



# Richmond City Council

The Voice of the People

Richmond, Virginia

## Office of the Council Chief of Staff

### Finance & Economic Development Standing Committee

May 20, 2026

### Prep Document for Committee Members

**Previous Meeting:** April 16, 2026

**Next Meeting:** June 17, 2026

---

#### **Agenda Overview:**

- Nine papers for consideration:
  1. [Ord. 2025-282](#) with proposed amendments (create real estate tax deferral program for certain owner-occupied properties)
  2. [Ord. 2026-081](#) (Mayor's proposal to amend existing payment register ordinance/code)
  3. [Ord. 2026-090](#) (modify collective bargaining procedures)
  4. [Ord. 2026-110](#) (modify fee schedule for temporary use of Main Street Station)
  5. [Ord. 2026-114](#) (Venture Richmond work plan and budget for FY27 SSADs)
  6. [Ord. 2026-115](#) (amend SSAD service agreement with Venture Richmond to extend through FY31)
  7. [Res. 2026-R019](#) (authorize OD standing committee to investigate failure to publish a monthly payment register as required by City Code § 12-16 and application of FOIA exclusions)
  8. [Res. 2026-R020](#) (Enterprise Zone amendments and applications to state DHCD)
  9. [Res. 2026-R021](#) (request feasibility study for establishment of registration system for providers of affordable housing)
- Two written submissions included as discussion items:
  - Quarterly ARPA update
  - Update on financial reporting

#### **Preview of June 2026 meeting (tentative):**

- Presentation: P-card program overhaul (DCAO for Finance and Administration or designee)

**1. Ordinance No. 2025-282 Patrons** Councilor Abubaker, Councilor Trammell, Councilor Breton, Councilor Lynch, Councilor Gibson

Title: To amend ch. 26, article V, div. 2 of the City Code by adding therein a new section 26-370, concerning a deferral program for certain real estate taxes pursuant to and in accordance with Code of Virginia § 58.1-3219.

**Council Staff Notes:**

- Councilor Abubaker is proposing several amendments to this paper for the committee’s consideration before forwarding the amended version to Council:
  - Delay implementation date to January 2028
  - Require submission of draft implementation plan to be considered at December 2026 Finance meeting and final implementation plan to be submitted by February 2027 Finance meeting
  - Reduce lifetime maximum in deferred taxes and interest per participating property to \$25,000 from original figure of \$50,000
  - Require payment in full of deferred taxes and interest within 10 years from the deferral date
  - Add reference to existing authority of Finance director to enter into installment agreements with “any taxpayer” (Sec. 26-363(b)) to make explicit that the tax deferral program would be a distinct type of installment agreement for eligible property owners
- The O&R includes an attachment detailing the analysis of fiscal impact. The amount of potentially, temporarily foregone real estate tax revenue would likely be higher beginning with tax year 2028 because of the time between general assessments associated with the “freeze.”
- On Monday, 4/13, members received a memo from Ken Martinez, Director of Revenue Administration, outlining the administration’s position on this ordinance. The Administration sent a revised version of the memo to committee members on 4/22.

## 2. Ordinance No. 2026-081

Patron Mayor Avula

Title: To amend City Code § 12-16, concerning publication of the City's payment register, for the purpose of promoting transparency and accountability in the expenditure of public funds by providing public access to information regarding payments made by the City to vendors for goods and services and reimbursements to employees, while protecting confidential and personal information as required by law.

### Council Staff Notes:

- Ord. 2014-257-2015-9 (adopted January 2015) established Sec. 12-16 requirement to post monthly payment register. The city has been out of compliance since 2019.
- The Administration's proposal has been described as chiefly designed to protect the privacy of individuals, though they have also suggested that the revised payment register data fields would reduce the amount of manual review needed prior to publication.
- Key changes in this proposal include:
  - New definition of "payment": (i) a disbursement by the City to **a vendor for goods or services provided to the City pursuant to a contract, purchase order, procurement, grant agreement, or other authorized operational expenditure and (ii) reimbursements to employees for authorized expenses paid.**
  - Exclusion of the following types of payments: payments to city employees, excluding reimbursements; payments to individuals receiving refunds or assistance payments; tax refunds or tax-related payments; payments made pursuant to legal settlements or claims; payments protected by state or federal privacy laws; and any payment that would disclose personally identifiable information protected by law
  - Removal of most required data fields
- The City Auditor is conducting a review of the city's accounts payable function, the results of which may be important to consider before making significant changes to the legal requirement to publish payment register data.

### Council Staff Questions:

- Please explain the justification for excluding legal settlements altogether rather than publishing settlement or risk management claim payments with names redacted.
- When can the committee and Council expect to receive the FY25 payment register data using the proposed changes to the ordinance?
- Has the Administration developed an implementation plan for this ordinance?

**3. Ordinance No. 2026-090 Patrons** Councilor Trammell, Councilor Gibson, Councilor Abubaker

Title: To amend City Code §§ 2-1301.4, concerning the City's rights and authority, and 2-1301.14, concerning labor-management dispute and impasse resolution, to modify collective bargaining procedures.

**Council Staff Notes:**

- This paper amends Ord. No 2022-221, adopted July 25, 2022, the Collective Bargaining Ordinance (“CBO”), which established collective bargaining in the City of Richmond after the passage of HB 582 (2020) by the General Assembly. Patrons of the paper at the time understood that such matters as the systems and methods of promoting employees, scheduling them, and filling vacancies were to be subject to negotiation. However, a recent arbitration decision found that those matters were not subject to negotiation as written in the current ordinance. The purpose of this paper is to amend the collective bargaining ordinance and make it clear that those matters are subject to negotiation.
- Specifically, the paper amends Section 2-1301.4(a) to make it clear that the following are subject to negotiation and not only exclusive to the employer’s determination:
  - Systems governing promotions and transfers;
  - Systems governing scheduling of employees; and
  - Procedures for determining how vacancies are filled.
- Furthermore, the paper amends Section 2-1301.14 regarding the resolution of unresolved disputes/impasses and the use of arbitration, mediation, and fact-finding by:
  - Requiring that matters not related to economic benefits and wages such as those in the Section 2-1301.4(a) discussion above are subject to binding arbitration;
  - Requiring that costs of arbitration be shared equally; and
  - Requiring that impasses related to wages or economic fringe benefits be submitted to non-binding fact finding.

#### **4. Ordinance No. 2026-110**

**Patron Mayor Avula**

Title: To amend City Code § 8-555, concerning fees for temporary use of Main Street Station, to modify the fee schedule.

#### **Council Staff Notes:**

- The O&R notes that these fee adjustments are proposed to reflect market adjustments, new revenue sources, and fees for interdepartmental use.
- For fiscal impact, the O&R only states that “Updated pricing will increase Main Street Station revenue.”
- The FY27 adopted budget includes numerous line items for capital projects involving Main Street Station. The \$4 million included in the FY27 budget for “Main Street Station Operating” derives from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Urban Maintenance Program.

#### **Council Staff Questions:**

- By how much is Main Street Station revenue expected to increase as a result of the proposed amendments to the fee schedule?
- What are the allowable uses of revenue generated through these fees?
  - How is revenue from Main Street Station temporary use fees currently used, and are there any planned changes to the uses of these funds?

**5. Ordinance No. 2026-114**

**Patron** Councilor Robertson

Title: To approve the Work Plan and Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, for the provision of services in the Downtown Special Service and Assessment Districts.

**Council Staff Notes:**

- The proposed budget and work plan assume revenue and expenditures equaling approximately \$1.36 million for FY27.
- Venture Richmond is under contract with the City to manage the Downtown Special Assessment Districts and submits an annual Work Plan and Budget to City Council. Upon approval of this plan, by ordinance, Venture Richmond will implement programs for the Service Districts, through June 30, 2027.
- Venture Richmond provides management of the Clean and Safe Program; provides marketing services; produces various downtown events; is the property manager for the Riverfront Overlay District; and provides a variety of services including the canal cruises.

**6. Ordinance No. 2026-115**

**Patron** Councilor Robertson

Title: To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute an Eighth Amendment to the Agreement for the Provision of Services in the Downtown Richmond Special Service and Assessment Districts between the City of Richmond and Venture Richmond, Inc., for the purpose of extending the term of the agreement to June 30, 2031.

**Council Staff Notes:**

- The city has contracted with Venture Richmond to administer the downtown special service and assessment districts (SSADs) since 1996.

**7. Resolution No. 2026-R019**

**Patron** Councilor Gibson, Councilor Trammell

Title: To authorize the Council's Organizational Development Standing Committee to investigate the City's failure to publish a monthly payment register as required by City Code § 12-16 and application of exclusions allowed under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

**Council Staff Notes:**

City Code § 12-16 – Publication of Payment Register

- Established via Ord. 2014-257-2015-9
- Sub-section (b) of the existing requirement in Sec. 12-16 includes the following related to redactions:

“The Director of Finance may redact particular fields for particular payments only if and to the extent required by law or permitted by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Code of Virginia, §§ 2.2-3700—2.2-3714, provided that nothing in this section shall require the Director of Finance to redact any of the information in the register simply because the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Code of Virginia, §§ 2.2-3700—2.2-3714, so permits.”

## 8. Resolution No. 2026-R020

Patron Mayor Avula

Title: To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to submit four separate applications to the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development to (i) amend the boundaries of Enterprise Zone 19 and Enterprise Zone 28A within the city of Richmond and (ii) modify the local enterprise zone incentive package for the amended Enterprise Zones.

### Council Staff Notes:

- Per the O&R, private economic development projects within the boundaries of an enterprise zone have access to two grant programs from the Commonwealth: the Real Property Investment Grant and the Job Creation Grant. In the past three award years, Richmond-based projects have been awarded \$3.1 million in state funds.
- The proposed changes to the enterprise zone boundaries and incentives would be the first in over a decade and are meant to align the boundaries and the incentives with Richmond 300, the strategies articulated in the adopted Strategic Plan for Equitable Economic Development (SPEED), and the City’s Mayoral Action Plan.
- The proposed changes also reflect shifts in market conditions and redevelopment patterns.
- Per the presentation (slide 3), the city’s local incentives pursuant to the program are six small grant programs (award amounts ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000). Over FY25 and FY26 YTD, more than \$500,000 has been awarded through 135 grants (predominantly to new or growing small businesses), leveraging \$40 million in private capital investment associated with these projects.
- Presentation slide 6: blue shading represents current enterprise zones; red shading represents proposed deletions; green shading represents proposed additions.
- Presentation slide 9 lists the incentives being recommended for discontinuation and slide 10 lists the proposed enhancements to existing incentives (e.g., amend relocation rebate to increase the maximum award amount to \$25,000 from \$10,000 and making funds available for “opening or expanding a facility within an EZ” rather than moving into one).

### Council Staff Questions:

- Please provide additional information about the types of “new or growing small businesses” that have participated in the city’s enterprise zone program.
- Are there any joint zone opportunities with Chesterfield County that have been considered, or is the joint zone with Henrico the only one?

**9. Resolution No. 2026-R021**

**Patron** Councilor Robertson

Title: To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause the Department of Planning and Development Review, in coordination with other relevant City departments, to conduct a study of the feasibility of establishing a registration system for non-profit and for-profit housing providers to register housing units reserved for affordable housing tenants and purchasers within the city for the purpose of identifying such units and recognizing affordability restrictions in the valuation of such properties for taxation purposes and to provide the Council with recommendations for implementing such system.

**Council Staff Notes:**

- Councilor Robertson is proposing an amendment that would add for-profit housing providers to the scope of this resolution (see underlined portion of “Title” above).
- Per the O&R, non-profit developers and providers of affordable housing have expressed difficulty in communicating to the city that they are providing housing units at below-market rates, which has implications for the accuracy of their real property assessments.

## **Discussion Item: Quarterly ARPA Update**

### **Council Staff Notes:**

- The first-time homebuyer assistance program has been flagged as the only ARPA program substantially at risk of failing to expend all obligated funds by the December 31, 2026 deadline. The Administration changed some of the administrative criteria for the program to broaden the pool of eligible and interested applicants (see 1/30/26 memo from CAO Donald previously emailed to committee members ahead of the February meeting). Council also recently approved an ordinance ([Ord. 2026-055](#)) expanding program eligibility to RPS employees.
- As of April 2026, \$175,160 of the \$1,339,828 in obligated ARPA funds (13%) had been expended to provide first-time homebuyer assistance grants to 6 individuals.
  - As of December 2025, \$62,260 (5%) had been expended, serving 3 individuals.
  - The detailed ARPA update document notes that the expansion of eligibility to RPS employees resulted in 188 additional interested individuals.

### **Council Staff Questions:**

- Did the interest from RPS employees noted in the full progress report document translate to new applications?
- How many applications are currently pending or in the closing process?
- What other options, if any, should the city consider to reduce the amount of ARPA funding that would need to be returned to the federal government from this program?

## Discussion Item: Updates to Financial Reporting

### Council Staff Notes:

- As part of a process initiated by Chair Robertson in fall 2025, OCCOS staff shared the below proposal for a quarterly operational report that would build on past practice and replace at least a portion of the information currently required to be reported monthly in the monthly financial synopses (Sec. 12-21). The Administration initially indicated that February 2026 was a feasible due date for a “mock up” of such a quarterly report, but has since requested additional time.
- As of the afternoon of Monday, 5/18, OCCOS staff have not received or seen a written memo to provide additional updates on proposed changes to financial reporting systems and publications.
  
- **Written submission from F&A DCAO first scheduled for February 2026 meeting of the Finance committee: Mock-up of quarterly operational report (Q2)**
  - Narrative summary of key activities and events
  - Clearly labeled summary of projected general fund balances (revenues and expenditures) as of the end of the quarter being reported on
  - Detailed table: Sources (revenues) – *currently included (without projections or any narrative) in monthly financial synopses as an appendix*
    - Revenues broken out by category (e.g., revenue from local sources, revenue from the Commonwealth and federal government, revenue from utilities)
    - Table columns: FY budget, FY amended budget, FY collections as of quarter end, projection for the FY as of that quarter, variance: current (budgeted) vs. projection (surplus/shortfall)
  - Detailed table: Uses (expenditures) – *currently included (without projections or any narrative) in monthly financial synopses as an appendix*
    - Expenditures broken out by agency
    - Table columns: FY budget, FY amended budget, FY expenditures as of quarter end, projection for the FY as of that quarter, variance: current (budgeted) vs. projection (surplus/shortfall)
  - Revenue projections – explanations of variances within major accounts (for variances that are +/- 5% or +/- \$500,000) and current forecast for total revenue surplus or shortfall
  - Expenditure projections – explanations of “major variances” (for variances that are +/- 5% or +/- \$500,000) and current forecast for total expenditures compared to the budget

- A comparison of revenues and expenditures to the same period in the preceding two fiscal years (*modified version of requirement in Sec. 12-21(2) that would enable basic trend analysis*)
- Outstanding long-term debt (*as currently captured by Figure 4, Table 5 in monthly financial synopses though not required by Sec. 12-21*), including any debt that was refinanced at a lower interest rate during that quarter, to include total savings on interest
- Updates on all special purpose revenue funds and special reserve funds, organized by agency charged with managing each fund, to include starting and ending (unappropriated) balance for that quarter; any transfers between funds or appropriations made from the special reserve and the purpose of each appropriation made during that quarter, including those required by law; and explanations for any deviations from legislated requirements, if applicable
  - (*expanded version of requirement in Sec. 12-21(7)*)
  - Also include information about delinquent tax sales activity, if any, in portion related to that special fund
- A report on delinquent tax accounts, that includes a break out of delinquencies (number of delinquent accounts, total delinquent amount, and average age of delinquency) for real estate, sales tax, personal property tax, and meals tax, provided that no information prohibited from being disclosed to the public by Code of Virginia § 58.1-3 is included.
  - (*modified version of requirement in Sec. 12-21(5); intent is to provide better line of sight into tax delinquency and collections performance*)
  - At minimum, break out delinquencies (number of delinquent accounts, total delinquent amount, and average age of delinquency) for real estate, sales tax, personal property tax, and meals tax, since those are the four largest city taxes in terms of revenue generated
- Data related to risk management and claims