



City of Richmond

Special Meeting Minutes

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

Monday, April 5, 2021

5:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall
Virtual Meeting

Councilmembers Present

The Honorable Cynthia Newbille, President
The Honorable Ellen Robertson, Vice President
The Honorable Andreas Addison (late arrival)
The Honorable Michael Jones
The Honorable Katherine Jordan
The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert (late arrival)
The Honorable Kristen Larson
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch (late arrival)
The Honorable Reva Trammell

Council President Cynthia Newbille called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m., and presided.

ELECTRONIC MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

City Clerk Candice Reid, in accordance with Ordinance No. 2020-093, adopted April 9, 2020, as most recently amended by Ordinance No. 2020-232, adopted December 14, 2020, announced the meeting would be held through electronic communication means. City Clerk Reid stated notice of the meeting was provided to the public through a public information advisory issued on April 1, 2021, and through Legistar on the city website in accordance with usual practice. Members of the public were encouraged to provide comments in writing prior to the meeting and all comments received prior to 10:00 a.m., on Monday, April 5, 2021, were provided to Council members. Ms. Reid indicated that members of the public who signed up to speak and provide comment would be called to speak at the appropriate time.

CITIZEN SPEAKER GUIDELINES

Upon the President's request, Deputy City Clerk RJ Warren provided citizen speaker guidelines.

Councilor Andreas Addison joined the meeting at 5:04 p.m.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert joined the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

MOTION TO EXPEDITE CONSIDERATION

Vice President Ellen Robertson moved to expedite consideration of the following resolution, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 7, Addison, Jordan, Lambert, Trammell, Jones, Robertson, Newbille. Noes 1, Larson. Lynch had not yet arrived.

RES. 2021-R021

To declare vigorous support for and urge the General Assembly promptly to approve amendments recommended by the Governor to legislation legalizing the simple possession of up to one ounce of

marijuana that are intended to promote equity for Richmond residents and other Virginia citizens disproportionately affected by the enforcement of laws prohibiting marijuana possession.

Patrons: Mr. Jones and Ms. Lambert

Councilor Michael Jones provided an introduction of RES. 2021-R021 and addressed additional background information regarding the proposed resolution.

Public Hearing

Brydges Hamilton spoke in support of RES. 2021-R021, and stated he was excited about the proposed legislation and its potential impact.

Vice President Ellen Robertson requested to be added as a co-patron of RES. 2021-R021. Vice President Robertson stated her concerns regarding what she believed was an unjust racial disparity of individuals arrested for marijuana possession. Vice President Robertson also stated she looked forward to working with the General Assembly of Virginia on additional steps to be taken to address inequity within the justice system.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch joined the meeting at 5:13 p.m.

Councilor Kristen Larson stated her concerns with the decision to hold a special meeting for the purpose of expedited consideration of legislation. Councilor Larson informed members that she did not believe expedited consideration provided enough opportunity for the public to engage in the legislative process.

Councilwoman Reva Trammell stated her concerns regarding the long-term impact a marijuana possession arrest can have on an individual's future prospects. Councilwoman Trammell requested to be added as a co-patron of RES. 2021-R021.

Councilor Andreas Addison stated he did not believe arrests of marijuana possession were equally enforced amongst certain races. Councilor Addison also stated his support for promoting fairness through legislative action on marijuana possession.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert inquired from members if expedited consideration was necessary due to the timing of the General Assembly's pending action on marijuana possession legalization legislation. Councilor Lambert noted that she was a co-patron of RES. 2021-R021, and she informed members she was in support of the resolution.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch referenced RES. 2020-R030, adopted May 11, 2020, regarding the request that city administration exclude marijuana use from substance detection testing of city employees, and stated she did not believe the request within the resolution was executed. Councilor Lynch requested the adopted resolution be honored and the necessary changes to the city's substance detection testing policy be implemented.

It was the consensus of Council to allow an individual to provide public comment, who did not register for public comment with the Office of the City Clerk prior to the meeting.

Marty Jewel spoke in favor of RES. 2021-R021, and encouraged the use of potential revenue from marijuana taxation to help rejuvenate the community. Mr. Jewel stated the potential legislation pending with the General Assembly of Virginia regarding marijuana would be a monumental achievement if the legislation was adopted.

Acting Chief Administrative Officer Lincoln Saunders informed Council that city administration was working on the implementation of RES. 2020-R030.

President Cynthia Newbille stated she believed the legalization of marijuana possession would swiftly address the inequity of marijuana arrests, and she also stated it would improve the quality of life of individuals living in the city.

There were no comments or discussions and **RES. 2021-R021 was adopted:** Ayes 8, Addison, Jordan, Lambert, Lynch, Trammell, Jones, Robertson, Newbille. Noes None. Abstentions 1, Larson.

President Cynthia Newbille stated that Council would look to increase communication amongst members regarding any future request for a special meeting to allow for expedited consideration of legislation.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 5:44 p.m.

CITY CLERK