



City of Richmond

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

Minutes

Governmental Operations Standing Committee

Tuesday, May 4, 2021

2:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor – Virtual Meeting

Committee Members and Staff in Attendance

The Honorable Kristen Larson – Chair
The Honorable Katherine Jordan – Vice Chair
The Honorable Michael Jones – Member
The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert – Alternate
Lisa Braxton, Council Management Analyst
Haskell Brown, Interim City Attorney
Joyce Davis, Interim Council Chief of Staff
Jamie Isley, Assistant City Clerk
Pamela Nichols, Senior Assistant City Clerk
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Steven Taylor, Council Policy Analyst
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Kristen Larson called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m., and presided.

Electronic Meeting Announcement

Assistant City Clerk Jamie Isley, in accordance with Ordinance No. 2020-093, adopted April 9, 2020, as amended by Ordinance No. 2020-183, adopted August 20, 2020, announced the meeting would be held through electronic communication means. Assistant City Clerk Isley stated notice of the meeting was provided to the public through a public information advisory issued on April 23, 2021, and through Legistar on the city website in accordance with usual practice. She also stated members of the public were encouraged to provide comments in writing prior to the meeting and all comments received prior to 10:00 a.m., on Tuesday, May 4, 2021, were provided to committee members. Ms. Isley indicated that members of the public who signed up to speak and provide comment would be called to speak at the appropriate time.

Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Assistant City Clerk Jamie Isley provided the citizen speaker guidelines.

Public Comment

There were no public comment speakers.

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of Wednesday, March 24, 2021, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

Board Vacancies

Senior Assistant City Clerk Pamela Nichols reviewed board applications for consideration by the committee.

Ms. Nichols informed the committee that the Sister Cities Commission is seeking applicants with interest or experience in global affairs and that the commission has suggested the committee continue consideration of the pending vacancy. She further stated that Alternate Member Ann-Frances Lambert requested the committee reconsider Johnson Thankachan's prior application to the Sister Cities Commission.

Member Michael Jones noted his concerns regarding recommendations from boards and commissions concerning applicant appointments.

Alternate Member Lambert offered clarification regarding the requests made by the Sister Cities Commission.

Vice Chair Katherine Jordan informed the committee of the reasoning behind various Council standing committees' request of boards and commissions to provide opinions concerning applicants and vacancy criteria.

Member Michael Jones expressed concern regarding the diversity of district representation on boards and commissions as well as current processes.

Chair Kristen Larson requested the committee discuss boards and commissions processes at a future meeting of the Governmental Operations Standing Committee.

Vice Chair Michael Jones moved to forward the following appointment application to Council with the recommendation to approve, which failed for lack of a second.

Member Jones reiterated concerns regarding district representation on the Sister Cities Commission.

Vice Chair Katherine Jordan moved to continue consideration of the following appointment application to the Sister Cities Commission, to the next Governmental Operations Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and unanimously approved:

Board Name	Criteria for Appointment	Applicant Name
Sister Cities Commission (13 members)	Reside or work in the city (1 vacancy)	Norman E. Washington, II 7 th District Employment

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Presentation(s)

There were no presentations.

Papers for Consideration

The following ordinance was considered:

ORD. 2021-095

To amend and reordain ch. 2, art. I of the City Code by adding therein a new section 2-6, concerning the prohibition of the sale or distribution of symbols of hate by the City, for the purpose of ensuring that the City does not promote the distribution or display of symbols of hate or oppression.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

Citizens were provided an opportunity to offer comments in writing regarding ORD. 2021-095 prior to the Governmental Operations Standing Committee meeting. All written comments received by the Office of the City Clerk were provided to members of the Council prior to the meeting and are included as an appendix to the May 4, 2021, Governmental Operations Standing Committee meeting minutes.

Maggie Anderson, Office of the Mayor acting chief of staff, introduced ORD. 2021-095. Ms. Anderson stated that the scope of ORD. 2021-095, will only impact the city of Richmond.

Member Michael Jones asked if the disposal of the Confederate monuments recently removed from city-owned property is an act of distributing symbols of hate.

Interim City Attorney Haskell Brown stated that the intent of ORD. 2021-095, is to prevent the use of city property to sell memorabilia with symbols of hate attached. He further stated the belief that the proposed ordinance does not prohibit the disposal of monuments that have already been removed.

Ms. Anderson highlighted an exemption within ORD. 2021-095, for books, digital medium, museums, and for educational or historical purposes.

Interim City Attorney Brown clarified the definition of symbols of hate, and reiterated the intent of the proposed ordinance.

Chair Kristen Larson requested an exception be added to ORD. 2021-095, to exclude the disposition of Confederate Monuments.

Interim City Attorney Brown stated that the amendment to ORD. 2021-095, would exclude the disposition of monuments pursuant to ORD. 2020-154, adopted August 3, 2020, and would require a two week continuance.

Member Michael Jones requested that ORD. 2021-095 be amended as discussed.

There were no further comments or discussions and **Member Michael Jones moved to forward ORD. 2021-095 to the May 10, 2021, Council meeting with recommendation to approve with amendment, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

The following ordinance was considered:

ORD. 2021-107

To amend and reordain City Code § 9-58, which assigns polling places in the city, to relocate and establish a new polling place for Precinct 111. (1st District)

Patron: Mr. Addison

Interim Council Chief of Staff Joyce Davis introduced ORD. 2021-107.

Member Michael Jones requested signage be placed at the previous Precinct 111 polling place to alert the public of the location change on Election Day.

There were no further comments or discussions and **Vice Chair Katherine Jordan moved to forward ORD. 2021-107 to the May 10, 2021, Council meeting with recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

Discussion Item

Charter Review Committee Process Update

Chair Kristen Larson requested members of the committee review the provided spreadsheet of recommendations from the 2009 Richmond City Charter Review Commission, and report back with additional recommendations to discuss at the next Governmental Operations Standing Committee meeting.

Vice Chair Katherine Jordan asked whether a special meeting could occur regarding the review of the Richmond City Charter. Vice Chair Jordan suggested discussing Richmond City Charter review with members of the 2009 Richmond City Charter Review Commission or former councilors.

Member Michael Jones discussed issues regarding legislative and process implementation.

Chair Larson reviewed the timeline for the Richmond City Charter review process.

Member Jones asked whether utilizing Google software to create a working spreadsheet is a breach of transparency.

Interim City Attorney Haskell Brown stated that utilizing Google software is acceptable, and that all drafts of the proposed Google spreadsheet would be available under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) at any point in the process.

Chair Larson stated that city administration will need the opportunity to weigh in regarding changes to the Richmond City Charter.

Interim Council Chief of Staff Joyce Davis stated that she would follow up with all members of the committee regarding the hiring of a consultant to assist with the charter review process.

Staff Report

Interim Council Chief of Staff Joyce Davis provided the committee with the April staff report.

A copy of the report provided has been filed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:58 p.m.

From: [Jack Blizzard](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Opposing ORD. 2021-095
Date: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 10:01:42 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear City Clerk,

I am writing to oppose ORD. 2021-095 that defines the Confederate Flag as a symbol of “hate.”

Definitely info any American historical flag as a “hate” symbol is inappropriately biased.

The attached documentation further defines Monument Avenue as symbols of oppression and inequality.

“Hate” is a political oppression tool to limit freedom of speech and exclude opposing perspectives of history.

Thank You,

Anonymous