



City of Richmond

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

Draft Meeting Minutes Education and Human Services Standing Committee

Thursday, April 9, 2026

2:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Committee and Other Council Members In Attendance

The Honorable Stephanie Lynch - Chair (late arrival via Microsoft Teams)
The Honorable Nicole Jones - Vice Chair
The Honorable Andrew Breton - Member

Staff in Attendance

Whitney Brown, Council Policy Analyst
Kiley Kesecker, Deputy City Clerk
Kimberly Morris, Assistant City Clerk
Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst
Janet Palmer, Deputy City Attorney
Will Perkins, Senior Council Legislative Services Manager
Candice Reid, City Clerk

Call to Order

Vice Chair Nicole Jones called the meeting to order at 2:02 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

Dr. Cindy Robinson, Principal of Richmond Virtual Academy (RVA), urged Richmond City Council to fully fund the school board's budget request.

Dr. Jacqueline Johnson Wilson, a parent of a student at RVA, urged full funding for Richmond Public Schools to support the academy.

Tomorrow Lofton-Pickens, an Instructional Compliance Coordinator at RVA, emphasized that RVA represented less than 1% of the overall RPS budget, and the academy should be viewed as an asset rather than a liability. She asked for an independent audit of RPS expenditures to ensure that funds are used appropriately.

Dr. Candace Benn, a school counselor at RVA, spoke about the importance of RVA as a safe and supportive learning environment, especially for students with anxiety or nontraditional learning needs. She urged full funding for RPS, including RVA, to continue supporting students' well-being and success.

Sandra Portee, Virtual Learning and Homebound Coordinator for RPS, urged approval of the full RPS budget to sustain Richmond Virtual Academy.

Member Stephanie Lynch joined the meeting at 2:09 p.m.

Electronic Participation

Pursuant to Rule III(D)(4)(b) of Council's Rules of Procedure, Committee Chair Stephanie Lynch has made a request to participate in this meeting via Microsoft Teams due to a family obligation requiring travel along the I-95 corridor. The committee members present were required to adopt a motion to approve Chair Lynch's participation in the meeting by electronic communication means if it appeared to the committee that her request complied with Rule III(D) of Council's Rules of Procedure. A motion was solicited from those members physically assembled to approve Chair Stephanie Lynch's participation in the meeting by electronic communication means.

Member Andrew Breton moved to allow Chair Stephanie Lynch to participate in the meeting by electronic communication means. The motion was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Breton, Jones. Noes None.

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of March 12, 2026, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2026.100](#) March 12, 2026 - Education & Human Services Standing Committee Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [20260312 Meeting Minutes](#)

Board Vacancies

Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst, reviewed board applications for consideration by the committee.

[CD.2026.103](#) Education and Human Services Standing Committee Boards & Commissions Vacancy Report Thursday, April 9, 2026

Attachments: [20260409 EHS Board Vacancy Report](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Member Andrew Breton moved to forward the following appointment and reappointment applications to Council with a recommendation to approve, and to continue consideration of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Inc., vacancy to the committee's July 9, 2026 meeting, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 3, Breton, Jones, Lynch. Noes None.

Aging and Disabilities Advisory Board:
Brienne Frankart

Richmond Behavioral Health Authority:
Anika Richburg (reappointment)
Rosario Miller
Katie Smithwick

Richmond Public Library Board:
Brent Braves (reappointment)

Social Services Advisory Board:
Sharon Walton Darby

Presentation(s)

Human Rights Commission Overview

[CD.2026.098](#) Human Rights Commission Overview

Attachments: [April 2026 Human Rights Commission EHS Presentation](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Emily Wolfeich, Vice Chair of the Human Rights Commission (HRC), provided an overview of the mission, activities, and ongoing initiatives of the commission. She stated that the commission's core purpose was to safeguard the rights of Richmond residents by addressing unlawful discrimination across 13 protected categories, including race, gender, disability, and sexual orientation.

Samantha Galina, HRC Chair, provided an update of the Commission's Intake and Investigation Committee and its efforts to develop an enforcement ordinance that would allow the Commission to enforce anti-discrimination laws under Virginia law. Ms. Galina stated since 2025, the committee has researched enforcement models by consulting with human rights commissions and attorneys in other Virginia localities, including Charlottesville, Alexandria, and Fairfax, as well as the Virginia Attorney General's Office. She also stated the Commission has also reviewed the Code of Virginia and drafted proposed intake and investigation procedures.

Committee members asked about the ordinance's scope and applicability. Commission representatives clarified that the Virginia Human Rights Act protects all residents of Virginia, including non-citizens and undocumented residents. They discussed how enforcement powers could help address discrimination related to immigration enforcement, including employment termination and housing discrimination tied to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) activity. They cited Charlottesville as a locality where similar protections helped residents remain housed, and they confirmed that all commission member positions were filled. Committee members requested a list of commissioners and expressed appreciation for the Commission's intentional and community-focused approach.

Richmond and Henrico Health District Services Overview

[CD.2026.099](#) Richmond and Henrico Health District Services Overview

Attachments: [Richmond City April 2026](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Elaine Perry, Director of the Richmond Henrico Health District (RHHD), provided an overview of how the health district was established in 2018 through a shared leadership model between the Richmond City and Henrico County Health Districts.

She stated while the two jurisdictions maintain separate budgets, leadership and many public health initiatives were coordinated regionally to more effectively address shared health challenges.

She also stated the top identified priorities were mental health, including substance use, community safety and violence prevention, and chronic disease, and that the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), currently in draft form, outlines multi-year goals and strategies.

Deanna Krautner, RHHD Chief Operating Officer, reviewed the FY2026 budget. She stated that approximately 85% of the budget was allocated to personnel, and that local funds support a range of programs, including community resource centers, adolescent health, communicable disease services, violence prevention, housing advocacy, and tobacco cessation. Resource centers were highlighted as a key investment, leveraging multiple funding sources and providing direct community engagement. She also noted the following funding sources:

- Local government contributions (including required match and additional funding)
- State general funds
- Federal grants
- Revenue from clinical, environmental health, and vital records services

Committee members discussed the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) metrics and timeline, program effectiveness, impacts of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women's' Infants, and Children (WIC) program, and the Southwood Resource Center.

Discussion Item(s)

Update from the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) for Human Services

Amy Popovich, DCAO for Human Services, provided the committee with the following updates:

- Aneesah Smith, Human Services Manager, had been appointed by the Governor to the state LGBTQ Advisory Board
- Ms. Smith would also launch the city's first LGBTQ community survey through the Office of Equity and Inclusion, set to go out on April 20, 2026
- A new coordination effort between the YMCA, Richmond Public Schools, and the city's Parks and Recreation program to align elementary after school program registration on May 1, 2026.
- Updates from the Office of Aging and Disability Services, including a "Big Spring Fling" event on April 23, 2026 at TB Smith Community Center

Paper(s) for Consideration

There were no papers for consideration.

Staff Report

[CD.2026.110](#) Education & Human Services Standing Committee April 9, 2026 Staff Report

Attachments: [April 2026 EHS Committee Mtg Prep](#)

Council staff provided the committee with the April Education and Human Services staff report.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:59 p.m.