



City of Richmond

Minutes

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

Education and Human Services Standing Committee

Thursday, November 18, 2021

5:30 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor

Committee Members and Staff in Attendance

The Honorable Stephanie Lynch – Chair
The Honorable Katherine Jordan – Committee Member

Samson Anderson, Council Budget Analyst
Debra Bowles, Assistant City Clerk
Jamie Isley, Boards and Commissions Administrator
M. Janet Palmer, Deputy City Attorney
Candice Reid, City Clerk
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Absent

The Honorable Ellen Robertson – Vice Chair

Call to Order

Chair Stephanie Lynch called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Announcement and Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Chair's request, Assistant City Clerk Debra Bowles provided information on the appropriate manner in which the Council Chamber is to be evacuated in the event of an emergency along with citizen speaker guidelines.

Discussion Item

Richmond Public Schools Update

Superintendent of Richmond Public Schools (RPS) Jason Kamras stated that RPS is considering options for an extended year calendar for the 22-23 school year. Mr. Kamras also stated that a survey will be forwarded to families at the beginning of December which will provide information to be assessed and forwarded to the RPS School Board. Mr. Kamras stated further that the purpose of an extended year is for students to have additional instructional time that could improve outcomes.

Chair Stephanie Lynch inquired about the repercussions if the extended school year is not approved by the School Board.

Mr. Kamras responded by stating that summer school, and the before or after school programs, would need to grow and offer additional instruction. Mr. Kamras also stated that the programs are limited and are not built into the calendar. Mr. Kamras further noted that each option for the extended year offers a minimum break of six weeks during the summer.

Member Katherine Jordan asked if the beginning date of the extended school year option was adjusted for an earlier start date, which would allow for more instructional time prior to testing as opposed to extending the days at the end of the calendar.

Mr. Kamras stated that in all of the proposed options, school would begin in August.

Chair Lynch inquired about RPS staffing and potential risks that City Council needs to be made aware of prior to the Formal Council meeting on December 13th. Ms. Lynch also inquired about the notice for public input on the rezoning of students attending River City Middle School (RCMS).

Superintendent Kamras stated that two of the initial three team members have been hired and interviews are being done for the third team member; however, additional positions could be needed. Mr. Kamras also stated that nine bids have been received for construction of a new George Wythe High School (GWHS) which will be reviewed, and in late January 2022, a decision should be made regarding a design contract which will be contingent on funding. Mr. Kamras reminded the committee that he has shared concerns regarding the proposed size of GWHS. Mr. Kamras further commented on the rezoning at RCMS, stating that the school will be over capacity in the 22-23 school year; therefore, students will be rezoned to attend Thomas C. Boushall or Lucille M. Brown Middle Schools. Mr. Kamras noted that the three middle schools are the feeder schools for GWHS.

Member Jordan noted that a population study had just been completed to know where families are located within the city, and asked if the population has grown more than anticipated in the RCMS area. Ms. Jordan also asked if the Request for Proposal (RFP) will be for prototype designs or unique community designed schools.

Mr. Kamras stated that it is a combination of greater growth than anticipated and natural population movement within the city. Mr. Kamras noted that in the last rezoning, it was the desire to maximize the use of the new schools close to capacity. Mr. Kamras further noted that in the design of the new schools, zoning should be based upon an 80 – 90% capacity, not 90 – 95% capacity, particularly in city areas where there is rapid growth. Superintendent Kamras stated that the RFP requested prototype designs for new constructions.

Public Comment

Ellery Lundy, president and founder of the Broken Men Foundation, explained that the purpose of the foundation is to offer a sixteen week course that prepares young men for their future. Mr. Lundy stated that the foundation is in need of funding assistance. James Fobbs, Community Outreach Coordinator, was also in attendance.

Chair Stephanie Lynch thanked Mr. Lundy for his assistance with helping young men.

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the minutes of the Thursday, October 14, 2021, committee meeting, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

Board Vacancies

Boards and Commissions Administrator Jamie Isley reviewed board applications for consideration by the committee.

Member Katherine Jordan moved to forward the following board appointment applications to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and

unanimously approved:

Board Name	Criteria for Appointment	Applicant Name
Aging and Disabilities Advisory Board (11 members)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representatives of the business community – Live or work in the city 	Jaron Clay 7 th District Resident
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persons with disabilities – City Resident 	Glynis Boyd Hughes 6 th District Resident
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Past or current caregivers of a person with a disability or senior citizen – City Resident (3 vacancies)	Valerie James-Gilbert 3 rd District Resident - Caregiver
	City employee or an attorney or paralegal whose firm or office handles cases for senior citizens or persons with disability has experience addressing Americans with Disabilities Act issues – No residency or work location requirement (4 vacancies)	April Bingham 6 th District Resident

A copy of all material provided has been filed.

Presentation

Review of Non-Departmental Budget

Director of Budget and Strategic Planning Jason May stated that the application process for non-departmental funds went live on Thursday, November 18th, via the Budget and Strategic Planning website and that it will also be on the RVA.gov website on Friday, November 19th. Mr. May also stated that there would be advertisements placed within local newspapers during the week of November 22nd, printed in both English and Spanish. Mr. May further stated that there would be a training workshop for applicants on Friday, December 3rd, and the due date for applications will be during the week before Christmas.

Chair Stephanie Lynch requested information regarding the process to approve funding for a non-departmental entity.

Management Analyst, Principal for Human Services Le'Charn Benton provided the process in which an application is reviewed for consideration. Ms. Benton stated that upon receipt, the application is placed with the review committee that evaluates the entity based upon a criteria sheet in which each section of the application is graded. Ms. Benton also stated that budgets, past performance and goals are reviewed to determine if the entity is in line with the city's goals. Ms. Benton further stated that entities that have a threshold of 75 or better are then processed and moved forward to the Department of Budget and Strategic Planning. Ms. Benton further stated that those entities that did not receive a 75 or better are notified as to why they were not chosen.

Mr. May stated that once the application is received by the Department of Budget and Strategic Planning, the application competes with applications from other city organizations that have made requests for city funding.

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Human Services Reginald Gordon stated that the entities chosen to receive funding are entities that are believed to align with the priority areas that have been articulated by the Mayor. Mr. Gordon also stated that each entity that is awarded funding is issued a contract with the city. Mr. Gordon further stated that consistent site visits take place and each entity must provide quarterly reports, which are reviewed by Ms. Benton prior to payments

being made.

Ms. Benton informed committee members that a virtual workshop will be provided on Monday, December 6th, to assist applicants with the application process. Ms. Benton confirmed that she is the best contact to assist new applicants through the process.

Paper(s) for Consideration

There were no papers for consideration.

Staff Report

There was no staff report.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.