced greater reductions in violent and property crime. Research has also shown that local, community-based organizations provide critical services and facilitate engagement in ways that strengthen neighborhoods.”

Thank you for your consideration,
Alexandra "Aili" Chatfield-Taylor

From: [Alex Criqui](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Finance Comittee Police funding Proposal
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 2:56:55 PM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Richmond City Finance Committee,

I am writing you today as both a concerned citizen of this great city and as a victim of the recent upheaval of police violence in our city. Over the last month I have seen the Richmond Police Department engage in continual acts of reckless abuse of power and improper use of our public resources as they have engaged in unprovoked acts of violence towards the peacefully assembled citizens of our city who have gathered to express their first amendment rights.

These demonstrations of force by the RPD have been excessive and undeserved, and have demonstrated to me that the resources we have allocated to the RPD in the name of public safety have become tools for an unrestrained toxic culture of violence and militarism that has taken hold within our city's police force, where violence against peaceful people and the utilization of chemical weapons, explosives, and less lethal projectiles have become normalized and enabled by the outsized funding which we have provided to our city's police department.

These acts of violence have only stoked the unrest in our city and have turned peaceful assemblies into scenes of chaos and violence. I believe that by defunding our police department and reallocating those resources towards social services, education, public health and safety, we will not only make better use of our public resources but also dissuade our police forces from recklessly deploying these weapons of war against the people of our city.

I don't say any of this with malice towards the men and women who work within our police department but with compassion for them, as I have seen the pain in the faces of our police officers as their duty has come into conflict with their conscience, and as their livelihood and careers have come at the cost of the ethical standards which I am sure many of them hold in their hearts. By defunding RPD we will not only ensure the safety of our citizens but the well being of these officers by dissuading their superiors from deploying them into situations where public resources are directed towards acts of unprovoked aggression that only cultivate animosity within our community between citizens and police.

I ask you to defund the RPD, for the future of our city, and for the safety and well being of everyone.

Sincerely,

Alex Criqui

From: [Charles F](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Finance committee comment
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 8:28:39 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

A comment to the Finance committee on RPD funding:

I'm a resident of Richmond, and like the vast vast majority of Richmond residents I support the Police.

RPD could be better, but is arguably the best department in the area.

The recent jump in murders and crime shows we need them. And the last people that should be listened to on this are the people who are breaking windows and looting bike shops and setting fire to buildings.

Charles Frankenhoff

From: [gina.sonderegger](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Funding for RPD
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 10:16:59 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Committee Members:

I am a resident of Richmond. I am requesting that you stop using taxpayer money to stop terrorizing and brutalizing black and brown communities. I ask that you defund the police and redirect the money to truly invest in building a community that can thrive. I ask that you release a report that shows the entire/transparent RPD budget.

Richmond can be bold and prove we are leaders. Defund the police now.

Thank you.

Gina Sonderegger (5th District Resident)

From: [Tamora Droppa](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: In Favor of Resolution 2020-R047
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 4:25:36 PM

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Hello, my name is Zachary Droppa, I live in the city of Richmond, and I am strongly in favor of RES. 2020-R047. Re-appropriating funding from the police to social service programs is a necessary step in improving the well-being of citizens here. Thank you for introducing this resolution, and thank you for reading.

Regards,

Zachary Droppa



From: [Kyu Kang](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Police Department Funding
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 10:19:45 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

I just learned that Richmond Police Department is approved to receive \$96M in funding and would like to see a budget breakdown justifying this astronomical price tag. Why should the police department receive almost 1/3 of the entire school system budget? How does that budget break out? Please explain.

Thank you,
Kyu Kang

From: [Emily H](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Police funding
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 9:53:38 PM

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As a citizen of the city of Richmond, I encourage the city council to revisit the budgetary request from Richmond Police and to reallocate some of their funding. Until recently I was unaware of how much money is spent on policing versus other budget items. The \$96 million that they have requested is to grant Richmond Police the right to continue with "business as usual". Our city, like our country, has been asking itself what kind of role we want the police to play in our community, and what other services could be funded with the money taken from the police budget.

We want more equitable treatment by law enforcement. We want mental health response teams. We want our children to have access to school nurses and mental health counseling. We want the police to know that although they are exposed to more risk, they are responsible for protecting life, rather than ending it. We all want a Richmond that is safe, where we can live our lives free from fear, but too much money and responsibility have been given to the police department to meet those needs. This is our opportunity to reimagine public safety.

Sincerely,
Emily Hardesty

From: [Earth Folk Collective](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Police Funding
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 9:48:25 AM

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Hello,

I am writing to express my concern over the suggested allocation of \$96 million dollars of taxpayer money to Police funding.

There are so many other places that this money should be invested to enhance the lives of residents such as - education, rehabilitation, and housing (Just to name a few).

Richmond does not have adequate support in place for our houseless community... a community that is unfortunately growing due to mass evictions.

Richmond Police department has spent thousands of dollars this past year attacking the people they claim that they protect with tear gas, and rubber bullets. We do not support our tax dollars furthering this brutalizing violence against our people. We do not trust this institution to reform itself.

We request, along with many other citizens, FULL TRANSPARENCY meaning a full report of how RPD spends their ENTIRE BUDGET.

Thank you,
Richmond City Residents
Laney Sullivan and Jameson Price

From: [Carol-Anne Petit](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public comment 7/16/20
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 8:00:38 AM

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I'm writing a public comment for 1. To DEFUND the Richmond police department and 2. To have public transparency over the entire RPD financial budget.

From: [Mary Beth Murray](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: public comment 7-16-20 RPD Finance Committee meeting
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 9:26:41 AM

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I reside in RIchmond CIty along with my wife and two children. I am a child/adolescent mental health clinician and my wife is a school psychologist. We request that funds are diverted from RPD and be reallocated into education, social and economic programs to provide reparations to our community members of color.

Our school system is currently unable to plan for any in-person learning to take place in the pandemic environment due to lack of funds. The lack of funds pre-existed COVID19 and now is even more dire. Our schools already lacked functioning sinks and HVAC systems,, handwashing supplies and the presence of a single nurse in each school. Now we need all of that and more: PPE, additional staff, laptops, wifi, services for students who can't access remote learning, mental health services to mitigate anxiety, depression and trauma.

We know our children will lose valuable social and academic skills. This painstaking decision was made because you as lawmakers aren't prioritizing what should be an obvious and clear way to support a successful community. Instead, you spend enormous amounts of money EVERY day on military weaponry and police aggression at protests to maintain a racist system of oppression. You prioritize sending a clear message to everyone that the police are in charge. You choose this over helping the children in our community actually learn.

The school board, school staff, and community members are ready to get to work but we need resources mobilized ASAP. In our school system, 90% of the students are Black/African American or Latinx. Investing in basic needs for their education is a clear and direct way to support equity in our very own community.

Mary Beth Murray

From: [Una Urban](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comment for 7/16
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 8:14:14 AM

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The police do not prevent crime, no matter how well-funded they are. They only react to crime, and they react violently to it. The millions of dollars being considered for RPD's budget should be spent on healthcare, housing, education, and a multitude of other things before it's spent on more riot gear, tear gas canisters, and overtime pay for following protesters. Investing in our community's healthcare, housing, education, and social services prevents crime more than police ever could. The root of what we call "crime" is most often poverty, trauma, and the lack of options that result from them.

Defund the police. Who do they protect? Who do they serve?

- Una Urban
23220

From: [Lucy Schapiro](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comment for Defunding RPD Resolution
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 9:35:19 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hello Finance Committee,

As a City of Richmond resident, I urge you all to support the defunding of the Richmond Police Department. Second, please provide a report that shows RPD's budget to uphold total transparency in their allocation of funds and spending. These need to be done immediately, it is possible.

Please protect us, the community. I don't even want to see my tax dollars going to the police that are harming targeted neighborhoods.

Looking forward to thank you for defunding them.

Lucy of 5th district

--

Lucy Schapiro, MSW

[REDACTED]

From: [Casey Mulroy](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comment for Finance and Economic Development Committee 7.16
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 9:59:21 AM

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Hello! I'd like to submit a public comment for today's Finance and Economic Development Committee Meeting, and request to speak/read the comment live if possible. My comment is below:

I'm here today in support of Res 2020-R047, which requests that funds be reappropriated from the Richmond Police Department to other city departments serving mental health, substance abuse, and social service programs. In the past month, we have seen RPD and VSP treat their communities with violence and terror, using tear gas, rubber bullets, and pepper spray against otherwise peaceful protestors. This has come at the cost of \$2 million to taxpayers in overtime, equipment, and surveillance costs. As a 7th district resident and homeowner, I'm disappointed that tax dollars are used in this way. RPD has proven that additional funding and training will not work. Instead, we must reimagine what public safety looks like in Richmond, and begin to address the root of crime rather than the symptoms. Res 2020-R047 is an excellent starting point, by funding services designed to help, not hurt or incarcerate, our residents. Thank you.

~Casey Mulroy

From: [Katherine Malady](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comment for Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee - RES 2020 - R047 and RES 2020 R039
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 4:37:35 PM

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Good afternoon,

Please provide the following public comment to the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee member for the July 16, 2020 meeting -

My name is Katherine Malady. I live in Richmond's 5th District.

1. I ask that you vote in favor of Res 2020-R039 to restore **and increase** funding for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and Eviction Diversion Programs.

Richmond has the ***second highest eviction rate*** in the country, 11% annually from 2000 to 2016, based on the Princeton University Eviction Lab analysis of millions of eviction case court records. **Five** of the top ten cities in the US with the **highest eviction rates** are located in the State of Virginia. Obviously we are doing something wrong in Virginia.

Evictions disproportionately harm Black Virginians. And as such, there is inherent racism in allowing evictions to commence at the rate in which they do here in Richmond without providing adequate funding and programming support to those who need it. With thousands of Richmonders losing their jobs, we are in the midst of a massive eviction crisis. Housing is a human right. And it is one that we must prioritize, fund, and protect here in the capital city.

2. I ask that you vote in favor of Res 2020-R047 to identify and make recommendations for what funds appropriated to the Department of Police will be re-appropriated and transferred to other City departments and to community mental health, substance abuse, and social service programs. In the midst of a public health crisis, housing crisis, and community safety crisis, we must change our approach from one that is punitive to one that invests in true community care. Please support this resolution and continue to take steps to divest from a punitive system, rooted in centuries old racism, and invest in transformative and collective models for community care and racial justice.

Sincerely,
Katherine Malady

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [AG Sweany](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public comment for finance committee
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 8:43:54 AM

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My name is AG, I am a resident of the fan and have been for 6 years, my comment is that we need to defund the Richmond PD, and that we need complete transparency of the current and future RPD budget in the form of a complete written report.

Thanks!

AG

--

AG Sweany



From: [Renny L](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comment for Finance Committee
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 9:01:40 AM

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Good morning,

As a black student who attends Virginia Commonwealth University in RVA, I do not feel safe with the immense presence of RPD within and outside of my community. After all of our protesting and what we had to endure (the abuse, pain, injuries, DEATHS) during those protests from the police department, it upsets me that they would receive \$96 million in citizens' taxes. That money could easily be put back into the community (affordable housing, education, mental health services, homelessness, etc.). Instead, you'd rather put money into an organization that targets black and brown people and those who stand for us. It's not enough to simply reform this, you cannot reform an organization that constantly lets racism continue. Defund RPD. They do not deserve the citizens' money when they have never done their job correctly.

From: [Millicent Bean](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comment for July 16 Finance Committee Meeting
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 5:56:52 PM

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Good evening City Clerk Reid,

My name is Millicent M. Bean and I have lived in Richmond since beginning my job at VCU in June 2018. In reviewing the [city budget](#), I urge the finance committee to divert funds from the Richmond Police Budget of \$96 million to services that community members have been advocating for. I'm not a member of [Richmond Transparency and Accountability Project](#) (RTAP), but they have been advocating for the following and I believe their demands would benefit Richmond citizens.

- Don't hire additional officers and instead fund the Marcus Alert System as envisioned by the family of Marcus David-Peters and RTAP
- Establish a Civilian Review Board separate from any law enforcement agency and holds subpoena power, not Mayor Stoney's vision for a board
- Get rid of all military equipment inventory to ensure the violence protestors experienced by Richmond Police never happens again - and drop charges against protestors
- Provide the public with more transparency by releasing the names of RPD officers under investigation for use of force misconduct - and fund more transparency of what police are doing so they can be more accountable to the public they're charged with "serving and protecting"
- Fund substance use counseling instead of incarcerating people who need medical care/counseling for substance use disorders
- Fund initiatives that would help Black Richmonders thrive instead of increased patrolling or policing
- Parts of Richmond are food deserts - how can some of that \$96 million be used to ensure the basic need of eating nutritious food is provided to people living in them?
- How much of the \$96 million could be used to ensure Richmonders are registered to vote and equitably participate in local, state and national elections?
- Richmond could really benefit from more community centers. Let's take some of RPD's \$96 million to begin creating those spaces.
- Did you know that city librarians help people find jobs, connect to resources, and learn - not just sit there and tell people to "Shh"? How much more good for the public could they do if their budget was increased!?
- More rental assistance initiatives or programs to help people be homeowners instead of RPD criminalizing homelessness would be great, too.

In addition, Resolution RES. 2020-R047 would formalize diverting funds from RPD to services that benefit the community. I support the City Council passing that resolution.

Thank you for your time,
Millicent Bean

--

Millicent M. Bean

[Redacted signature line]

[Redacted contact information]

From: [Breanna Diaz](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comment for Resolution No. 2020-R047
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 8:29:48 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee,

I am writing in support of Resolution No. 2020-RO47, a resolution calling for the re-appropriation of funding for the Department of Police for mental health, substance abuse, and social service functions in the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget and the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Special Fund Budget to other City departments and to community mental health, substance abuse, and social service programs designed to perform such functions.

I write to you all as a resident of Richmond, as a Policy Director of a national nonprofit that works to address the detrimental impact criminalization, surveillance, and policing has on marginalized communities, as a member of the LGBTQ community, as a Latinx woman, and as someone with personal experience interacting with police during a time of mental health crisis. By allocating funding to law enforcement to continue operating in these areas, or even to expand their funding, undermines the very intent of said programs and/or work. Law enforcement lack the training, education and systems necessary to support community—whether it be housing instability, mental health crises, intimate partner violence, or enforcing public health orders in the time of COVID-19. Allocating funding and the responsibility to oversee such programs to law enforcement will only increase the number of police interactions with marginalized folks creating the opportunity for further criminalization via penalty enhancements, taking on additional charges or simply making a traumatic experience worse for the individual in need.

Finally, it is critical that the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee—that our city government—share with the public the full RPD budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a comment.

Best,
Breanna Diaz

From: [Nicole Spangenberg](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public comment for Thursday re: RPD budget
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 9:08:20 PM

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Good evening, below is my public comment. You may use my name.

Police have not been protecting public safety. Police have been protecting their own. Richmond Police scare me. I used to believe they were there to keep me safe. Now, any blue lights bring panic.

I was playing in the park with my dog when about 20 riot cops showed up and questioned what we were doing and told us to leave.

My dog can't eat or sleep and won't walk in the Fan ever since this police encounter.

It's worsened because of sirens, riot cops, helicopters, flashing lights. I cannot fathom why this level of surveillance and intimation is necessary.

Please stop spending millions on intimidating citizens. I wish that was an exaggeration but Eli Coston was directly quoted saying it's about intimidation.

Imagine what you could do with 2 million dollars. The 2 million RPD has spent on overtime and protest response. How many budget meetings in your life have you wished you had more money to cover what you care about?

Now's the time, finding that money is much easier once we defund RPD.

Please remember we are your constituents, we are watching, and we will remember what happens today.

Nicole Spangenberg



From: [Rose Szabo](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT IN FAVOR of RES. 2020-R047
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 3:09:14 PM

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Distinguished members of the Richmond City Council:

I am strongly in favor of Resolution 2020-R047, to identify items in the police budget that address mental health, substance abuse and social service causes so that they can be redirected toward the funding of "mental health, substance abuse, and social service programs." Police are not trained to adequately perform these functions, and the relevant social services departments in our city could put this funding to better use.

Some people will say that this constitutes "defunding the police", and I do not agree. This is a moderate position that will lighten the load of the police, enabling them to focus on their core public safety concerns. Putting police in situations where they are expected to address mental health, social service and substance abuse issues is harmful for everyone involved--citizens like Marcus-David Peters risk violence and death, and the police themselves risk traumatic experiences and are exposed to unnecessary liability.

It is important to have the right person for the job, and to equip them properly to do that job. Mental health and social service professionals can make far better use of this funding than the police can, and I expect that if we fund them adequately and stop trying to make the police do social work, we will see a drastic fall in violence in our city.

Sincerely,

--

Rose Szabo



From: [jess versus](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT on Proposed Resolution 2020-R047 // RPD proposed budget
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 4:09:09 PM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

To the committee working on proposed Resolution 2020-R047,

As a citizen living and working in Richmond, I am absolutely appalled at the behavior of the Richmond Police Department the last few months. There is absolutely no way they should receive nearly a BILLION dollars of taxpayer money, especially when evictions of people struggling to pay for housing are commencing again, schools are closed indefinitely, and small business owners are struggling to stay afloat.

Defund the RPD. Take some of those (96!) MILLIONS of dollars, and use them to help out students, teachers, restaurants, service industry folks, the houseless, and everyone else struggling to make ends meet during a pandemic. DO NOT give more money to the militarized police who just take over streets at random (see: Grace street) with NO OVERSIGHT from city council, and intimidate, arrest, harass, unleash teargas and pepper spray and rubber bullets on their own peaceful citizens who they have been sworn to protect. It's absurd to think they deserve MORE BUDGET AND FUNDING based on what they've done with the tax dollars they've already been unfairly awarded to physically and emotionally beat and harass their own communities.

In addition, we the citizens of Richmond DEMAND to see a budget report breakdown, a detailed inventory of what they want these millions of dollars for. Why should we finance their use of chemical weapons to encourage their use on OURSELVES? Why should we pay the pensions of people wounding and killing people on the street, in traffic stops, or just minding their own business, trying to live and work as best they can?

DEFUND THE RPD. Reject this budget increase. RELEASE A BUDGET REPORT. Cut that amount by MILLIONS and then cut it down to ZERO. Allocate funding for programs that will better Richmond instead of turning it further into a militarized war zone.

A concerned Citizen.

From: [Shane Diller](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public comment on RES 2020 - R047
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 9:11:38 AM

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Hi there, I would like to add my public comment about the proposal at 1pm for the budget for richmond police department. Please add the following:

"I am writing today, to voice my severe discontent with how the RPD has managed their budget. Over the past few months, I have seen them respond to the protests against systemic racism and police brutality, with an overwhelming amount of bodies and force. Putting aside the psychological cost of their actions on our community, they are spending tax dollars needlessly and wastefully. The cost of overtime, pepper spray, tear gas, flashbangs, and less than lethal rubber rounds, in response to those exercising their constitutional right to gather and voice concern, has been reported as somewhere close to \$2 Million. They are not needed at these protests, and they only escalate instead of de-escalate tensions. We have seen them spray identified press in the face with pepper spray, and declare assemblies unlawful just to excuse their use of these devices. And we have not seen any transparency or oversight in identifying and correcting these officers using excessive force.

We have seen three police chiefs in two months, and the rhetoric coming from these police chiefs show no intention of cutting back on this use of force, and therefore the spending of funds. They have referred to fellow officers as 'troops' and stated that they will 'take the city back'. They have proven they are not capable of responding to nonviolent situations, and improving the situation.

I ask, does that sound like a department that is seeking to manage their funds correctly? If we continue to grant them more money, they will continue to waste this money. Let us defund this violent police department, and invest in social workers, schools, and the community. Thank you.

-Shane Diller, taxpayer of Richmond VA"

From: [Leigh Rossi](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public comment on resolution 2020-R047
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 9:10:29 AM

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Please read the following public comment and have it recorded into the minutes of the finance committee:

--

Hello chairperson and members of the council, my name is Leigh Rossi and I live at 803 Chimborazo Boulevard in the city of Richmond.

I am commenting on this resolution to demand that council members divert funds away from the Richmond Police Department budget and into areas that keep residents safe and healthy -- namely, affordable housing, education, food security, mental health services, homeless services, public transportation, and addiction & recovery services.

Investing in these areas addresses the root cause of crime (survival) while respecting residents' dignity and humanity. Investing in these areas also begins to right our historic wrongs against our Black residents and neighbors.

The Richmond police do not keep us safe. Their "us vs. them" approach is violent and dangerous. A safer, more equitable future is possible, and it starts today. Fund our community by defunding RPD.

Thank you.

From: [Elizabeth Rossi](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public comment on resolution 2020-R047
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 6:28:30 PM

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Members of the finance committee,

As a white Richmond resident, I strongly believe it would benefit ALL Richmond residents to defund the Richmond Police Department. I don't feel protected or served by the RPD. Their use of violent force, for situations ranging from peaceful protesters exercising their constitutional rights to a young black man in the midst of a mental health crisis, is appalling and uncalled for. I value the safety and well-being of my Black and immigrant neighbors over any false comfort I or my white neighbors may take in the knowledge that this violence will be used on our behalf instead of against us. In the strongest possible terms I call on the city of Richmond to redistribute the funds used to overpolice and militarize our neighborhoods into housing, healthcare, and public schools. Serve ALL the people of Richmond, not just those looking to fortify their wealth and property.

Thank you,
Liz Rossi



From: [jess vs](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT on RPD proposed budget
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 3:55:55 PM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern;

As a citizen living and working in Richmond, I am absolutely appalled at the behavior of the Richmond Police Department the last few months. There is absolutely no way they should receive nearly a BILLION dollars of taxpayer money, especially when evictions of people struggling to pay for housing are commencing again, schools are closed indefinitely, and small business owners are struggling to stay afloat.

Defund the RPD. Take some of those MILLIONS of dollars, and help out students, teachers, restaurants, service industry folks, the houseless, and everyone else struggling to make ends meet during a pandemic. DO NOT give more money to the militarized police who just take over streets at random (see: Grace street) with NO OVERSIGHT from city council, and unleash teargas and pepper spray and rubber bullets on their own peaceful citizens who they have been sworn to protect. It's absurd to think they deserve MORE BUDGET AND FUNDING based on what they've done with the tax dollars they've stolen to physically and emotionally beat and harass their own communities.

In addition, we the citizens of Richmond DEMAND to see a budget report breakdown, a detailed inventory of what they want these millions of dollars for. Why should we finance their use of chemical weapons to encourage their use on OURSELVES? Why should we pay the pensions of people wounding and killing people on the street, in traffic stops, or just minding their own business, trying to live and work as best they can?

DEFUND THE RPD. Reject this budget increase. RELEASE A BUDGET REPORT. Cut that amount by MILLIONS and then cut it down to ZERO. Allocate funding for programs that will better Richmond instead of turning it into a militarized war zone.

A concerned Citizen,
Jess Versus

--

Thanks,
Jess Versus

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [Emily Schapka](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public comment re: resolution to defund RPD being presented to Finance Committee, July 16
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 5:03:33 PM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

I'm writing to express my strong support for any and all measures to significantly reduce the RPD operating budget. I would strongly favor a graduated program to reduce their budget by at least 30%, and ideally 50%, over the course of 3 to 5 years.

In order to limit RPD's ability to respond punitively to these budget cuts, I also support the introduction of legislation that will stipulate certain funding levels for certain line items. For example, I believe we should strictly limit what portion of the budget may be allocated for weapons, armor, and other tools of violence, unneeded cosmetic or luxury upgrades to the police fleet, and surveillance activities, among others. In the same vein, we should strictly require that certain activities are adequately funded and prioritized: rape kit testing, 911 response, and filing of reports requested by citizens, among others.

Finally, I support the introduction of legislation that would make mid-year budget reallocations subject to a more rigorous approval process, to reduce any incentive for RPD to circumvent budget cuts by deliberately going over their budget.

Why? Because police don't prevent crime. The recent press conference, in which Chief Gerald Smith abdicated any responsibility for a night of 5 shootings and blamed the community for not protecting itself, is the loudest and clearest possible proof. They're clearly unable and unwilling to "serve and protect" us. The only thing they know how to do is come in after the damage is done, adding insult to injury by funneling people into an unjust, retributive "justice" system that fails to rehabilitate anyone. Instead of helping, the police damage the community and leave it more vulnerable to future violence and property losses.

Instead, we could be using our money to reduce crime by addressing its causes. Just imagine what we could do with \$50,000,000 a year! Eviction diversion, housing for the homeless, adult education, food for the hungry, increased school funding and after-school options for children -- our city desperately needs these things, and the reason we can't afford them is that we're too busy buying weapons and armor for police. Stop punishing and start helping. Defund the police.

Emily Schapka

From: [Lucy Isman](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comment Regarding Police Funding
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 9:27:54 PM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hello:

I am a concerned citizen residing in Richmond, VA, 23220 demanding that the Richmond Police be defunded and that a report be released that shows RPD's entire budget. As a very close resident to the Grace St. department, RPD has done nothing but waste taxpayer money and torment residents. From closing Grace to having at least a dozen officers posted outside on nights where no protest occurred, I have witnessed firsthand the misuse of funds perpetrated by the RPD. I have witnessed the police tear gas innocent people outside of my doorstep and enough is enough. I do not want my taxes to go toward the RPD.

To reiterate, as a citizen of Richmond, I support the community demand to defund RPD and that RPD must release a report of its entire budget.

Thank you,

Lucy Isman

From: [Sydney Cordoba](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 6:00:33 PM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear City Clerks Office,

My name is Sydney Cordoba and I am a concerned citizen of Richmond, Virginia. It has come to my attention that the finance committee will be deciding on RPD budgets tomorrow. It is known that RPD is set to receive \$96 million in tax payer funding in 2021. I believe very strongly that steps need to be taken to defund the police.

While he was the chief of the Dallas Police Department, Superintendent David Brown said "We're asking cops to do too much in this country. We are. Every societal failure, we put it off on the cops to solve. Not enough mental health funding, let the cops handle it ... Here in Dallas we got a loose dog problem; let's have the cops chase loose dogs. Schools fail, let's give it to the cops ... That's too much to ask. Policing was never meant to solve all those problems".

The city of Richmond doesn't need more police, it needs to invest in education, in schools, housing, and in mental health. I am asking that Richmond listens to and invests in its people. The people of Richmond also demand full transparency in RPD's entire budget.

Thank you,
Sydney Cordoba

From: [Alexander Cortes](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 1:11:58 PM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hello,

As a concerned citizen of Richmond City and ally to the Black liberation movement, which ensures to liberation of all peoples, I am writing to submit a public comments regarding the RPD 2021 budget.

I am demanding that RPD be defunded, so that those funds can better serve Black and brown communities of Richmond, who are disproportionately policed and incarcerated, as well as subjected to police brutality. More funding for RPD is not going to improve the lives of these communities.

Additionally I am demanding for transparency to the public of RPDs budget in a detailed report.

In solidarity,
Alex Cortes

From: [Aaron Kemmerer](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public comment: Defund RPD
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 2:03:52 PM

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Defund the police. These \$96 million given to RPD for FY21 need to be reallocated to education, safe and affordable housing, sustainability projects, and most importantly public health infrastructure. We are surviving a global pandemic. COVID numbers are still on the rise, yet the city is allocating precious funds to RPD. I am a social worker with experience working in shelters for the houseless, with survivors of intimate partner violence, and youth in our community. This is about regular people who are tired of daily violence and inequality.

People need affordable housing in Richmond. Not more cops protecting wealthy property owners. People need a sustainable food system. Not more cops policing and surveilling poor communities for survival crimes. People need relevant mental and physical health and community care services. Not police responding to substance misuse and mental health crises.

I have extensively worked with survivors and practice trauma informed care. There is no way for an armed police officer to provide a trauma-informed response. Tell me how will a cop show up to respond to a domestic violence call when many cops are perpetrators of domestic violence themselves? We can no longer trust them.

Not to mention, with our schools literally crumbling, the current police budget at \$96 million is in utterly inhumane. The conditions in schools are *unacceptable*. If this city is going to do anything while K-12 students are out of school this fall, we ought to defund the police and invest that money into updating our school buildings. Our schools don't need SROs, they need working plumbing and history textbooks that do not glorify slaveowners. Police do not need to be alongside our children everyday in schools.

Don't feed us lip service about "reforms" or "re-imagining." Been there, done that. Reforms have meant more funding to police, more training for them. The fact is: there are plenty of licensed mental health professionals who already have the credentials to respond to crises. So we do not need to spend more money on trainings and reforms which have previously failed to change the fundamentally racist and patriarchal nature of police.

Defund the police. In my house, our budget reveals our priorities. If you don't defund the police, that's like purchasing a security system before you pay the rent or mortgage. The police do not protect or serve us and don't deserve taxpayer money. They are leeches on our society, which we sorely don't need as we survive a pandemic. There has been little to no leadership around the public health crisis from ANYONE and the only official response has seemingly been...more policing? Why don't you use some of the police budget money to fund a public health campaign to encourage people to wear face masks in public? There is a long list of worthy alternatives. Do anything but give more money to these abusive personality types who seek only power and control.

From: [Ruby Tippl](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comment: Res 2020-R047
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 4:52:19 PM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

I am submitting this statement for public comment, to be read before the Finance Committee on Thursday, July 16, in regards to the proposed resolution to defund the Richmond Police Department:

Richmond Police Department is due to receive \$96 million in funding in 2021. This is a gross and violent misappropriation of funds. 96 million dollars that could address housing inequalities and evictions, underfunded and under-resourced public schools, a lack of accessible public transport, and a myriad of other racial and economic injustices perpetrated against citizens of Richmond. I am submitting this comment in support of Res. No. 2020-R047, that defunds the RPD and puts that money back into community mental health and substance use services. In addition, I am asking that City Council provide an itemized budget of RPD's entire budget for full transparency as to where taxpayer dollars are being spent. The Richmond Police Department does not make our city safer, and it's very existence is a threat to Black communities.

Ruby Tippl

From: [Charlie Schmidt](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comments for Finance and ED committee
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 10:01:22 AM

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Hello. Below are my comments to the committee in regards to the meeting today at 1pm.

- Charlie Schmidt, Richmond resident

Honorable members of the committee,

My name is Charlie Schmidt and I am a Richmond resident. Thank you for your work to bring more accountability and oversight to policing in Richmond. I am writing in support of items 6 and 7 on the agenda - specifically the resolutions to provide more oversight to civil asset forfeiture funds and reallocation report on police funding. I fully support these resolutions and hope the full Council will eventually pass these and other critical ordinances and resolutions around police accountability. I thank the patrons for the introduction of these.

Briefly, to civil asset forfeiture, I and many other advocates have worked hard over the years at the General Assembly to reform Virginia's laws around Civil Asset Forfeiture. Plain and simple, Civil Asset Forfeiture promotes "policing for profit". It incentivises police to seek out property to seize, rather than seek justice and public safety. Police should not be allowed to keep funds generated by civil asset forfeiture. It creates a slush fund. I encourage members of the Council to read reports and information generated by the ACLU or the Institute for Justice to learn more about the many problems surrounding civil asset forfeiture.

As to the broader police budget, again, I commend the patrons for seeking to address the issue of bloated police budgets. For too long we have handled all public safety concerns, especially mental health and addiction crises through oppressive policing. Police should not be our front-line, first responder to simple instances that call for help. Police should be a last resort, not a first response to community concerns of public safety. My hope is that the council will support this resolution and ultimately invest in more support and social services. Less police, more help. Thank you.

From: [Eryn Alloway](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comments for tomorrow's Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 2:21:11 PM

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Greetings Candice D. Reid and all City Council Members,

In advance of tomorrow's Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting, I am writing to convey my support for Resolutions 2020-R039, 2020-R046, and 2020-R047. These are critical and needed resolutions to support our community. I appreciate your time in considering these resolutions. (I have copied the briefs of the resolutions after my comments.)

I wish to express my support for Resolution 2020-R039, to restore funding to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the Eviction Diversion Program to the amounts proposed in the March 6th Budget. I also wish to express my support for these programs to be funded whether or not the city's revenue exceeds projections. These programs are even more crucial than ever during this time of COVID-19. The loss of projected income to the city should not mean that families who have lost their income must face housing insecurity. This is the time to support our citizens who need help during this crisis.

5. RES. 2020-R039

To request that the Mayor introduce such budget amendments to the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget as may be necessary to restore funding for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the Eviction Diversion Program to the amounts proposed in the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget introduced on March 6, 2020, in the event that City revenues exceed current projections for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.

Patrons: Ms. Robertson

I also wish to express my support for Resolution 2020-R046, to request that a report be submitted to identify detailed information regarding the civil asset forfeiture special funds and allow for increased oversight of the forfeiture process and special funds. I believe that allowing police to seize civil assets for profit provides an incentive for police to seize private assets for departmental monetary gain. I do not support our city's participation in the US Justice Department program to seize these resources. Please support this resolution to increase oversight of this program.

6. RES. 2020-R046

To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause to be prepared and submitted to the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee a quarterly report that provides certain data relevant to the City's five civil asset forfeiture special funds for the purpose of increased oversight of the sources and uses of civil asset forfeiture special funds.

Patrons: Ms. Lynch, Mr. Jones and Mr. Addison

And last but not least, I wish to express my heartfelt and enthusiastic support for Resolution 2020-R047. Our community needs funding and support for mental help, substance abuse,

and social service programs - and not through the police department. The police department is not equipped to provide these services. There are private and city programs designed to provide support in these areas, they should receive adequate funding to be able to function at the highest level possible and serve our community appropriately.

7. RES. 2020-R047

To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause to be prepared and submitted to the Council and the Mayor a report identifying funding in the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget and the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Special Fund Budget appropriated to the Department of Police for mental health, substance abuse, and social service functions and that provides recommendations, to the extent permitted by law, for the re-appropriation and transfer of such funding from the Department of Police to other City departments and to community mental health, substance abuse, and social service programs designed to perform such functions.

Patrons: Ms. Lynch and Mr. Jones

Best regards,
Eryn Alloway



I represent no organizations and am not affiliated economically or professionally with anything that would be affected by the adoption of these resolutions. These comments are my own as a City of Richmond resident.

From: [Patrick Basloe](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Cc: [Lynch, Stephanie A. - City Council Office](#)
Subject: Reallocation of Taxpayer Funds to Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Social Service Programs
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 2:58:32 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

As a long-time (18 year) resident of the city of Richmond and current constituent of Ms. Stephanie Lynch in the 5th District, I am requesting that a significant portion of the \$96 million that the Richmond Police Department is set to receive be identified for reappropriation. Specifically, I would like to see a considerable amount of this \$96 million be transferred to other City departments dealing with mental health, substance abuse, and social service programs. The actions of the RPD over the last 6 weeks have only reaffirmed my position that their share of the budget is substantially overstated and the needs of our citizens are not being met by their elected officials through the current allocation of these taxpayer funds.

Sincerely,

Patrick Basloe



From: [Kyndall Williams](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Request to Speak- Please Invest in Schools Not Police
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 8:31:13 AM

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Good Morning,


I am writing to express my concern regarding the RPD budget for 2021. We are in a time where major change is being rightfully demanded by our BIPOC residents and allies. Police brutality and systemic racism are here to stay until cities begin to rethink their funding, structure, and priorities.

Richmond, a diverse city of forward-minded residents, should be leading the way in discussions to defund the police, not continuing with the status quo. By allocating \$96 million to RPD, you are turning a blind eye to your BIPOC residents. You are blatantly refusing to listen. This is disappointing, to say the least.

I am a first year teacher. I am terrified to begin my career during these times, but you know what would help? Training, resources, and extra funds for my students. I need training so I can plan effective virtual lessons. I need online resources that my students can access. I need tactile items to send home for my students because not every child can learn online. I need to know my students are being fed, clothed, and sheltered.

I am writing to ask that you please reconsider the RPD budget for 2021. Please consider investing in our schools. By doing so, you will be investing in our families and communities. Shouldn't that be your top priority?

I would also like to ask that this email be read before the finance committee, or that I be invited to speak before them.

Thank you,
Kyndall Williams


From: [Kennan McLaren](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Request
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 1:28:30 AM

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Bruh just defund the police already come on

From: [Enna Wholey](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Request
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 2:12:04 PM

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Hello,

I am writing to demand the Richmond Police Department is defunded. The budget allocation of 96 million is immoral. The demands of protesters and activists in this country must be heard and reflected in local government NOW!

We want money to be divested from RPD completely, and we want to invest that 96 million to change black communities in Richmond with tangible assistance like counseling, social work, therapy, housing assistance, healthcare assistance, childcare, education, college scholarships, bikes, free bus passes, food and water supply drives, toy drives, block parties, community maintenance of roads and trash, assisting previously incarcerated individuals, halfway houses...

the list goes on and on. We demand our tax dollars be utilized for human rights not for the continued oppression and violence and punishment that our carceral system deems as justice. That is not justice. Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness must be funded for our black and brown communities now.

We want RPD defunded. We want transparency of the budget NOW.

Thank you,

Enna Wholey

From: [Elizabeth Dowker](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: RES-2020r047 Police budget report
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 12:36:51 AM

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Hello,

I am a lifelong resident of Richmond. I am reaching out to demand action about RES-2020r047, the Police budget report proposed. First, the Richmond police and the police of the Greater Richmond Region should be defunded and disbanded. Second, these police forces and any additional armed, government-tied and paid forces should not be facing off with or using force against Black Lives Matter protesters in Richmond. I do not want to support police equipment, pay, and overtime pay with my tax dollars. I call you to eliminate police funding and protect other programs from having their money taken to pay for these police bills accrued while harming Richmond residents. Instead, it should be invested in supporting education efforts in marginalized communities especially in this pandemic era and other public relief efforts. Public monies should be spent to benefit the community, not on people and forces who tear it down.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Dowker

From: [Samantha Dean](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: RES2020-R047
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 8:29:26 AM

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Do not increase the budget for RPD. Defunding the police needs to be the priority and instead we need to be allocating these funds to improve the conditions of living in this city. This is disgusting

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Liz Roberts](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Resolution to Defund RPD Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 2:12:47 PM

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Good afternoon,

I am emailing you in regards of public comment for the RPD budget for 2021. As someone who lives in the city I have seen and heard first hand the violence that RPD has inflicted on its citizens, specifically black and brown people. Giving \$96 million dollars of taxpayer funds is absolutely not the answer. I am here to demand that RPD be defunded and that a report of RPDs entire budget be released so there is transparency in the budget and the people can see what our money is being used for.

Thank you for your time.

From: [Leslie Saul](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Resolution to defund the police
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 6:24:05 PM

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I'm writing to state my support of defunding the police. I am against the \$96 million Being planned for the police in 2021

I support a citizen review board with subpoena power and the Marcus Alert.

I support using the money designated for police to set up a team of Social workers as a crisis response team to respond to calls that don't require the military approach of police. The money can fund a nurse and several Clinical Social workers In every school, rather than SROs, invest the money in neighborhoods to set up community programs to stop shootings, to protect people from evictions and provide stable affordable housing.

Thank you

Leslie Saul
Richmond VA
23222

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kathleen Lash](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Richmond Police Department Budget
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 9:18:53 PM

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To Whom It May Concern,

As a proud citizen of Richmond, I am demanding transparency from the government of Richmond. The full budget of the Richmond Police Department must be fully transparent - not only the amount, but a detailed accounting of how the money is spent down to the last penny. As taxpayers, we deserve to see how our money is being spent. Especially considering that any money going to the RPD means riot gear, guns, and other tools of war used to kill black and brown people, and suppress protests against this violence.

We do not support police brutality. Therefore, we are calling for the immediate defunding of the Richmond police. Do not increase the RPD budget. Doing so enables the murder of more people such as George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Sandra Bland, Trayvon Martin, and countless others. The police will argue that they need more money to deal with the protests, but it is giving the police department money that continues the cycle of violence. If the police are defunded, then hopefully there will no longer be a need for protests against police brutality.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Lash

From: [Shannon Lowe](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: RPD BUDGET
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 8:21:41 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Good morning,

As a resident of Richmond I am disgusted with the size of the budget we put into our police force. I do not support any decisions to increase this budget. I would like to see the budget reduced and those funds be spent in different areas of our community.

I would also like a completely transparent breakdown of the entire RPD budget made available to the public that pays for it.

Thank you,
Shannon Lowe

From: [Peter Stauffer](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: RPD Budget Public Comment
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 9:45:46 AM

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Hello,

My name is Peter Stauffer and I am a concerned citizen in the City of Richmond. I am also an ally to the Black liberation movement, which aims to liberate all peoples, and I am writing to submit a public comment regarding the Richmond Police Department's (RPD) 2021 budget.

I am demanding that the RPD be defunded, so that those funds can better serve Black communities and all communities of people of color in Richmond, who are disproportionately policed and incarcerated, as well as subjected to police brutality. More funding for RPD is not going to improve the lives of these communities, nor will it guarantee a safer Richmond for all.

Additionally I am demanding transparency of RPD's entire budget in a detailed report to the public.

I thank you for your time and appreciate your attention.

Sincerely,
Peter Stauffer

From: [Corey Martin](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: RPD Budget Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 4:03:43 PM

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Hello,

My name is Corey Martin and I am a concerned citizen in the City of Richmond. I am also an ally to the Black liberation movement, which aims to liberate all peoples, and I am writing to submit a public comment regarding the Richmond Police Department's (RPD) 2021 budget.

I am demanding that the RPD be defunded, so that those funds can better serve Black communities and all communities of people of color in Richmond, who are disproportionately policed and incarcerated, as well as subjected to police brutality. More funding for RPD is not going to improve the lives of these communities, nor will it guarantee a safer Richmond for all.

Additionally I am demanding transparency of RPD's entire budget in a detailed report to the public.

I thank you for your time and appreciate your attention.

Sincerely,
Corey Martin

From: [Rebecca Dyson](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: RPD Budget
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 9:45:50 AM

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Hello,

I am calling for the Richmond Police Department to be defunded, and for the budget to be reallocated to community services and education. Furthermore, I request better transparency with the RPD budget—please release a thorough report of spending and allocation.

Thanks,
RMD, 23221

From: [cayla.carruthers](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: RPD Budget
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 9:35:10 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

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Good morning-

The only ethical and responsive option for our city is to redistribute funding toward RPS and other supports to families (specifically childcare) as we embark on a semester of fully virtual learning. Keeping students and teachers at home protects us all, but adds a financial burden to parents and guardians. Defund the police, fund Black futures.



C. Carruthers

From: [Mac MacDaniel](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: RPD funding
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 9:25:43 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

I am writing as a native Richmonder and voter to express my desire for the defunding of the Richmond Police Department.

Time and time again, especially in recent months, Richmond police have shown flagrant disregard for public safety, public health, and the rights of city residents.

I think it would be a mistake to reward bad behavior by increasing their funding, as the new chief has requested, or even to keep their funding at the same level.

I think that as a city, we should reroute RPD funding to schools, infrastructure, and public health. Those seem like much worthier and more beneficial ways to spend our taxpayer dollars.

Thank you.

From: [Video Guns](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: RVA Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 6:33:43 PM

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- defund/reform police
- make regularly available to the public the complete and entire RPD budget

Sasha Waters



From: [Lindsey Franklin](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Support fo RES. 2020-R047 and RES. 2020-R046
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 6:09:08 AM

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Dear City Clerk,

I am writing to express my support for these two ordinances proposed by Councilman Jones, RES. 2020-R047 and RES. 2020-R046.

Thank you,

Lindsey Franklin
Richmond, VA

--



From: [Jasper Gunn](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Support for Defunding RPD (RES 2020-R047)
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 3:05:25 AM

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Hello,

My name is Jasper Gunn and I am a district 5 resident. I would like to register my comment for today's finance committee meeting, in favor of RES 2020-R047 for defunding the RPD and allocating funds to mental health, substance abuse, and social services.

Thank you,
Jasper Gunn

From: [Carla Keyes](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Support for RES. 2020-R046 and 047
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 8:48:10 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support for the following ordinances:

RES. 2020-R047- Defund the Police - To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause to be prepared and submitted to the Council and the Mayor a report identifying funding in the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget and the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Special Fund Budget appropriated to the Department of Police for mental health, substance abuse, and social service functions and that provides recommendations, to the extent permitted by law, for the re-appropriation and transfer of such funding from the Department of Police to other City departments and to community mental health, substance abuse, and social service programs designed to perform such functions.

Our systems of community care are under-funded, and police departments are over-funded. This adjustment would help to rectify that problem.

RES. 2020-R046 - Asset Forfeiture Quarterly Report - To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause to be prepared and submitted to the Council Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee a quarterly report that provides certain data relevant to the City's five civil asset forfeiture special funds for the purpose of increased oversight of the sources and uses of civil asset forfeiture special funds.

We must provide oversight over unjust policing practices. I hope we will reinvest forfeiture funds in communities of color.

Thank you.
Carla Pratt Keyes



From: [Marina Blough](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Thursday's Finance Committee Meeting
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 2:47:31 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

As a lifelong resident of Richmond Virginia, I'm writing today to go on record with a public comment demanding that the Richmond Police Department be defunded--preferably in whole, but at the very least we must begin divesting from RPD and investing in mental health services, public health services, education, housing, and welfare. It makes me sick to my stomach to think of my tax dollars being used to fund a violent police force with several outstanding lawsuits for excessive force and extrajudicial murder while children in our city go hungry, without shelter, or without adequate education.

DEFUND RPD NOW!

Marina Blough

From: [Kevin Sabo](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Transparency
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 8:11:14 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hello,

As a citizen of Richmond City, I am asking to see a full list of what the RDP will be spending with the 96 million dollar funding it receives. I am also requesting that the RDP be defunded and we opt for more community-driven lines of service and help to the citizens of Richmond.

With purpose,

Kevin Sabo