



City of Richmond

Informal Meeting Minutes

900 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219
www.richmondgov.com/cityclerk

Monday, March 9, 2020

4:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Councilmembers Present

The Honorable Cynthia Newbille, President
The Honorable Andreas Addison (late arrival)
The Honorable Kim Gray
The Honorable Michael Jones (late arrival)
The Honorable Kristen Larson (late arrival)
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch
The Honorable Ellen Robertson
The Honorable Reva Trammell

Reported Absent

The Honorable Chris Hilbert, Vice President

Staff Present

Lawrence Anderson, Council Chief of Staff
Lisa Braxton, Council Management Analyst
Haskell Brown, Interim City Attorney
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Tabrica Rentz, Acting Deputy City Attorney
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Council President Cynthia Newbille called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. and presided.

Upon the President's request, Council Management Analyst Lisa Braxton provided information on the appropriate manner in which the Council Chamber is to be evacuated in the event of an emergency.

Docket Review

Council Management Analyst Lisa Braxton reviewed the following agenda items as indicated:

Consent Agenda:

1. Ord. 2018-324 – to be continued to Monday, April 13, 2020
2. Ord. 2018-325 – to be continued to Monday, April 13, 2020
3. Ord. 2019-294 – retained on the Consent Agenda
4. Ord. 2020-042 – retained on the Consent Agenda
5. Ord. 2020-043 – retained on the Consent Agenda
6. Ord. 2020-044 – retained on the Consent Agenda
7. Ord. 2020-045 – retained on the Consent Agenda

8. Res. 2020-R012 – retained on the Consent Agenda

Councilor Michael Jones arrived at 4:03 p.m. and was seated.

9. Res. 2020-R013 – to be amended and continued to Monday, March 23, 2020

Regular Agenda:

10. Ord. 2019-343 – to be continued to Monday, March 23, 2020

11. Ord. 2020-041 – to be continued to Monday, April 13, 2020

Robert “Bob” Steidel, deputy chief administrative officer – Operations, introduced Res. 2020-R012 and was available to answer questions.

Councilor Kristen Larson arrived at 4:06 p.m. and was seated.

Councilor Andreas Addison arrived at 4:07 p.m. and was seated.

There were no further comments or discussions concerning Consent and Regular Agenda items reviewed.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

Fire Chief Melvin Carter briefed Council and answered questions regarding city administration’s preparedness efforts in the event there is a widespread outbreak due to the coronavirus. Chief Carter stated that city administration, along with county leaders, spoke to initiate a coordinated regional response to combat the emerging threat of COVID-19. Mr. Carter further stated that the city has reviewed departmental continuity of operation plans for updating city employees and residents of the epidemic and will be relying largely on the Richmond City Health District and Virginia Department of Health for guidance.

Council OpenBudgetRVA Website

Councilor Andreas Addison provided his colleagues with information regarding an OpenBudgetRVA initiative he is spearheading that would allow for a citizen-focused approach to drive transparent accessibility and visualization of the city budget and revenue data. A copy of the information provided has been filed.

Councilor Kim Gray questioned the maintenance of the current open data portal that provides citizens access to city records and ultimately the proposed OpenBudgetRVA data.

Councilors Stephanie Lynch, Kristen Larson and Michael Jones expressed support for the proposed OpenBudgetRVA initiative.

Acting Chief Administrative Officer Lenora Reid addressed Council and stated that she will investigate reported maintenance issues with the open data portal.

It was the consensus of Council to move forward with procuring the proposed vendor, Maxx Potential, to develop the OpenBudgetRVA initiative.

Soil and Water Conservation District

Councilor Kristen Larson apprised Council of the need for a soil and water conservation district, which will provide city residents with financial, technical and educational assistance with property erosion, drainage and vegetation issues. Due to the lengthy process for the city to create its own district, Ms. Larson proposed that the city partner with the County of Henrico’s soil and water

conservation district, and she requested support for the introduction of legislation approving a memorandum of understanding (MOU) agreement to grant financial support to the county. A copy of the information provided has been filed.

Councilor Kim Gray expressed support for the soil and water conservation district.

President Cynthia Newbille requested that the Department of Public Utilities be included in discussion with the county regarding the soil and water conservation district and MOU agreement. President Newbille also requested an analysis of city properties that could benefit from the proposed initiative.

Eviction Diversion Program (EDP) and Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME) Update

Osita Iroegbu, Office of the Mayor senior policy advisor, addressed and thanked Council regarding its collaborative efforts and commitment concerning the city's eviction diversion program before introducing Monica Jefferson, HOME vice president and chief operating officer, who provided a presentation that included EDP's objectives, funding threshold, performance progress and activity, demographic data and an initiative in conjunction with Richmond Redevelopment Housing Authority. A copy of the presentation and information provided has been filed.

Heather Crislip, HOME president and chief executive officer, and Martin "Marty" Wegbreit, Central Virginia Legal Aid Society director of litigation, were in attendance as well as members of the Eviction Diversion Taskforce.

Destiny Saunders, city resident, shared her experience as an EDP recipient.

Ms. Jefferson invited councilors to attend the "Eviction Crisis" exhibition event to be held on Tuesday, March 10, 2020 at the Richmond Public Library Main Branch.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch inquired regarding the eligibility criteria for the EDP.

Ms. Jefferson informed Council of HOME's request for an increased budget allocation in fiscal year 2021.

Casino and Coliseum Small Area Development Plan

Sharon Ebert, deputy chief administrative officer – Economic and Community Development, presented Council with a proposed pre-development timeline for the coliseum area and two options for the casino request for proposal and referendum. A copy of the presentation provided has been filed.

President Cynthia Newbille stated that Council will discuss timeline options concerning the coliseum area and casino at the next Informal Session of Council.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:48 p.m.

CITY CLERK