



City of Richmond

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

Meeting Minutes Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee

Thursday, February 15, 2024

1:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor – City Hall

Committee Members and Other Council Members in Attendance

The Honorable Cynthia Newbille – Chair
The Honorable Ellen Robertson – Vice Chair
The Honorable Katherine Jordan – Member

Staff and Others in Attendance

Gabriel Boisvert, Assistant City Attorney
LaTanja Davenport, Council Budget Analyst
Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst
Adam Poser, Deputy Council Chief of Staff
Candice Reid, City Clerk
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Call to Order

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

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement and Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Chair's request, Deputy City Clerk RJ Warren 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.

Public Comment Period

There were no public comment speakers.

Approval of Minutes

There were no corrections or amendments to the meeting minutes of the Thursday, January 18, 2024 committee meeting, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2024.040](#) January 18, 2024 - Finance & Economic Development Meeting Minutes

Presentation(s)

Economic Development/Economic Development Authority (EDA) Update

Leonard Sledge, Director of Economic Development, provided the committee with an update regarding performance grants. Mr. Sledge addressed how performance grants are used to attract new businesses to the city, while also helping to provide assistance to local businesses. Mr. Sledge also provided information regarding performance grant requirements and the current statuses of active agreements.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

[CD.2024.052](#) Performance Grant Agreement Update

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson inquired about the amount of revenue the city would receive as a result of its investment through performance grants. Vice Chair Robertson stated that the city should use increased revenue to address and increase affordable housing options in the city. Vice Chair Robertson also inquired about which performance grants would be concluding in the year 2024, and she requested that the information be provided by the March 21, 2024, Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting.

Mr. Sledge stated that the presentation addressed performance grants, and that the committee should inquire with the Finance Department about any increase to revenue projections. Mr. Sledge also stated he would provide the committee with information regarding performance grants projected to close in 2024, 2025, and 2026.

Member Katherine Jordan inquired about the amount of local small businesses that receive assistance. Member Jordan stated that she was informed by local businesses that applying for business, professions and occupational tax (BPOL) relief was too complicated. Member Jordan requested the committee be provided information on the number of local small businesses that received BPOL relief.

Mr. Sledge informed the committee about action the city would take to assist local small businesses.

Paper(s) for Consideration

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to continue the following ordinance to the March 21, 2024 Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting:

1. [ORD. 2024-011](#) To amend Ord. No. 2023-071, adopted May 8, 2023, which adopted the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 General Fund Budget and made appropriations pursuant thereto, by increasing anticipated revenues from (i) certain funds due to the City from the Greater Richmond Convention Center Authority, in accordance with an Interlocal Agreement dated February 1, 2000, by \$3,140,571.00 and (ii) additional interest generated from the use of City funds by \$509,429.00

and appropriating the sum of \$3,650,000.00 to the Department of Economic Development for the purpose of providing funding for the acquisition of the parcel of real property located at 10 Belt Boulevard in the city of Richmond for community services related to homelessness and housing alternatives. (8th District)

Patrons: Mayor Stoney

The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinance was considered:

2. [ORD. 2024-033](#) To amend City Code § 8-555, concerning fees for the temporary use of Main Street Station, for the purpose of revising the schedule of fees for the temporary use of Main Street Station.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney

Adam Hohl, Senior Policy Advisory for the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Operations, provided an introduction for ORD. 2024-033. Dironna Moore Clarke, Department of Public Works Deputy Director of Equitable Transit and Mobility, and Crystal Lowery, Department of Public Works Program and Operations Manager, provided additional information regarding the ordinance's impact on Main Street Station.

Member Katherine Jordan inquired about policies related to the usage of Main Street Station by city government entities. Member Jordan also inquired about the possibility of relocating all the city's office and space rental operations under the review of one city department.

Dironna Moore Clarke and Crystal Lowery provided rental policies and restrictions related to the use of Main Street Station by city departments.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson inquired and confirmed that Main Street Station was achieving its goals for event rental occupancy. Vice Chair Robertson also inquired about the amount of time Main Street Station was vacant.

Ms. Lowery informed the committee that only one Saturday in 2024 was vacant, and that all remaining Saturdays were booked for an event. Ms. Lowery stated the city was working to increase the amount of events scheduled during the week.

There were no further comments or discussions and Member Katherine Jordan moved to forward ORD. 2024-033 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinance was considered:

3. [ORD. 2024-038](#) To amend Ord. No. 2023-071, adopted May 8, 2023, which adopted the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 General Fund Budget and made appropriations pursuant thereto, to (i) create a new line item in the Non-Departmental agency called “ElderHomes Corporation t/a project: HOMES,” (ii) transfer \$500,000.00 from the Non-Departmental line-item Reserve for Alternative Housing, (iii) appropriate such \$500,000.00 to the new line item in the Non-Departmental agency for the purpose of providing funding for alternative housing, (iv) increase anticipated revenues from certain funds due to the City from the Greater Richmond Convention Center Authority, in accordance with an Interlocal Agreement dated February 1, 2000, by \$3,140,571.00, and (v) appropriate a total of \$3,140,571.00 of such anticipated revenues to the Department of Economic Development for the purpose of funding certain professional and consulting services for developments in the city of Richmond and for the reimbursement of certain expenditures of the Economic Development Authority.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney

Sabrina Joy-Hogg, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) for Finance and Administration, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance. DCAO Joy-Hogg stated that the budget transfer was necessary because a vender had not been identified when the fiscal year 2024 budget was adopted. DCAO Joy-Hogg informed the committee that a vender was now identified, and that the ordinance was required to adhere to City Code.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson stated her concerns about the legislative action required to use the funds previously approved, and she suggested working with city administration to address the process.

There were no further comments or discussions and Member Katherine Jordan moved to forward ORD. 2024-038 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinance was considered:

4. [ORD. 2024-039](#) To amend the assigned range incorporated into section I of the Pay Plan for the classification title of Council Liaison for the purpose of changing the pay range for such classification.

Patrons: City Council

Chair Cynthia Newbille provided an introduction for the proposed ordinance.

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward ORD. 2024-039 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinance was considered:

5. [ORD. 2024-040](#) To amend and reordain City Code § 27-282, concerning the special parking districts program and permitted expenditures from the Special Parking Districts Fund, for the purpose of authorizing the Chief Administrative Officer to execute grant agreements to disperse the funds to be used by neighborhood associations and civic associations within their boundaries for the maintenance of clean and safe neighborhood environments.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney

Lynne Lancaster, Department of Public Works Deputy Director, provided an introduction about the proposed ordinance.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson inquired about the funding provided to the entities responsible for the special parking districts.

Ms. Lancaster stated that the civic associations responsible for the special parking districts could use received city funds to participate in the city's Clean Sweep Program. Ms. Lancaster informed the committee that three civic associations no longer wanted to utilize the Clean Sweep Program, and that the legislation allows the associations to use the former program funds for beautification efforts it deems best.

There were no further comments or discussions and Member Katherine Jordan moved to forward ORD. 2024-040 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinance was considered:

6. [ORD. 2024-041](#) To amend City Code §§ 26-430, concerning penalties for unpaid property taxes, and 26-431, concerning interest on unpaid property taxes, for the purpose of reducing the interest and percentage of the penalty applied to certain unpaid personal property taxes.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney, Ms. Robertson, President Nye, Vice President Lambert, Ms. Lynch and Ms. Jordan

Sheila White, Director of Finance, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance. Ms. White stated that the ordinance would lower the delinquent personal property tax penalty from ten percent to two percent, but that it would default to 10 percent once the new fiscal year begins on July 1.

Chair Cynthia Newbille stated her appreciation for city administration and its efforts to respond to residents regarding tax issues.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson inquired if the ten percent interest rate was reasonable.

Member Katherine Jordan inquired how the interest rate compared to surrounding counties.

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer Sabrina Joy-Hogg stated that it was similar to other localities, and that without the eventual ten percent interest penalty, it may discourage some residents from paying personal property taxes in a timely fashion.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson requested to be added as a co-patron of ORD. 2024-041.

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward ORD. 2024-041 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following resolution was considered:

7. [RES. 2024-R005](#) To set the rate of personal property tax relief for qualifying vehicles for the 2024 tax year pursuant to City Code §§ 26-495-26-497.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney

Sheila White, Director of Finance, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed resolution. Ms. White discussed how the value of personal property qualifies for certain amounts of tax relief.

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward RES. 2024-R005 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Presentations

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Quarterly Report

Sabrina Joy-Hogg, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) for Finance and Administration, provided the committee with an update regarding the city's receipt and allocation of ARPA funding.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

[CD.2024.046](#) ARPA Update Presentation

Member Katherine Jordan confirmed that the city was taking action necessary to ensure ARPA funds are allocated by the required deadline, and she noted that she would have additional meetings with city administration regarding the presentation.

Chair Cynthia Newbille stated that the city needed to collaborate with its philanthropic partners to address funding once all ARPA funds are exhausted.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson stated that ARPA funding had made a significant impact on the construction of affordable housing units in the city. Vice Chair Robertson also stated that she believed the city and developers could meet the need for more construction if the funding was available.

Board Vacancies

There were no board vacancies.

Discussion Item(s)

Review of Assigned Boards & Commissions

Council Management Analyst Pamela Nichols discussed with the committee information regarding assigned boards and commissions, and she provided data that addressed boards and commissions meeting history, minutes, operating costs, and annual reports.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Member Katherine Jordan requested information regarding when and if certain boards and commissions are required to present before Council or standing committees.

Staff Report

LaTanja Davenport, Council Budget Analyst, provided the committee with a review of the staff report.

[CD.2024.053](#) February Finance Staff Report

[CD.2024.056](#) February 15, 2024 City Administration Legislative Summary

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:21 p.m.