



City of Richmond

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

Draft Meeting Minutes Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee

Thursday, April 18, 2024

1:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor – City Hall

Committee Members and Other Council Members in Attendance

The Honorable Cynthia Newbille – Chair
The Honorable Ellen Robertson – Vice Chair
The Honorable Katherine Jordan – Member
The Honorable Kristen Nye – Council President (Late Arrival and Early Departure)
The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert – Council Vice President (Early Departure)

Staff and Others in Attendance

Tori Cotman, Assistant City Attorney
LaTanja Davenport, Council Budget Analyst
Tamiya Lunsford, Council Budget Analyst
Nahdiyah Muhammad, Assistant City Clerk
Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst
Candice Reid, City Clerk
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Cynthia Newbille called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Announcement and Public 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 public speaker guidelines.

Electronic Participation

Pursuant to Rule III(D)(4)(b) of Council's Rules of Procedure, Vice Chair Ellen Robertson made a request to participate in the meeting via Microsoft Teams from home, due to a medical condition that prevented her physical attendance. The committee members present were required to adopt a motion to approve Vice Chair Robertson's participation in the meeting by electronic communication means if it appeared to the body 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 Vice Chair Robertson's participation in the meeting by electronic communication means.

Vice Chair Cynthia Newbille moved to allow Vice Chair Ellen Robertson to participate in the meeting by electronic communication means. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Public Comment Period

There were no public comment speakers.

Approval of Minutes

There were no corrections or amendments to the meeting minutes of the Thursday, March 21, 2024 committee meeting, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2024.093](#) March 21, 2024 - Finance & Economic Development Standing Committee Meeting Minutes

Board Vacancies

Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst, reviewed board vacancies for the committee's consideration.

[CD.2024.109](#) Finance & Economic Development - Board Vacancy Report

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Vice Chair Cynthia Newbille moved to forward the following board reappointment application to Council with a recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved:

Board of Directors of the Economic Development Authority:
Jer'Mykeal McCoy (reappointment)

Member Katherine Jordan moved to forward the following board appointment application to Council with a recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved:

Participatory Budgeting Steering Commission:
James Alexander Boschen
Samuel Davies

Presentation(s)

Diamond District Development Update

Sharon Ebert, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) for Planning and Economic Development, provided the committee with a presentation regarding Diamond District Development project.

[CD.2024.127](#) Diamond District Updates - Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Chair Cynthia Newbille gave thanks to city administration for their responsiveness regarding questions and concerns from Council members.

Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinances were considered:

5. [ORD. 2024-111](#) To authorize the issuance of general obligation public improvement bonds of the City of Richmond in the maximum principal amount of \$170,000,000 to finance the costs of the design, acquisition, construction and equipping of a new baseball stadium to be developed in connection with the redevelopment of the area known as the "Diamond District" and to pay the issuance and financing costs incurred in connection with such bonds (including, but not limited to, certain capitalized interest on such bonds); to authorize the Director of Finance, with the approval of the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City, to sell such bonds for such capital improvement project, to provide for the form, details and payment of such bonds; and to authorize the issuance of notes of the City in anticipation of the issuance of such bonds.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney, Ms. Jordan, President Nye, Ms. Newbille, Ms. Trammell, Mr. Addison, Ms. Lynch and Ms. Robertson

6. [ORD. 2024-112](#) To create the Diamond District Community Development Authority.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney, Ms. Jordan, President Nye, Ms. Newbille, Ms. Trammell, Mr. Addison, Ms. Lynch, Ms. Robertson and Vice President Lambert

7. [ORD. 2024-113](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute the Diamond District Redevelopment Project Purchase and Sale and Development Agreement by and between the City of Richmond, Virginia, Diamond District Partners, LLC, and the Economic Development Authority of the City of Richmond, Virginia, for the purpose of providing for the financing, construction, maintenance, and operation of public improvements and private development within an area generally known as the Diamond District along North Arthur Ashe Boulevard and Hermitage Road.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney, Ms. Jordan, President Nye, Ms. Newbille, Ms. Trammell, Mr. Addison, Ms. Lynch and Ms. Robertson

8. [ORD. 2024-114](#) To approve a plan to finance certain public infrastructure in connection with the redevelopment of the area known as the “Diamond District” through the issuance of revenue bonds by the Economic Development Authority of the City of Richmond, Virginia (the “Authority”); to approve the form of a Cooperation Agreement pursuant to which the City of Richmond, Virginia (the “City”), will undertake, subject to annual appropriation by the Council of the City of sufficient amounts for such purposes, to make available to the Authority such funds as may be necessary to enable the Authority to (a) satisfy its undertakings pursuant to the Purchase and Sale and Development Agreement, the Stadium Development Agreement and the Stadium Lease, each to be entered into in connection with the Diamond District redevelopment project, (b) pay the debt service on the revenue bonds to be issued to finance such public infrastructure and (c) pay certain other costs and fees and fund other obligations required pursuant to the terms of the financing documents pursuant to which such revenue bonds are to be issued; and to authorize the Chief Administrative Officer and other appropriate officers of the City to execute and deliver the Cooperation Agreement and such other documents as may be necessary or appropriate to accomplish the plan of finance with respect to the public infrastructure.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney, Ms. Jordan, President Nye, Ms. Newbille, Ms. Trammell, Mr. Addison, Ms. Lynch and Ms. Robertson

Public Hearing

Jerome Legions spoke in support of the proposed ordinances, and he stated that this project is important because it will provide engagement among city residents.

Charles Skelly, President of the Richmond Building and Construction Trades Council and Business Manager of IBEW Local 666, spoke in support of the proposed ordinances, and he stated that there will be no concerns for the labor force regarding the construction of the development. He also stated there will be required reports to ensure accountability.

Knight Williams, Carpenters Local 205 member, spoke in support of the proposed ordinances, and he stated that the development project will bring more jobs to the Richmond area and provide middle class wages.

Grace Washington, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of J&G Workforce Development and Workforce Development Coordinator for the Diamond District Development Project, spoke in support of the proposed ordinances, and she stated that the development will be a great economic opportunity for the city.

Rashaun Wynn spoke in support of the proposed ordinances, and he stated that the development project can help individuals develop trade skills.

Zule Panetta, Organizer with the Laborers' International Union of North America, Local 804 (Liuna!), spoke in support of the proposed ordinances, and she stated the development will help create and maintain good paying jobs in the city.

Martha Mendoza, Local Union 10 member, stated her support for the proposed ordinances.

John Easter, Senior Vice President of Government and Community Affairs for ChamberRVA, spoke in support of the proposed ordinances, and he stated that the development will be a great opportunity for the city's infrastructure and economy.

Laura McCann, Governing Board member of Richmond for All, spoke in opposition to the proposed ordinances, and she stated that the new bond structure for the development is a financial risk that the city should not be responsible for.

Raymond Nix, Founder and President of Nix Development Company, spoke in support of the proposed ordinances and stated that he is looking forward to working with Pennrose to develop the affordable housing component within the Diamond District development.

Patrick Stewart, Regional Vice President of Pennrose, spoke in support of the proposed ordinances, and he stated that as the affordable housing developer in partnership with Nix Development Company, he is looking forward to developing the project in an inclusive and equitable way.

Member Katherine Jordan stated appreciation to city administration for providing a presentation regarding the proposed ordinances. Ms. Jordan further stated that having more understanding of the financial components of the development was informative to determine the financial risk.

Council Vice President Ann-Frances Lambert stated her gratitude for city administration responding to inquiries Council made regarding the proposed ordinances.

Chair Cynthia Newbille gave thanks to city administration for their responsiveness to questions from Council. Chair Newbille also stated that the city will have full access to the stadium and that the stadium would be treated as a city asset.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson stated that residents have concerns about the city being responsible for issuing the bonds necessary to fund the stadium development.

DCAO Ebert provided information regarding the city issuing bonds for development, and she also noted that the city would own the new stadium and receive lease payments from the Flying Squirrels baseball team to put towards other city costs. DCAO Ebert further stated that she was confident that private development would increase around the proposed stadium development.

Sabrina Joy-Hogg, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) for Finance and Administration, informed the committee that no capital improvement project (CIP) funds would be used for the stadium development, and that no CIP funds would be diverted from future school construction.

Member Katherine Jordan moved to forward ORD. 2024-111, ORD. 2024-112, ORD. 2024-113, and ORD. 2024-114 to Council with a recommendation to approve.

Vice Chair Robertson requested additional information regarding the timeline of the development project and bond issuance.

DCAO Ebert provided information that was previously addressed in her presentation that outlined the timeline of the project and the issuance of bonds.

The motion to forward ORD. 2024-111, ORD. 2024-112, ORD. 2024-113, and ORD. 2024-114 to Council with a recommendation to approve was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinances were considered:

2. [ORD. 2024-108](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Memorandum of Understanding Property Analytics Firm Infrastructure Grant Program between the City of Richmond, the Commonwealth of Virginia, CoStar Realty Information, Inc., the Virginia Economic Development Partnership Authority, and the Economic Development Authority of the City of Richmond for the purpose of providing CoStar Realty Information, Inc., with incentives for the development of infrastructure of existing and planned facilities at its regional headquarters located at 501 South 5th Street and 600 Tredegar Street in the city of Richmond. (6th District)

Patrons: Mayor Stoney

3. [ORD. 2024-109](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Property Tax Grant Performance Agreement between the City of Richmond, CoStar Realty Information, Inc., and the Economic Development Authority of the City of Richmond for the purpose of providing a grant to CoStar Realty Information, Inc., to

expand, equip, improve, and operate its regional headquarters located at 501 South 5th Street and 600 Tredegar Street in the city of Richmond. (6th District)

Patrons: Mayor Stoney

Leonard Sledge, Director of Economic Development, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinances.

Vice President Ann-Frances Lambert left the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

President Kristen Nye left the meeting at 2:34 p.m.

Public Hearing

Nadia O'Dea, Senior Director of Corporate Real Estate and Facilities at CoStar Group, spoke in support of the ordinances and stated appreciation for the city's partnership with CoStar Group as it continues to expand its facilities in the city.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson inquired about the performance grants related to the CoStar Group development.

Director Sledge provided information regarding the performance grants, and he addressed the requirements noted in the memorandum of understanding referenced in the proposed ordinances.

There were no further comments or discussions and Member Katherine Jordan moved to forward ORD. 2024-108 and ORD. 2024-109 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinance was considered:

4. [ORD. 2024-110](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for an on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept grant funds in the amount of \$100,000,000.00 from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and to appropriate the increase to the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Capital Budget by increasing estimated revenues and the amount appropriated to the Department of Public Utilities' Combined Sewer Overflow project in the Utilities category by \$100,000,000.00 for the purpose of funding the Combined Sewer Overflow project.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney

Billy Vaughan, Department of Public Utilities (DPU) Deputy Director, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson requested the required timeline implemented by the state for the city to address its combined sewer overflow (CSO) system.

Deputy Director Vaughan stated that the state had approved the city's initial interim phase of CSO related projects scheduled to be completed by 2027. Deputy Director Vaughan also stated that the city must submit its final proposal to the state by July 1, 2024, that will establish the timeline for completing the entire CSO replacement project by 2035.

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward ORD. 2024-110 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinance was considered:

1. [ORD. 2024-077](#) To amend Ord. No. 2023-071, adopted May 8, 2023, which adopted the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 General Fund Budget and made appropriations pursuant thereto, by increasing revenues from estimated interest income by \$9,000,000.00, to appropriate a portion of such estimated interest income to various City departments and a non-departmental agency, to create certain new line items in the Non-departmental agency, appropriate a portion of such estimated interest income revenue thereto, and transfer certain funds; to amend Ord. No. 2023-073, adopted May 8, 2024, which accepted a program of proposed Capital Improvement Projects for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 and the four fiscal years thereafter, adopted a Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, and determined a means of financing the same, by establishing a new project for the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities in the Capital Investment Opportunities category called the "Parks Improvement Projects" project; and to appropriate \$988,156.00 in transferred funds of such \$9,000,000.00 of increased revenue from estimated interest income to the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities' Parks Improvement Projects project in the Capital Investment Opportunities category for the purpose of funding improvements in City parks and recreation facilities.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney

Meghan Brown, Acting Director of Budget and Strategic Planning, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson inquired about the proposed \$3,000,000 for the Richmond Coliseum demolition, and she asked why general fund money was to be used rather than capital improvement project (CIP) funding. Vice Chair Robertson also inquired if demolition could be delayed and later included in a future City Center development project.

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Lincoln Saunders stated that independent demolition is not an allowable use of CIP funds. CAO Saunders also stated that no City Center development plan has been finalized, so any future CIP funds cannot be allocated to the demolition. CAO Saunders further stated that the city viewed the coliseum as a security risk, and that the city wanted to move forward with demolition.

Sharon Ebert, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) for Planning and Economic Development, provided additional information regarding the city's plan for selecting a developer for the City Center project, and how the redevelopment of the area surrounding the coliseum would occur.

Vice Chair Robertson stated her concerns that the proposed \$3,000,000 in general funds could be used for essential city needs, and that the demolition could take place later with CIP funds once a finalized City Center project is selected.

CAO Saunders stated that without moving forward with demolition, the city will need to allocate \$500,000 in funds to address coliseum security concerns.

Chair Cynthia Newbille stated that Council and city administration could collaborate on providing funding for the concerns raised by Vice Chair Robertson through the upcoming Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 city budget.

Member Katherine Jordan moved to forward ORD. 2024-077 to Council with the recommendation to approve.

Vice Chair Robertson moved to continue consideration of ORD. 2024-077.

Member Katherine Jordan amended her prior motion and moved to forward ORD. 2024-077 to Council with no recommendation, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Discussion Item(s)

There were no discussion items.

Staff Report

Council staff provided the committee with the March Finance and Economic Development staff report.

[CD.2024.126](#) Finance & Economic Development Staff Report

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:24 p.m.