



City of Richmond

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

Meeting Minutes Public Safety Standing Committee

Tuesday, September 26, 2023

1:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor – City Hall

Committee Members

The Honorable Reva Trammell – Chair
The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert – Vice Chair (late arrival)
The Honorable Kristen Nye – Member

Others in Attendance

LaTanja Davenport, Council Budget Analyst
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch – Councilmember
Greg Lukanuski, Deputy City Attorney
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Steven Taylor, Council Policy Analyst
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Reva Trammell called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement and Citizen Speaker Guidelines

City Clerk Candice Reid 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

Patricia A. Hopkins addressed the committee and stated her safety concerns regarding a tree in front of her house. Ms. Hopkins informed the committee that she had requested the city to address the tree issue two years prior, but no action had been taken.

Stephen Willoughby, Department of Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response Director, informed the committee that he would speak with Ms. Hopkins about her issue and then inquire with the Department of Public Works regarding her request.

Bridgette Whitaker addressed the committee and discussed the city's response to providing emergency shelter at City Hall during an inclement weather event the previous weekend. Ms. Whitaker stated she believed the city was too dysfunctional to provide an adequate response to emergency inclement weather events.

Chair Reva Trammell informed Ms. Whitaker that the committee would be addressing the city's preparations for emergency response later in the committee meeting.

Nancy Williams, Three Gifts to You, addressed the committee and stated her concerns with the city's emergency response to an inclement weather event the previous weekend. Ms. Williams also stated that she believed the city needed to do a better job at preparing emergency response.

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of July 25, 2023 and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2023.266](#) July 25, 2023 Public Safety Meeting Minutes

Presentations

There were no presentations.

Papers for Consideration

There were no papers for consideration.

Board Vacancies

There were no board vacancies.

Discussion Items

Department of Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response Update

Stephen Willoughby Department of Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response Director, provided the committee with an update regarding the Department of Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

[CD.2023.302](#) Department of Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response Update

Vice Chair Ann-Frances Lambert arrived at 1:24 p.m. and was seated.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch arrived at 1:26 p.m. and was seated.

Vice-Chair Ann-Frances Lambert inquired about the city's use of City Hall as emergency shelter during a tropical storm the previous weekend. Vice Chair Lambert asked if the city has a plan to use other locations, other than City Hall, for emergency shelter.

Director Willoughby stated that the Department of Human Services was responsible for emergency shelter due to inclement weather. Director Willoughby also stated that Chief Administrative Officer Lincoln Saunders recently presented to Council the city's plans to provide emergency shelter in the future, and that he believes the city has taken the necessary steps to initiate that plan.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch discussed with Director Willoughby the city's planned response for both emergency shelter and long-term shelter for homeless individuals. Councilor Lynch stated it was important that the public is aware of emergency shelter locations, and that the shelters are administered by trained staff.

Chair Reva Trammell stated that City Hall was not a safe location to provide emergency shelter. Chair Trammell also stated that she believed the city needed to better inform the public of inclement weather emergencies.

Member Kristen Nye stated that the city should address inclement weather with a preventative approach. Member Nye also stated that the city should prepare out of an abundance of caution and then close any emergency shelter if the inclement weather forecast changes.

Vice Chair Lambert stated that Council should be ready to hold a special meeting if necessary to review legislation related to the city providing emergency shelter.

Traci DeShazor, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Human Services, addressed the committee regarding the city's previous response to inclement weather, and she provided additional information regarding the city's next steps to provide emergency shelter during inclement weather events in the city.

Richmond Police Department's Real-Time Crime Center

Richmond Police Chief Rick Edwards provided the committee with information regarding the Richmond Police Department's (RPS) use of a Real-Time Crime Center.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

[CD.2023.301](#) Real-Time Crime Center Presentation Slides

Chief Edwards provided the committee with past examples of how the Real-Time Crime Center helped RPD quickly address violent crimes in the city.

Staff Report

Council Policy Analyst Steven Taylor provided members with the committee's September staff report.

[CD.2023.267](#) September 26, 2023 Public Safety Standing Committee Staff Report

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:22 p.m.