

**From:** [andeskeith@gmail.com](mailto:andeskeith@gmail.com)  
**To:** [City Clerk's Office](#)  
**Cc:** [Carter, Melvin D. - Fire](#); [Mike Oprandi](#); [Bill Pantele](#); [Brad Nixon](#)  
**Subject:** 2021 Budget Public Hearing  
**Date:** Friday, April 24, 2020 8:48:11 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 Candice, I hope you and your Family are holding up well under these extreme circumstances!! Richmond Firefighters Association would like to request distribution of the following letter to City Council for the April 27th 2021 Budget Public Hearing in lieu of speaking through audio or video means. Thanks for all you & the dedicated City Clerk's staff do for all of us, stay safe!! My best, Keith

Keith Andes, President Richmond Firefighters Association, IAFF Local 995  
[andeskeith@gmail.com](mailto:andeskeith@gmail.com)  
(804)349-8353

Honorable Councilmembers, what a difference six weeks make!! On Friday March 6th, Mayor Stoney addressed City Council on his 2021 Budget proposal that included funding for police/ fire step increases, unfreezing/funding the Career Development Program & increasing starting salaries. Welcomed news by the rank & file of public safety!! Sadly, our world has changed not only medically, but economically as well. Federal, state & local governments, along with household budgets have been hit hard, no one could have predicted this, but it is what it is, unfortunately. Tough decisions will be made by this government body, and as always you will do your best to make sure the financial health of the City remains a priority, but we also ask to keep the health & safety of Richmond's Public Safety employees as a component of your decision making as well. I could include in this letter all the risks that my fire service Brothers & Sisters are subjecting themselves and their families to during this crisis, but I'm sure you are aware of them. Firefighters are also exposed daily to cancer causing carcinogens and unknown elements that, statistically proven, cut years from their life, unfortunately the Covid-19 virus just adds to that list.

Over the last year, our members have been heavily involved in the communities we serve by volunteering to assist areas of need. Through our "Operation Warm Program" Firefighters & Police Officers came together, with help of generous donations from corporate & private donations in raising over \$20,000 to purchase 1000+ new coats for kids in three RVA schools. Every child enrolled at those schools received a fitted coat that will keep them warm on cold winter days. The "Thank You's" and smiling faces that came from the placement of a new coat on these young people, warmed the souls of all who participated. Local 995 also continued its annual participation in providing free popcorn to attendees for the Recreation & Parks "Movies in the Park" summer program. Lastly, we filled a "need request" for a citizen to have a ramp in place so that it would make her journey to the dialysis center a little easier to navigate. These listed efforts above are not looking for "pats on the back", but to show we truly care about the citizens we serve.

Firefighters & Police Officers are cognizant to the fact the City faces tough budget shortfalls. We respectfully ask that in your upcoming budget discussions, please look at keeping as a priority, the police/fire step plan increase. We appreciate all the support you

show public safety. Richmond Professional Firefighters, IAFF Local 995 & the Richmond Coalition of Police will continue to answer the call with the dedication & professionalism displayed each & every day, no matter the crisis, it's that concerted effort that will bring us back to where we were on March 6th, sooner then later!! We ask you to keep all our first responders in your thoughts & prayers, also please continue to keep your Family & yourselves safe!! We thank each of you for all you do!! My best, Keith

Keith Andes, President Richmond Firefighters Assoc., IAFF Local 995  
[andeskeith@gmail.com](mailto:andeskeith@gmail.com)  
[\(804\)349-8353](tel:(804)349-8353)

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone