



City of Richmond

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

Minutes

Governmental Operations Standing Committee

Wednesday, February 24, 2021

2:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor – Virtual Meeting

Committee Members and Staff in Attendance

The Honorable Kristen Larson – Chair
The Honorable Katherine Jordan – Vice Chair
The Honorable Michael Jones – Member (*late arrival*)
The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert – Alternate Member
Samson Anderson, Council Budget Analyst
Lisa Braxton, Council Management Analyst
Haskell Brown, Interim City Attorney
Joyce Davis, Interim Council Chief of Staff
Bill Echelberger, Council Budget Analyst
Jamie Isley, Assistant City Clerk
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Dominique Thaxton, Assistant City Clerk

Call to Order

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

Electronic Meeting Announcement

Assistant City Clerk Jamie Isley, in accordance with Ordinance No. 2020-093, adopted April 9, 2020, as amended by Ordinance No. 2020-183, adopted August 20, 2020, announced the meeting would be held through electronic communication means. Assistant City Clerk Isley stated notice of the meeting was provided to the public through a public information advisory issued on February 16, 2021, 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 Wednesday, February 24, 2021, were provided to committee members. Ms. Isley indicated that members of the public who signed up to speak and provide comment would be called to speak at the appropriate time.

Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Chair's request, Assistant City Clerk Jamie Isley provided the citizen speaker guidelines.

Public Comment

There were no public comment speakers.

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of Wednesday, January 27, 2021, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

Board Vacancies

There were no board vacancies for review.

Presentation(s)

There were no presentations.

Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinances were considered:

ORD. 2021-033

To amend City Code § 21-40, concerning cooperative procurement, for the purpose of modifying the procedures for joint and cooperative procurement.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

ORD. 2021-034

To amend City Code § 21-59, concerning contract modification or supplement, for the purpose of providing that no fixed-price contract may be increased by more than 25 percent of the amount of the contract or \$100,000.00, whichever is greater, without written approval by the Chief Administrative Officer before any such modification is made.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

ORD. 2021-035

To amend City Code §§ 21-67, concerning competitive negotiation for goods, nonprofessional services, insurance, and construction, and 21-68, concerning contracting for professional services by competitive negotiation, for the purpose of modifying the procedures for the publishing of public notices for competitive negotiations.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

ORD. 2021-036

To amend City Code § 21-68, concerning contracting for professional services by competitive negotiation, for the purpose of increasing the threshold for competitive procurement of professional services from \$60,000.00 to \$80,000.00.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

Betty Burrell, Department of Procurement Services Director, introduced ORD. 2021-033, ORD. 2021-034, ORD. 2021-035 and ORD. 2021-036. Ms. Burrell informed the committee that the aforementioned proposed ordinances are non-mandatory amendments to the Richmond City Code that propose changes to increase operational efficiencies and reduce operating costs.

Vice Chair Katherine Jordan asked how many individuals view procurement advertisements within newspapers of general circulation such as the Richmond Times-Dispatch (RTD) and the Richmond Free Press in contrast to the city's website. Vice Chair Jordan also asked if persons interested in bidding on proposals would be notified of the change in procurement advertisement procedures proposed within ORD. 2021-035.

Ms. Burrell offered to provide information regarding readership statistics for the RTD and the Richmond Free Press. Ms. Burrell informed the committee that proposers and bidders would be informed that procurement advertisements in newspapers of general circulation may cease to exist upon adoption of ORD. 2021-035, and would only be posted to the city website and Virginia's eProcurement Portal (eVA).

Alternate Member Ann-Frances Lambert asked for clarification regarding ORD. 2021-034.

Ms. Burrell stated that inconsequential modifications and supplements are currently reviewed by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), while the director of the Department of Procurement Services has the authority to sign a \$10,000,000 contract without CAO approval. She further explained the inefficiencies regarding the CAO being required to approve trivial changes to multi-million dollar contracts.

Chair Kristen Larson asked whether electronic procurement advertisements in place of newspaper procurement advertisements is standard practice in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Ms. Burrell stated that the Virginia Public Procurement Act authorizes electronic advertisements as a cost-savings measure. She further stated that the city is not prohibited from utilizing newspaper advertisements when necessary.

Alternate Member Lambert inquired about the total cost savings expected from ORD. 2021-035.

Ms. Burrell stated that the total is dependent on the number of requests for proposals within the queue and that she would follow up with the committee.

Alternate Member Ann-Frances Lambert moved to forward ORD. 2021-033, ORD. 2021-034, ORD. 2021-035 and ORD. 2021-036 to the March 8, 2021, Council meeting pending follow-up information from Ms. Burrell, which was seconded.

Ms. Burrell asked if the committee would be amenable to moving ORD. 2021-033, ORD. 2021-034 and ORD. 2021-036 forward, and consider ORD. 2021-035 separately.

Chair Larson agreed with Ms. Burrell and suggested continuing ORD. 2021-035 for 30 days in committee.

There were no further comments or discussions and Alternate Member Ann-Frances Lambert moved to forward ORD. 2021-033, ORD. 2021-034 and ORD. 2021-036 to the March 8, 2021, Council meeting with recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Councilor Michael Jones entered the meeting at 2:22 p.m.

Chair Larson provided Member Jones with an overview of the committee's deliberations of the proposed ordinances.

Member Michael Jones moved to continue ORD. 2021-035 to the March 24, 2021, Governmental Operations Standing Committee meeting with recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Discussion Item

Fund Balance Allocation Regarding COVID-19

Chair Kristen Larson provided an overview of previous discussions that have occurred relating to the fund balance allocation regarding Council's COVID-19 relief fund. Chair Larson informed the committee that several proposals from Council members regarding the funds have been discussed, and asked members to consider the options covered and be prepared to forward recommendations to Council following the next committee meeting.

Samson Anderson, Council Budget Analyst, informed the committee that the total fund balance is approximately \$847,000. Mr. Anderson further stated that the Council has two options regarding the fund balance, to retain the funds for funding initiatives during the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 (FY22) budget deliberations or use the funding for certain initiatives. Mr. Anderson further informed the committee that federal funding similar to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding that was received in 2020 is expected in 2021, and that specific information would not be available until a later date. Mr. Anderson stated that the Office of the Council Chief of Staff recommends retaining the fund balance to utilize during the FY22 budget deliberations.

Member Michael Jones asked if there are any limitations on spending the fund balance.

Samson Anderson, Council Budget Analyst, stated that the fund balance is not legally bound to COVID-19 related funding, and that the fund balance was originally intended to assist the city with the ongoing effects of the pandemic.

Chair Larson explained the committee's process for making recommendations to Council regarding the fund balance allocation.

Bill Echelberger, Council Budget Analyst, reviewed several options with the committee regarding methods of utilizing the fund balance.

Alternate Member Ann-Frances Lambert asked about funding local food banks with the fund balance allocation.

Mr. Anderson informed the committee that while splitting the funding between local initiatives is possible, it is best to allocate the \$847,000 to a central focus.

Chair Larson stated that the next committee meeting will host an in-depth conversation regarding the fund balance.

Staff Report

Interim Council Chief of Staff Joyce Davis provided the committee with the February staff report.

Ms. Davis informed the committee that Samson Anderson has been assigned to the Land Use Housing and Transportation Standing Committee and that William Echelberger has been assigned to the Governmental Operations Standing Committee. Ms. Davis also stated that an email was sent to members of the committee regarding potential topics for consideration throughout the year, which would be discussed at the next committee meeting.

Chair Kristen Larson requested the committee address annual Council appointee reviews at future meetings of the committee.

A copy of the report provided has been filed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:51 p.m.