



City of Richmond

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

Meeting Minutes

Governmental Operations Standing Committee

Wednesday, November 15, 2023

1:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Committee and Other Council Members in Attendance

The Honorable Katherine Jordan - Chair
The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert - Vice Chair
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch - Member (late arrival)

Staff and Others in Attendance

Joyce Davis, Council Policy Analyst
Laura Drewry, City Attorney
Susan McKenney, Senior Assistant City Attorney
Nahdiyah Muhammad, Assistant City Clerk
Candice Reid, City Clerk
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Katherine Jordan called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement and Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Chair's request, Assistant City Clerk Nahdiyah Muhammad 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 Wednesday, October 25, 2023, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2023.341](#) October 25, 2023 - Governmental Operations Standing Committee Minutes

Attachments: [20231025 Gov Ops Mins - DRAFT](#)

Presentation(s)

Sustainable Design Standards

[CD.2023.344](#) November 15, 2023 - Sustainable Design Standards Presentation

Attachments: [20231115 Sustainable Design Standards Presentation - Gov Ops](#)

A copy of the material has been filed.

Laura Thomas, Director of the Office of Sustainability, provided the committee with a presentation regarding sustainable design standards.

Vice Chair Ann-Frances Lambert inquired about incentives for businesses that want to conduct improvements.

Laura Thomas stated that the adoption of Virginia's C-PACE program would give businesses a \$50,000 floor with no ceiling and a zero upfront cost fixed market rate finance program that would assist businesses in conducting several project upgrades. Ms. Thomas also stated that the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP) is a rebate program for storm water quality related projects.

Vice Chair Lambert inquired about the benefits of investing in solar panels.

Ms. Thomas stated that the installation of solar panels is project dependent and that some older facilities might not be able to hold the extra weight of solar panels. Ms. Thomas also stated that if the solar panels are compatible with facilities, it would be a great investment opportunity for certain businesses. Ms. Thomas further stated that an added benefit to the Virginia's C-PACE program is that there would be no upfront cost, and that if the current business owner does not retain ownership of the property, they would not be financially responsible as the cost would remain with the property and not the owner.

Chair Katherine Jordan inquired about the \$600,000 in funding allocated towards the consultant work needed for the sustainable design standards project.

Lynne Lancaster, Deputy Director of Public Works, stated that almost all of the \$600,000 in funding has been exhausted.

Chair Jordan stated concern that the \$600,000 has been exhausted. Chair Jordan inquired about additional funding available for sustainable design work.

Ms. Thomas stated that the Office of Sustainability does not currently have the additional \$100,000 in estimated costs necessary to continue with the implementation of the project.

Chair Jordan inquired about other sources of funding to continue with the implementation of the project.

Ms. Lancaster stated that additional funding will be identified to continue with the project.

Bob Steidel, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) for Operations, stated the \$600,000 came from the Capital Improvement Plan budget, that has now been exhausted. DCAO Steidel stated that a new Capital Improvement Plan budget starting in FY 2025 will be introduced.

Chair Jordan inquired about the duties given to the city's consultant to develop project standards. Chair Jordan also inquired if the consultant was required to provide a document that had community input.

DCAO Steidel stated that the consultant was assigned to develop standards that were similar to the Commonwealth of Virginia's, but that the standards are not ready to be implemented yet.

The committee had further discussion with city administration regarding sustainable design standards.

Chair Jordan inquired about community input given to the consultant.

Noelle Crowley, Project Manager and Environmental Planner, Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc., stated typically there would be community input but for the current project that was not collected. Ms. Crowley also stated that in the initial workshop held with the city, it was requested that they develop guidelines that the city should follow during the planning process.

The committee had further discussion with Ms. Crowley regarding sustainable design standards.

Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinance was considered:

1. [ORD. 2023-331](#) To amend and reordain City Code § 8-544, concerning the Urban Forestry Commission, for the purpose of revising the composition, appointment process, and scope and timeline for preparation and submission of reports to Council.

Patrons: Ms. Jordan, Ms. Lynch and Ms. Lambert

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2023-331](#)

Chair Katherine Jordan provided the committee with an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

Member Stephanie Lynch arrived at 1:33 p.m., and was seated.

Vice Chair Ann-Frances Lambert inquired about having individuals assigned to the Urban Forestry Commission.

Chair Katherine Jordan provided additional information regarding ORD. 2023-331.

Vice Chair Lambert requested to be added as co-patron of ORD. 2023-331.

Member Stephanie Lynch inquired about a timeline for the start of the Urban Forestry Commission.

Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst, stated that the Office of the City Clerk is in the process of receiving applications, with the application deadline set for December 15, 2023. Ms. Nichols also stated that with ORD. 2023-331 to be considered by Council on December, 11, 2023, there would be no time for proper advertisement of the vacancies, and the vacancies will be captured in the next vacancy period.

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Ann-Frances Lambert moved to forward ORD. 2023-331 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and was unanimously approved.

The following resolution was considered:

2. [RES. 2023-R011](#) To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities to consult with the Office of the City Attorney concerning the development of a plan and the preparation of necessary documents to acquire, preferably by gift, the properties known as Evergreen Cemetery [and], East End Cemetery, and Forest View Cemetery and to present such a plan and documents to the Council. (As Amended)

Patrons: Ms. Newbille, Ms. Lambert and Vice President Nye

Attachments: [Res. No. 2023-R011 - Amended 20231010](#)
[20231010 Amendment of Res. No. 2023-R011](#)

Chris Frelke, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities, provided the committee with an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed resolution.

Vice Chair Ann-Frances Lambert inquired about a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the city and surrounding counties that share the cemetery property. Ms. Lambert also inquired about joint work with the Clean City Commission, for volunteers to assist with clean up efforts.

Chris Frelke stated that because the cemeteries are private land, no MOU was necessary. Mr. Frelke also stated that because the land has not come into city ownership, next steps for property maintenance have not been developed, but there are volunteers interested in the clean up process.

Vice Chair Lambert inquired about the cost for a cultural landscape, and if the cost will be considered for the upcoming budget.

Chris Frelke stated that city administration is currently looking into the cost. Mr. Frelke also stated that there could be state funding available to fund a cultural landscape.

The committee had further discussion with city administration regarding RES. 2023-R011.

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Ann-Frances Lambert moved to continue RES. 2023-R011 to the January 24, 2023 Governmental Operations Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and was unanimously approved.

Board Vacancies

None

Discussion Item(s)

City Charter Next Steps

Member Stephanie Lynch provided the committee with a brief overview regarding City Charter next steps.

Megan Fields, Senior Policy Advisor for the Chief Administrative Officer, provided the committee with further information regarding City Charter next steps.

Staff Report

Joyce Davis, Council Policy Analyst, provided the committee with a staff report.

Chair Katherine Jordan stated that the continued work regarding the relevancy of boards and commissions of other standing committees will be overseen by the Governmental Operations Standing Committee.

[CD.2023.352](#) November 15, 2023 - Governmental Operations Staff Report

Attachments: [20231115 Gov Ops Staff Report](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:53 p.m.