



City of Richmond

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

DRAFT Meeting Minutes Organizational Development Standing Committee

Monday, November 3, 2025

4:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Members Present

The Honorable Cynthia Newbille, Chair
The Honorable Katherine Jordan, Vice Chair
The Honorable Andrew Breton, Member
The Honorable Kenya Gibson, Member
The Honorable Nicole Jones, Member
The Honorable Ellen Robertson, Member (late arrival)
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch, Member
The Honorable Sarah Abubaker, Member

Absent

The Honorable Reva Trammell, Member

Others in Attendance

Laura Drewry, City Attorney
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Kiley Kesecker, Deputy City Clerk
RJ Warren, Council Chief of Staff

Call to Order

Chair Cynthia Newbille called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. and presided.

Approval of Minutes

There were no corrections or amendments to the minutes of the Monday, October 6, 2025 Organizational Development Standing Committee meeting at 4:00 p.m., and the minutes were approved as presented.

[CD.2025.340](#) October 6, 2025 - Organizational Development Standing Committee Meeting Minutes

Member Ellen Robertson arrived and was seated.

Reports from City Administration, Council Staff, and Other Parties

1. Richmond Region Tourism Annual Update ~ President and CEO Katherine O'Donnell

[CD.2025.342](#) Richmond Region Tourism Annual Update

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Richmond Region Tourism (RRT) President and CEO Katherine O'Donnell presented an annual update on the work of RRT in the region over the past year, and discussed opportunities for growth. The presentation also highlighted visitor spending in 2024, sports tourism as a driver of group business, conventions, hotel booking data, regional marketing campaigns, blog and tourism publication features, and hosted influencer visits.

RRT Vice President of Community Relations Danielle Fitz-Hugh presented information on RRT Foundation programs including: the I Am Tourism VCU student program, workforce development programs, RVA Sports Awards, BLK RVA, and OutRVA.

Vice Chair Jordan asked if there were any visitor spending numbers available for 2025.

CEO O'Donnell stated that they would not have that data for some time, but noted that both July and September were record breaking months for hotel occupancy, so they are anticipating to see very good numbers when they are available.

Member Stephanie Lynch asked how RRT is funded and what percentage Richmond pays compared to other regional partners.

CEO O'Donnell stated that RRT is funded by the hotel occupancy tax, with Richmond, Hanover, Henrico, and Chesterfield each contributing the equivalent of 2% of hotel occupancy tax revenue from the previous fiscal year. She added that in dollars, Henrico contributes the largest sum due to having the highest number of hotel rooms out of the four localities.

Discussion Item(s)

1. 2026 General Assembly Session Legislative Agenda Update ~ Devon Cabot, Vice President, Two Capitols Consulting

[CD.2025.345](#) Virginia General Assembly 2026 Session Legislative Agenda

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Devon Cabot, Two Capitols Consulting, provided an overview of the city's updated draft legislative priorities for the 2026 General Assembly session. The legislative agenda highlighted five legislative and budgetary priorities:

- Low-Income Housing Tax Credit
- Long-Term Owner Occupancy Program
- Sales Tax for School Construction
- Water Treatment Plant
- Combined Sewer Overflow

Member Kenya Gibson stated that she would like to see more visibility in the process and that the language in the draft agenda is vague, not inclusive enough, and there was not enough public involvement. She also stated that she would like to see inclusionary zoning as a top legislative priority and to revisit the legislative agenda process to include more public participation.

Member Ellen Robertson stated that having too many items on the agenda could dilute the meaning of the requests, emphasizing the need to recognize the capacity for the number of bills being put forward.

Member Sarah Abubaker asked if it is more beneficial to use general or specific language.

Ms. Cabot stated that with many new legislators taking office, it is best to use vague policy statements.

Reports from City Administration, Council Staff, and Other Parties

2. Federal Government Shutdown Impact Update ~ Chief Administrative Officer Odie Donald, II

[CD.2025.350](#) Federal Government Shutdown Impact Update

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Chief Administrative Officer Odie Donald II presented information on the increasing local impact of the federal government shutdown. Items highlighted included:

- At risk federally supported programs
- Initial mitigation activities
- Navigation framework
- Projected cuts to Housing and Community Development
- Projected cuts to Department of Social Services
- Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program (SNAP) resources and programming
- Virginia Emergency Nutrition Assistance (VENA)
- Food distributions strategies and partnerships
- Focused outreach efforts targeting priority populations

At the request of Member Kenya Gibson and Member Stephanie Lynch, CAO Donald expanded on the city's outreach efforts to distribute information to individual residents regarding what resources and assistance programs are available and how to access them.

Member Nicole Jones asked how the city is combating misinformation surrounding the shutdown while expanding information distribution efforts.

CAO Donald explained the importance of more targeted communications strategies with marginalized populations.

Paper(s) for Consideration

There were no papers for consideration.

Reports of Standing Committees

City Council standing committee updates were provided by submitted documentation prepared by Council staff.

[CD.2025.369](#) November 3, 2025 - Staff Report

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Consideration of Appointments to Boards, Commissions and Similar Entities

There were no appointments for consideration.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.