



City of Richmond

900 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219
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Meeting Minutes Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee

Wednesday, May 21, 2025

2:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor – City Hall

Committee Members and Other Council Members in Attendance

The Honorable Ellen Robertson – Chair
The Honorable Nicole Jones – Vice Chair (early departure)
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch – Member (late arrival)
The Honorable Kenya Gibson – Councilmember

Staff in Attendance

Gabriel Boisvert, Assistant City Attorney
Laura Drewry, City Attorney
Maria Garnett, Council Policy Analyst
Nahdiah Muhammad, Assistant City Clerk
Will Perkins, Senior Council Legislative Services Manager
Candice Reid, City Clerk
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Ellen Robertson called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement and Public Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Chair's request, Assistant City Clerk Nahdiah Muhammad provided information on the appropriate way to evacuate the Council Chamber in an emergency along with public speaker guidelines.

Public Comment Period

There were no public comment speakers.

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of April 16, 2025, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2025.135](#) April 16, 2025 - Finance and Economic Development Standing
Committee Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [20250416 Finance Minutes - DRAFT](#)

Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinance was considered:

2. [ORD.
2025-097](#) To amend Ord. No. 2024-099, adopted May 13, 2024, which adopted the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 General Fund Budget and made appropriations pursuant thereto, by increasing anticipated revenues from certain funds granted to the City of Richmond from The Regents of the University of California in the amount of \$25,000.00 and appropriating such increased estimated revenues to the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office for the purpose of the Partnering with Prosecutors to Reduce Racial Disproportionalities project.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-097](#)

Colette Wallace McEachin, Commonwealth's Attorney for the city of Richmond, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance.

There were no discussions, and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2025-097 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None. Member Lynch had not yet arrived.

The following ordinance was considered:

3. [ORD.
2025-098](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept funds in the amount of \$160,000.00 from the Virginia Department of Forestry and to amend the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Special Fund Budget by creating a new special fund for the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities called the "Tree Maintenance Team for East End and Evergreen Cemeteries," and to appropriate the increase to the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Special Fund Budget by increasing the estimated revenues and the amount appropriated to the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities' "Tree Maintenance Team for East End and Evergreen Cemeteries Special Fund" by \$160,000.00 for the purpose of funding a tree maintenance team and ongoing care for East End and Evergreen

Cemeteries.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-098](#)

Shamar Young, Deputy Director for Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance.

There were no discussions, and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2025-098 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None. Member Lynch had not yet arrived.

The following ordinance was considered:

4. [ORD. 2025-099](#) To amend ch. 26 of the City Code by adding therein a new art. XIX, consisting of §§ 26-1288-26-1292, for the purpose of establishing a disposable plastic bag tax.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-099](#)
[Public Comments](#) [Council](#)

Laura Thomas, Director for the Department of Sustainability, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance.

Chair Ellen Robertson asked when the implementation of the plastic bag tax will begin.

Director Thomas stated the plastic bag tax will begin January 1, 2026.

Vice Chair Nicole Jones asked when community outreach will begin to inform residents and businesses of the plastic bag tax.

Director Thomas stated when and if the proposed ordinance is adopted, an outreach timeline will be provided.

There were no further discussions, and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2025-099 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None. Member Lynch had not yet arrived.

The following ordinance was considered:

5. [ORD. 2025-100](#) To amend City Code § 12-12, concerning the form of the budget submitted to Council, to require publication of a side-by-side comparison with the mayor's proposed budget submission with agency-level budget request documents and to amend ch. 12, art. I of the City Code by adding therein a new section 12-25, concerning publication of agency-level budget requests, for the purpose of requiring submission of agency-level budget request documents.

Patrons: Ms. Lynch, Mr. Breton, Vice President Jordan, Ms. Gibson, Ms. Jones and Ms. Abubaker

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-100](#)

Lauren Kirk, Senior Manager for the Department of Budget and Strategic Planning, stated that city administration requests a continuance of the proposed ordinance to allow for a more extensive review of the budget process.

Amy Robins, Fifth District Council Liaison, provided the committee with information on behalf of chief patron Councilor Stephanie Lynch, regarding ORD. 2025-100.

Member Stephanie Lynch provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance via Microsoft Teams.

Chair Ellen Robertson asked Member Lynch if she agrees with the requested continuance of the proposed ordinance.

Member Lynch stated that she is in support of a 30-day continuance of the proposed ordinance.

The committee continued its discussion of a possible continuance of the proposed ordinance.

Councilor Kenya Gibson stated her support for the proposed ordinance. Councilor Gibson also discussed the importance of adopting the proposed ordinance and having a new budget process in place before the next submission of the mayor's budget.

There were no further discussions, and Chair Ellen Robertson moved to continue ORD. 2025-100, to the July 16, 2025, Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Robertson, Jones. Noes None. Member Lynch had not yet arrived in person.

The following ordinance was considered:

6. [ORD. 2025-107](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept funds in the amount of \$75,000.00 from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, and to designate funds in the total amount of \$25,000.00 in the City Sheriff General Fund Budget as the required local match; to amend the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Special Fund Budget by creating a new special fund for the City Sheriff called the "DCJS JAG - Vehicle Cameras Special Fund;" and to amend the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Special Fund Budget by increasing estimated revenues and the amount appropriated to the City Sheriff's "DCJS JAG - Vehicle Cameras Special Fund" by the total amount of \$100,000.00, all for the purpose of equipping the City Sheriff's fleet vehicles with camera equipment.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-107](#)

Antionette Irving, Richmond City Sheriff, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance.

There were no discussions, and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2025-107 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None. Member Lynch had not yet arrived in person.

The following ordinances were considered:

7. [ORD. 2025-108](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept funds in the amount of \$1,500,000.00 from the Virginia Resources Authority and to amend the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Wastewater Utility Budget which appropriated the estimated receipts of the wastewater utility, by increasing estimated receipts and the amount appropriated for the wastewater utility by \$1,500,000.00, for the purpose of funding the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant Thickening and Dewatering Facilities Improvements project.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-108](#)

8. [ORD. 2025-109](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Financing Agreement between the City of Richmond and the Virginia Resources Authority for the purpose of funding the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant Thickening and Dewatering Facilities Improvements project.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-109](#)

Billy Vaughan, Deputy Director for the Department of Public Utilities, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinances.

There were no discussions, and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2025-108 and ORD. 2025-109 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None. Member Lynch had not yet arrived in person.

The following ordinances were considered:

9. [ORD. 2025-110](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Richmond Ambulance Authority Grant Agreement between the City of Richmond and the Richmond Ambulance Authority for the purpose of funding a Peer Recovery Specialist project to combat the opioid crisis in the City of Richmond.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-110](#)

10. [ORD. 2025-111](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Health Brigade Grant Contract between the City of Richmond and Health Brigade for the purpose of funding the creation and implementation of a substance use disorder treatment program to combat the opioid crisis in the City of Richmond.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-111](#)

Amy Popovich, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) for Human Services, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinances.

Jason Alley, Human Services Policy Advisor for Opioid Response Community Outreach and Engagement, provided additional background information regarding the proposed ordinances.

There were no discussions, and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD.

2025-110 and ORD. 2025-111 to Council with the recommendation to approve,

which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.

Member Lynch had not yet arrived in person.

The following resolution was considered:

11. [RES. 2025-R019](#) To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause to be conducted a study of the fiscal, operational, and other considerations associated with requiring janitorial and security contractors under contract to provide services to the City to pay the City's minimum wage, currently \$20.00 per hour, to their employees who are performing work under City contracts, and to provide the Council with any recommendations for implementing such a requirement by no later than Nov. 1, 2025.

Patrons: Ms. Robertson, President Newbille, Vice President Jordan, Ms. Trammell, Mr. Breton, Ms. Lynch, Ms. Jones and Ms. Abubaker

Attachments: [Res. No. 2025-R019](#)

Public Hearing

Tremayne Johnson, Lead Organizer for Service Employees International Union (SEIU) 32BJ, addressed the committee regarding the proposed resolution. Mr. Johnson stated his concerns regarding the timeline for the adoption of the proposed resolution and stated that delays could impact contract workers.

Councilor Kenya Gibson stated that contract workers have been organized by SEIU 32BJ to ensure fair working conditions. Councilor Gibson also stated that employers of contracted workers have not solidified proper contracts for their workers, and requested to amend the proposed resolution to revisit the procurement process to prioritize and support companies that employ unionized workers, and limit the contracts to shorter terms.

Chair Ellen Robertson stated that any contracted services that the city procures should require all contracted employees to receive the city's minimum wage. Chair Robertson requested data regarding the fiscal impact of the proposed resolution, and requested exploration of alternatives.

The committee continued its discussion of the proposed resolution.

There were no discussions, and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward RES. 2025-R019 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None. Member Lynch had not yet arrived in person.

Member Stephanie Lynch arrived at 3:01 p.m., and was seated.

The following ordinance was considered:

1. [ORD. 2025-032](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Grant Agreement between the City of Richmond, Refuge Apartments, LP, and the Economic Development Authority of the City of Richmond for the purpose of facilitating the construction of an affordable housing development located at 5015 Snead Road, 5009 Rear Snead Road, and 5015 Rear Snead Road, or a site resulting from any such consolidation of the aforementioned parcels. (9th District)

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-032](#)

Sharon Ebert, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) for Planning and Economic Development, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance.

Chair Ellen Robertson stated that she wants city administration to commit to rectifying the concerns of the committee regarding the proposed ordinance.

DCAO Ebert stated that city administration is committed to addressing the concerns of the committee regarding the proposed ordinance.

There were no further comments or discussions, and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2025-032 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Vice Chair Nicole Jones departed the meeting at 3:08 p.m.

Presentation(s)

Economic Development Plans & Pipeline

Matthew Welch, Acting Director of Economic Development, presented the committee with economic development plans and pipeline.

[CD.2025.175](#) May 21, 2025 - Economic Development Plans & Pipeline

Attachments: [20250521 Economic Development Plans & Pipeline Presentation](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Chair Ellen Robertson asked about the goals for economic development and revenue growth in the city.

Acting Director Welch provided the committee with economic development goals for the city. Acting Director Welch stated that city administration will provide the committee with data regarding each economic development strategy.

Sharon Ebert, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) for Planning and Economic Development, provided the committee with additional details regarding projected economic growth. DCAO Ebert stated that city administration will provide Council with additional information in a closed session during the next Council meeting regarding negotiations with Capstone.

Chair Robertson asked that city administration provide the committee with additional information regarding economic revenue growth.

Member Stephanie Lynch asked about the \$10 million purchase of the Altria Theater.

DCAO Ebert stated \$5.5 million was used to purchase the Altria Theater, \$4.5 million was used for key acquisitions in Southside, with a remaining \$1.75 million set aside for acquisitions.

City administration continued to discuss economic development plans with the committee.

Board Vacancies

There were no board vacancies.

Discussion Item(s)

There were no discussion items.

Staff Report

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

[CD.2025.196](#) May 21, 2025 - Finance and Economic Development Staff Report

Attachments: [20250521 Finance and Economic Development Staff Report](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.