



Richmond City Council

The Voice of the People

Richmond, Virginia

Office of the Council Chief of Staff

Finance & Economic Development Standing Committee

October 15, 2025

Prep Document for Committee Members

Previous Meeting: September 17, 2025

Next Meeting: November 19, 2025

Agenda Overview (excludes papers introduced 10/14):

- 4 papers for consideration:
 1. [Ord. 2025-225](#) (transfers \$2 million from the Delinquent Tax Sales Special Fund to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund)
 2. [Ord. 2025-232](#) (authorizes CAO to accept \$10K from Virginia Department of Energy and create a new special fund within OOS to support the Virginia Energy Resilience Study (VERS) and implementation of energy resilience planning in the East End)
 3. [Ord. 2025-233](#) (authorizes proposed tourism project at 921 Myers Street pursuant to the Virginia Tourism Authority's Tourism Development Financing Program)
 4. [Ord. 2025-234](#) (authorizes proposed tourism project at 1600 Roseneath Road pursuant to the Virginia Tourism Authority's Tourism Development Financing Program)
- Two presentations:
 - Department of Finance Director Letitia Shelton presenting on
 - Bureau of Risk Management
 - Tax Relief Program Performance

Ordinances & Resolutions for Consideration

1. Ordinance No. 2025-225

Patron Mayor Avula

Title: To amend Ord. No. 2025-057, adopted May 12, 2025, which adopted the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Special Fund Budget and made appropriations thereto, by transferring \$2,000,000.00 from the "Delinquent Tax Sales" special fund and appropriating such transferred funds to the "Affordable Housing Trust Fund" special fund for the purposes set forth in City Code § 16-53.

Council Staff Notes (i.e., not included in Administration memo):

- None.

Council Staff Questions:

- How much can the City expect to be deposited to the Delinquent Tax Sales special fund over the next two years based on:
 - The existing pipeline of funds held by the circuit court in accordance with Va. Code § 58.1-3967
 - Reinstated or enhanced collections procedures under consideration

2. Ordinance No. 2025-232

Patron Mayor Avula

Title: To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept funds in the amount of \$10,000.00 from the Virginia Department of Energy, to amend the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Special Fund Budget by creating a new special fund for the Office of Sustainability called the "Virginia Energy Resilience Study (VERS), Virginia Energy Resilience Planning Grant Special Fund," and to appropriate the increase to the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Special Fund Budget by increasing estimated revenues and the amount appropriated to the Office of Sustainability's "Virginia Energy Resilience Study (VERS), Virginia Energy Resilience Planning Grant Special Fund" by \$10,000.00 for the purpose of funding the implementation of energy resilience planning in the city's East End.

Council Staff Notes (i.e., not included in Administration memo):

- There is a line in the documentation included with the O&R that says a recent request by the state Department of Energy for a deadline extension was denied by the federal government and that "If we are unable to accept the funds by September 30th, we will lose this award."

Council Staff Questions:

- To confirm, did CAO Donald sign off on the agreement prior to 9/30 to avoid forfeiture of the funds?
- Is there an existing pipeline or "wait list" for other City sites to benefit from the energy resilience planning process once the East End project funded by this grant is complete? If so, please provide a list of all projects/sites and estimated timeframes for project launch and completion as of 10/15/25.

3. Ordinance No. 2025-233 and 4. Ordinance No. 2025-234

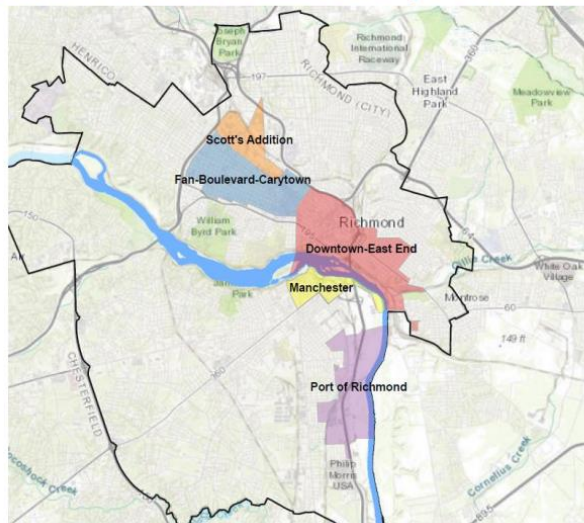
Patron Mayor Avula

Title: To authorize a proposed tourism project at 921 Myers Street (Ord. 2025-233)/1600 Roseneath Road (Ord. 2025-234) pursuant to the Virginia Tourism Authority's Tourism Development Financing Program in accordance with state law.

Council Staff Notes (i.e., not included in Administration memo):

- Please see detailed presentation uploaded by the Department of Economic Development to [Legistar](#) for information about program structure and history.
- Per DED presentation, Scott's Addition is the northernmost neighborhood with “tourism zone” designation as established in 2016:

Council Adopted Tourism Zones (Ord. No. 2016-144)



Council Staff Questions:

- Are there any deadlines of note, particularly given the “gap financing” nature of the program (i.e., is the developer at risk of losing any previously secured financing by a certain date)?
- It sounds like this program is quite complex to administer. Should the City consider lobbying for changes to state Code requirements for this program to make it a more attractive and accessible source of financing in tourism zones?
- If Council wanted to revisit the tourism zone map adopted in 2016, how quickly could DED prepare analysis and proposals for changes to the map, including the possibility for additions (such as in the Brookland Park Boulevard neighborhood)?

Presentation: Bureau of Risk Management – Letitia Shelton, Director, Department of Finance

Note: This presentation has been rescheduled several times. The detailed description of items to include in the presentation/memo, first communicated by OCCOS staff in May 2025, is as follows:

Finance presentation on risk management and settlements

- Overview and review of local, state, and federal policies
- Review FY25 to date settlements by agency (\$ total) and by type of issue (ex: property damage, sexual harassment, etc.)
- Outline efforts to mitigate damages

Council Staff Questions:

- General questions:
 - This presentation focuses on general liability and workers' compensation, and it doesn't include any information about potential City liability, self-insurance, or claims related to workplace discrimination or harassment. Why not?
 - Does the Bureau of Risk Management or third-party administrator have any role in assisting Departments with analysis of service coverage risk due to legally protected leave programs? If not, does that function exist within HR?
- Slide 6: Does this pie chart represent ALL claims or only successful claims resulting in a payout?
- Slide 7: Please provide a more detailed breakdown of liability claims paid by the City on behalf of the Richmond Police Department.
- Slide 8: Please explain the concept of "subrogation recovery."

Presentation: Tax Relief Program Performance – Letitia Shelton, Director, Department of Finance

Note: OCCOS staff, on behalf of Chair Robertson, requested that this presentation include the following information for the four largest City taxes (real estate, sales tax, personal property tax, and meals taxes):

- *Overview of each program: description, Code reference and date established, budget and staffing for FY26*
- *Performance indicators for each program*
 - *Please be sure to include number of actual participants; number of eligible participants, even if an estimate; median and average value of relief granted; and any other internally used performance indicators*
- *Update on any open audit items related to tax relief programs, if applicable (please include identifiers)*

Council Staff Questions:

- General questions:
 - Other than reference to the planned 3 part-time staffers for the Gap Grant program, this presentation does not include any information about staffing levels (as requested). Why is this?
 - The FY26 budget information included in the presentation also does not provide any breakdown of administrative costs, including marketing expenses if applicable, vs. budgeted foregone revenues. Is the City doing anything to market tax relief programs to eligible populations? If so, to what extent?
 - How, if at all, do program staff within Finance coordinate with staff within DSS and other City departments that serve populations eligible for these programs, particularly the real estate tax relief programs for seniors and the disabled?
- Slide 3 (Gap Grant program):
 - Please explain the discrepancies with “current application backlog,” the number of applications (2,337) not matching the subtotals in the table, and “N/A” across the board for unprocessed applications.
 - Please provide a breakdown of the reasons the 1,100 RVA311 tickets associated with this program were closed.
 - Please remind the Committee of the amount that was budgeted for FY25 and describe what happened to any appropriated amount above the \$16,800 that was disbursed across the fiscal year.

- Slide 4: What accounts for the significant increase in the percentage of applications approved from FY2021 to FY2024 and FY2025?
- Slide 5: How many properties and what total assessed value are exempted due to the veterans/surviving spouses of veterans program vs. the broader exemption categories such as government or religious properties? (It's our understanding that the City Assessor's office administers the property tax relief program for veterans and surviving spouses of veterans killed in the line of duty.)
- Slide 6: When you say that "the vehicle must be certified annually" to qualify for relief, does that mean residents are required to take steps outside of the state registration and inspection processes, or do those existing processes cover the annual "certification" requirement?