



City of Richmond

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

Meeting Minutes Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee

Wednesday, July 16, 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
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch – Member (late arrival)

Staff in Attendance

Tori Cotman, Assistant City Attorney
Maria Garnett, Council Policy Analyst
Nahdiah Muhammad, Assistant City Clerk
Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst
Candice Reid, City Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Ellen Robertson called the meeting to order at 2:04 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 June 18, 2025, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2025.220](#) June 18, 2025 - Finance and Economic Development Standing
Committee Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [20250618 Draft Finance Minutes](#)

Member Stephanie Lynch arrived at 2:06 p.m., and was seated.

Board Vacancies

Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst, reviewed board vacancies and applications for consideration by the committee.

[CD.2025.227](#) July 16, 2025 - Finance and Economic Development Board Vacancy Report

Attachments: [20250716 - Finance Board Vacancy Report](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Vice Chair Nicole Jones made a motion to continue consideration of appointment applications for vacancies on the following boards and commissions to the September 17, 2025, Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting: Board of Directors of the Economic Development Authority and the Participatory Budgeting Steering Commission, and to continue consideration of the Local Finance Board for Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Board reappointment application to the October 15, 2025, Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

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

Richmond Retirement System:
Carlin Gibson, Jr. (reappointment)

Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinance was considered:

1. [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](#)

The committee discussed continuing Ord. 2025-100 to the September 17, 2025, Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting, to allow for further development.

Member Lynch stated her concerns regarding continuing the proposed ordinance citing that it would not allow city administration the time to comply with the proposed ordinance by January 15, 2026.

Meghan Brown, Director of Budget and Strategic Planning, provided the committee with additional information regarding the proposed ordinance. Director Brown stated that city administration can not provide a timeline for when city administration would be able to implement the proposed ordinance.

Chair Ellen Robertson stated that continuing the proposed ordinance would allow for further discussion a part of the task force.

The committee continued to discuss the proposed ordinance.

There were no further comments or discussions, and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to continue ORD. 2025-100, to the September 17, 2025, Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinances were considered:

2. [ORD. 2025-158](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept funds in the amount of \$15,733,481.00 from the United States Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration, and to amend the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Gas Utility Budget, which appropriated the estimated receipts of the gas utility, by increasing estimated receipts and the amount appropriated for expenditures of the gas utility by \$15,733,481.00, for the purpose of providing funding to repair, rehabilitate, and replace natural gas pipelines and related equipment.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-158](#)

3. [ORD. 2025-159](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept funds in the amount of \$39,158,844.00 from the United States Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration, and to amend the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Gas Utility Budget, which appropriated the estimated receipts of the gas utility, by increasing estimated receipts and the

amount appropriated for expenditures of the gas utility by \$39,158,844.00, for the purpose of providing funding for the repair, replacement, and rehabilitation of natural gas pipelines and related equipment.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-159](#)

Dan Rifenburgh, Director of Richmond Gas Works for the Department of Public Utilities, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinances. Mr. Rifenburgh stated that the proposed ordinances will allow the city to receive grants from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) to replace gas mains. Mr. Rifenburgh also stated that the grant will be a full dollar amount match after the reimbursement is granted.

There were no comments or discussions and Member Stephanie Lynch moved to forward ORD. 2025-158 and ORD. 2025-159 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinance was considered:

5. [ORD. 2025-164](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept funds in the amount of \$2,119.00 from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development; to amend the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 budget adopted by Ord. No. 2024-184, adopted Jul. 22, 2024, for CDBG, HOME, ESG and HOPWA funds received from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development by recapturing Emergency Solutions Grant funds in the total amount of \$50,666.00; and to amend the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget adopted by Ord. No. 2025-063, adopted May 12, 2025, for CDBG, HOME, ESG and HOPWA funds received from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development by (i) allocating funds in the total amount of \$31,145.00 from the ESG Undesignated Reserve; (ii) creating a new project line item in the ESG funding called "St. Joseph's Villa"; and (iii) appropriating funds in the total amount of \$83,930.00 to the new "St. Joseph's Villa" line item for the purpose of providing funding for rapid rehousing programming.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-164](#)

Amanda Wrinkle, Director of Federal Entitlement Programs for the Department of Housing and Community Development, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance. Ms. Wrinkle stated that the proposed ordinance will reallocate unused funding from HomeAgain, with a combination of funds that were unawarded for the FY26 Budget. Ms. Wrinkle stated that the funds will be awarded to St. Joseph's Villa for a rapid re-housing program.

There were no comments or discussions and Member Stephanie Lynch moved to forward ORD. 2025-164 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinance was considered:

4. [ORD. 2025-160](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Performance Agreement between the City of Richmond, VPM Media Corporation, and the Economic Development Authority of the City of Richmond for the purpose of providing performance grants to VPM Media Corporation to establish, equip, and operate a new headquarters located at 13 East Broad Street in the city of Richmond. (2nd District)

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-160](#)
[Ord. No. 2025-160 VPM Memo](#)

Katie McConnell, Deputy Director of the Department of Economic Development, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance. Ms. McConnell stated that the proposed ordinance represents a \$65,000,000 Capital investment that will bring 70 new jobs to the city. Ms. McConnell also provided the committee with development goals of the VPM.

The committee requested the following regarding the proposed ordinance:

- Projected timeline of development and operation
- Performance grant agreement delay
- Performance short-fall template
- Jobs produced from performance grant agreement

Jayme Swain, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of VPM and the Virginia Foundation of Public Media, responded that VPM anticipates opening up the new headquarters in June 2026, and beginning the lease July 2026. CEO Swain stated that VPM started with a different process by going through the General Assembly, but due to a change in laws regarding rent abatements, VPM went through the city to receive a performance grant agreement.

Ms. McConnell stated that the proposed ordinance has a template showing annual profit, capital investment, jobs, report of community commitments and back-up documentation to show that performance metrics have been met.

CEO Swain responded that the 70 jobs stated in the performance grant are jobs that are new to Richmond but not VPM, and will transfer over from their current headquarters in Chesterfield County.

The committee expressed support of the proposed ordinance and its appreciation for the work that VPM has done for the community.

CEO Swain further discussed the proposed ordinance with the committee.

Public Hearing

Nupa Agarwal, Chair-Elect of the Economic Development Authority and VPM Board Member, spoke in support of ORD. 2025-160 and stated that the proposed ordinance will bring residents more opportunities for community engagement.

There were no further comments or discussions and Member Stephanie Lynch moved to forward ORD. 2025-160 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Presentation(s)

Department of Finance Revenue Administration Update

Shelia White, Director of Finance, presented the committee with a Department of Finance revenue administration updates regarding real estate mailing remediation, modernization efforts, consultant's report, personal property improvements, business portal and customer service improvements.

The committee expressed appreciation to Director White for her leadership within the Department of Finance and the improvements that she has made within the department. The committee stated that there is still work to be done and that questions of the status of the department will be provided to Ms. White before she leaves city service.

[CD.2025.237](#) July 16, 2025 - Department of Finance Revenue Administration Update

Attachments: [20250716 Department of Finance Revenue Administration Update Presentation](#)
[20250716 Department of Finance Revenue Administration - Richmond Tax Revenue Division Engagement of ASC LLC](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Discussion Item(s)

The committee discussed the cancellation of the August committee meeting. It was the consensus of the committee to cancel the August Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting.

Staff Report

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

[CD.2025.239](#) July 16, 2025 - Finance and Economic Development Staff Report

Attachments: [20250716 Finance and Economic Development Staff Report](#)
[20250716 Finance and Economic Development Admin Memo](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:18 p.m.