



City of Richmond

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

Draft Meeting Minutes Governmental Operations Standing Committee

Wednesday, May 27, 2026

1:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Committee and Other Council Members in Attendance

The Honorable Katherine Jordan - Chair

The Honorable Kenya Gibson - Member

Absent

The Honorable Sarah Abubaker - Vice Chair

Staff in Attendance

Kiley Kesecker, Deputy City Clerk

Susan McKenney, Senior Assistant City Attorney

Kimberly Morris, Assistant City Clerk

William Perkins, Council Senior Legislative Services Manager

Candice Reid, City Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Katherine Jordan called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement and Public Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Chair's request, Assistant City Clerk Kimberly Morris provided information on the appropriate way to evacuate the Council Chamber in an emergency along with public speaker guidelines.

Public Comment Period

There were no public comment speakers.

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes for the October 22, 2025, November 12, 2025, and February 25, 2026, meetings, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2026.151](#) October 22, 2025 Governmental Operations Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [20251022 GovOps Minutes \(Draft\)](#)

[CD.2026.152](#) November 12, 2025 Governmental Operations Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [20251112 GovOps Minutes \(Draft\)](#)

[CD.2026.150](#) February 25, 2026 Governmental Operations Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [20260225 GovOps Minutes \(Draft\)](#)

Presentation(s)

Plastic Bag Tax and RVAgreen 2050 Goals

Tara Worden, Sustainability Manager, Office of Sustainability, provided the committee with a presentation regarding the disposable plastic bag tax, the third quarter revenue findings, and RVAgreen 2050. The presentation highlighted early results from the city's new plastic bag tax, which had generated over \$75,000 for environmental initiatives despite reporting delays. Ms. Warden also reported that the city is making progress on the RVAgreen 2050 climate plan, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, urban forestry, and environmental education efforts, while continuing to seek external grant funding for sustainability projects.

[CD.2026.145](#) Plastic Bag Tax and RVAgreen 2050 Goals

Attachments: [OOS GovOps Presentation May2026](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Laura Thomas, Director of the Office of Sustainability, reported ongoing work to convert community centers into resilience hubs, which would provide services and shelter during emergencies including infrastructure upgrades, solar power, battery backup systems, and emergency support programming for residents.

The committee discussed linking sustainability efforts with affordability and public health. The discussion also highlighted plans to reduce household energy costs, prepare community facilities for climate related emergencies, carefully manage new plastic bag tax revenues, and improve transparency while continuing to expand Richmond's broader climate and sustainability initiatives.

Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinance was considered:

1. [ORD. 2026-076](#) To amend City Code §§14-335, concerning the City's Erosion and Stormwater Management Program, 28-780, concerning the City's Pre-treatment Program, and 28-966, concerning penalties for illicit discharge and connection violations.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2026-076](#)

Lee Crowell, Deputy Director, Department of Public Utilities, provided an introduction regarding the proposed ordinance. He stated that the department was seeking authority to issue administrative civil penalties directly, giving DPU a more practical enforcement mechanism for routine code violations while reducing the need for costly and time consuming court actions.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

Committee members and administration discussed how the proposal would give DPU a practical administrative enforcement tool for relatively minor environmental violations that currently go largely unenforced because court based civil and criminal procedures are too burdensome.

There were no further comments or discussions, and Chair Katherine Jordan moved to forward ORD. 2026-076 to Council with a recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Gibson, Jordan. Noes 0.

The following ordinance was considered:

2. [ORD. 2026-089](#) To amend City Code § 24-34, concerning duty to remove snow from paved sidewalks, to modify responsibilities, penalties, and definitions.

Patrons: Vice President Jordan and Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2026-089](#)

Chair Katherine Jordan provided an introduction regarding the proposed ordinance, which would clarify sidewalk snow and ice removal requirements. She noted that it would also create a civil enforcement mechanism and place responsibility for sidewalk maintenance at larger multifamily properties on owners rather than tenants, with the goal of improving safety and accessibility during winter storms.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

The committee and city administration staff discussed support for moving from criminal penalties to a more flexible civil enforcement system for sidewalk snow and ice removal. They focused on ensuring fairness during extreme weather events, maintaining exemptions for vulnerable residents, and promoting compliance through education and complaint-based enforcement rather than aggressive penalties.

Member Kenya Gibson requested information on how civil penalty revenues would be used within the city's budget. She also raised concerns about enforcing sidewalk clearing requirements during severe ice storms, noting that the storm conditions in January were difficult for both residents and the city to address, and she asked whether the ordinance provides flexibility when weather conditions make snow and ice removal impractical.

Bobby Vincent, Director of the Department of Public Works, emphasized that property owners were in the best position to maintain the public right-of-way adjacent to their properties during snow, ice, and freezing weather events. Mr. Vincent encouraged residents to take proactive measures, such as applying salt or sand before storms, noting that these actions make snow and ice removal more effective. He also indicated that he believed the civil penalty revenue funds would be deposited into the city's general fund.

There were no further comments or discussions, and Member Kenya Gibson moved to forward ORD. 2026-089 to Council with a recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Gibson, Jordan. Noes 0.

The following ordinance was considered:

3. [ORD. 2026-091](#) To amend City Code §§ 2-1202.7, concerning duties and reporting of the Public Utilities and Services Commission, and 2-1202.8, concerning the conduct of affairs of the Commission.

Patrons: Vice President Jordan

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2026-091](#)

Chair Katherine Jordan stated that the proposed ordinance would improve the Public Utilities and Services Commission's efficiency by removing the requirement for five subcommittees and redefining the quorum requirement based on appointed members rather than authorized positions excluding vacancies. She also stated that the changes were intended to address attendance challenges and ensure the commission could effectively conduct business.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

There were no further comments or discussions, and Member Kenya Gibson moved to forward ORD. 2026-091 to Council with a recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Gibson, Jordan. Noes 0.

The following ordinance was considered:

4. [ORD. 2026-116](#) To amend ch. 2, art. V of the City Code by adding therein a new div. 23, consisting of §§ 2-1202.15-2-1202.18, for the purpose of establishing the Sister Cities Commission, and to repeal Res. No. 91-R180-207, adopted Jul. 22, 1991, and all amendatory resolutions thereto.

Patrons: Ms. Jones and Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2026-116](#)

Will Perkins, Senior Council Legislative Services Manager, stated that the ordinance would formally establish the Sister Cities Commission in the City Code, codifying its role in fostering international partnerships. The primary change would authorize the Mayor to appoint two of the Commission's thirteen members, with the remaining appointments made by City Council. He also stated that existing members would be retained under the new structure, while current vacancies would remain available for future appointments.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

Councilmember Kenya Gibson expressed support for the ordinance, stating that it would enhance transparency and public awareness of the Sister Cities Commission's work. She recommended providing greater visibility into the program's objectives, outcomes, and costs and also to consider formal procedures for governance and continuity when multiple city leaders participate in international travel.

Councilmember Katherine Jordan asked Will Perkins, Council Senior Legislative Services Manager, to provide information on the Sister Cities Commission's budget and procedures.

There were no further comments or discussions, and Member Kenya Gibson moved to forward ORD. 2026-116 to Council with a recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Gibson, Jordan. Noes 0.

Board Vacancies

Kiley Kesecker, Deputy City Clerk, reviewed board vacancies and applications for the committee's consideration.

[CD.2026.144](#) Governmental Operations Standing Committee Boards & Commissions Vacancy Report May 27, 2026

Attachments: [20260527 Gov Ops Board Report](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Chair Katherine Jordan made a motion to continue consideration of appointment applications for vacancies on the Sister Cities Commission and an appointment application for Rosario Miller on the City Personnel Board to the July 22, 2026, Governmental Operations Standing Committee meeting, and to forward the following applications for appointment and reappointment to Council with a recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Gibson, Jordan. Noes, 0.

Central Virginia Waste Management Authority:
Joy Shaw

City Personnel Board:
Betty Burrell (reappointment)
Linda Jackson-Shaw (reappointment)
Glenda Cooper

Clean City Commission:
Teresa Ashe

Public Utilities and Services Commission:
Ryan Duckett
Andrew Krakie

Discussion Item(s)

Governmental Operations Scheduling

The committee postponed discussion of the scheduling of further meetings to the June Governmental Operations Standing Committee meeting.

Staff Report

Council staff provided the committee with the May Governmental Operations Standing Committee staff report.

[CD.2026.154](#) Government Operations Standing Committee May 27, 2026 Staff Prep Memo

Attachments: [Gov Ops Prep - May 2026](#)

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:58 p.m.