



## City of Richmond

900 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
www.richmondgov.com/cityclerk

### Minutes

#### Education and Human Services Standing Committee

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Thursday, October 11, 2018

12:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

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#### **Committee Members and Staff in Attendance**

The Honorable Michael Jones – Chair  
The Honorable Kristen Larson – Vice Chair  
The Honorable Kim Gray – Member  
Lou Brown Ali, Council Chief of Staff  
Debra Bowles, Assistant City Clerk  
Joyce Davis, Council Policy Analyst  
Richard Hill, Jr., Assistant City Attorney  
Candice Reid, City Clerk

#### **Call to Order**

Chair Michael Jones called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

#### **Evacuation Announcement and Citizen Speaker Guidelines**

Debra Bowles, assistant city clerk, 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**

There were no public comments.

#### **Approval of the Minutes**

There were no corrections or amendments to the meeting minutes of Thursday, July 12, 2018, and Thursday, September 13, 2018, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

#### **Presentation(s)**

##### **Greater Richmond Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) Program**

Community Engagement Coordinator for Greater Richmond Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) Program Sarah Mersereau provided an overview of the program and the services available to enhance the lives of children. Ms. Mersereau gave a brief review of the Richmond Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Program, Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) Program, Family Support Program, Circle Preschool Program and Community Programs. Ms. Mersereau stated that these programs are used to promote positive parenting and family strengthening, and to create a strong community that values and cares for children.

*Chair Michael Jones expressed appreciation to Ms. Mersereau regarding the work that SCAN is providing and for making communities aware of their services.*

*Vice Chair Kristen Larson inquired on the training that SCAN is providing to Richmond Public Schools (RPS).*

Ms. Mersereau stated that RPS offers a Resiliency Partnership Program in which SCAN and additional entities collaborate to provide services to RPS staff, students and families. Ms. Mersereau informed the committee that SCAN has two employees at area schools, one serves as a parent engagement coordinator and the other as project coordinator. Ms. Mersereau stated also that the coordinators work to make parents aware that school is a safe place for their children, help in relationship building and training or consultation to teachers, in addition to offering technical assistance when difficult situations occur.

*Member Kim Gray inquired on the location of the preschool program and how a child is enrolled or referred to the program. Ms. Gray also asked if there were additional programs available for students beyond preschool age.*

Ms. Mersereau responded stating that the preschool program is located at the Saint James' Children Center on West Franklin Street, which consists of one classroom with eight children. Ms. Mersereau stated that student referrals are made through individuals that are aware of a child's needs, the Department of Social Services (DSS) and school personnel. Ms. Mersereau noted that there are two additional therapeutic classrooms located in Henrico County. Ms. Mersereau also stated that there is not a direct number that can be called for assistance; however, students are reaching out through SCAN's child advocacy centers and the ongoing mental health programs. Ms. Mersereau further stated that teachers interact with SCAN through the RPS project, consultations and workshops being offered within the schools.

*Member Gray stated that statistics show 38,515 unfounded cases of abuse and asked if there is a tracking system in place that shows the initial unfounded cases that lead to a founded case in the future.*

Ms. Mersereau stated that she is not aware of tracking system of such cases but she would research Ms. Gray's question.

*A copy of the material provided has been filed.*

## **Paper(s) for Consideration**

### **The following ordinance was considered:**

#### ORD. 2018-269

To amend ch. 2, art. V of the City Code by adding therein a new div. 19 (§§ 2-1173-2-1178) for the purpose of establishing a History and Culture Commission.

**Patron:** Mayor Stoney

Council Policy Analyst Joyce Davis informed the committee that city administration did not have staff present to introduce **ORD. 2018-269**; however, she was communicating with administration for representation that would respond to inquiries by the committee. Ms. Davis stated that appropriate staff would arrive at the meeting soon and suggested that the committee move to the next item on the agenda and come back to the proposed legislation.

*Chair Michael Jones requested that the committee move to the next item on the agenda.*

## **Board Vacancies**

Assistant City Clerk Debra Bowles reviewed board appointment and reappointment applications for consideration by the committee.

**Vice Chair Kristen Larson moved to forward the following appointment and reappointment to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved:**

<b><u>Board Name</u></b>	<b><u>Criteria for Appointment</u></b>	<b><u>Applicant Name</u></b>
<b>Advisory Board of Recreation and Parks</b> (13 members)	1 <sup>st</sup> District resident (1 vacancy)	Charles Price (reappointment)
	7 <sup>th</sup> District resident (1 vacancy)	Casey Botticello

*Member Kim Gray stated that based on her conversations with current J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College board members, Kenneth Warren is qualified to serve on the board.*

*Vice Chair Kristen Larson questioned if there could be a conflict with Mr. Warren serving on the board since he is an employee of Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU).*

*Member Gray stated that it would only be a conflict if information is taken from the community college that could be used in a for profit operation.*

*Chair Michael Jones questioned if there would be a conflict with Mr. Warren serving on the board and if not, could assurance be provided from J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College or if the City Clerk's office already inquired on the matter.*

City Clerk Candice Reid informed the committee that she had contacted the City Attorney's Office via email regarding the prospect of a conflict of interest; however, she had not received a response regarding her inquiry. Ms. Reid also stated that she had been in contact with the chair of the J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College Board regarding applicants Todd Waldo and Kenneth Warren and the former chair stated there would be no objection to the appointment of either candidate.

**Member Kim Gray moved to forward the following appointment to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved:**

<b><u>Board Name</u></b>	<b><u>Criteria for Appointment</u></b>	<b><u>Applicant Name</u></b>
<b>J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College Board</b> (5 members)	Resident of the region served who is involved in business, industry or profession served by college (1 vacancy)	Kenneth Warren

**Vice Chair Kristen Larson moved to forward the following reappointments to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved:**

<u>Board Name</u>	<u>Criteria for Appointment</u>	<u>Applicant Name</u>
<b>Richmond Behavioral Health Authority</b> (15 members)	Family member of an individual who has received services (1 vacancy)	Joy Bressler (reappointment)
	Individual who is receiving or who has received services or a family member of an individual who receives or who has received services (1 vacancy)	Eduardo Vidal (reappointment)

*A copy of the material provided has been filed.*

### **Paper(s) for Consideration**

*The committee returned its attention to consideration of **ORD. 2018-269**.*

Policy Analyst Joyce Davis provided a brief overview of **ORD. 2018-269** stating that the proposed legislation seeks to establish a History and Culture Commission within the city that would act as an advisory body to the mayor and the Department of Planning and Development Review. Ms. Davis stated that the purpose of the commission is to tell the history of Richmond and to provide public awareness of history and culture. Ms. Davis also provided the committee with information regarding the membership of the commission.

Press Secretary to the Mayor Jim Nolan responded to written questions of Council’s staff by stating the proposed ordinance was not written to provide an annual report; however, administration would be amenable to providing an annual report. Mr. Nolan stated that the commission would not have a specific ending date as the commission could potentially review and resolve detailed information over a period of years as opposed to months. Mr. Nolan also stated that the \$80,000 in operating costs covers staff and expenses within existing resources of Planning and Development Review (PDR). Mr. Nolan informed the committee that, to offer the commission its best opportunity for success in serving the city, the goal is to fund a planner position to offer leadership of the commission.

*Member Kim Gray expressed her hesitation in supporting the proposed ordinance based on her concerns regarding the shortage of staff and the inability of the department to complete citizen requests and current projects.*

Mr. Nolan acknowledged member Gray’s concerns and stated that the city is working diligently to improve the efficiencies of the department regarding day-to-day requests and administration is addressing the department’s personnel shortage. Mr. Nolan also stated that the commission would be working to unify the needs of the city through a more efficient and organized structure, and administration believes that the commission is worth the investment.

Mayor’s Chief of Staff Lincoln Saunders stated that administration can provide the committee with a description of the planner position. Mr. Saunders also stated that administration believes the position will not detract from the department’s core responsibilities and the Mayor’s office is in full support of moving the commission forward. Mr. Saunders further stated that the planner position has evolved via the Rose Fellowship Report which suggested the need for a project manager to work with the department on development plans for Shockoe Valley/Shockoe Bottom. He informed the committee that administration believes the position will complement the department.

*Chair Michael Jones stated that, regardless of the outcome on the proposed ordinance, administration still needs to review the permit process as there is a lack of confidence in the department as perceived by the public.*

*Vice Chair Kristen Larson asked if public space is addressed within the proposed legislation and if the commission will be interacting with the city's Public Art Commission. Ms. Larson stated that the proposed ordinance may need to include a statement that defines the commission as one focused on public space.*

Mr. Saunders stated that focusing on public and shared community space is the broad intent of the commission and public and private ownership within an area would have input on the approach to a project. Mr. Saunders also stated that administration envisioned the commission to make recommendations that would be directed to the appropriate established public body or for administration implementation depending on the recommendation.

*Ms. Larson expressed the need for additional definitions within the proposed ordinance.*

*Ms. Gray asked if administration had considered having history, arts and culture as one commission due to the duplication of efforts.*

Mr. Saunders reiterated that the proposed commission is an advisory commission that will make recommendations to the mayor and administration.

**Vice Chair Kristen Larson moved to continue ORD. 2018-269 to the November 8, 2018, Education and Human Services Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

### **Discussion Item(s)**

There were no items for discussion.

### **Staff Report**

Council Policy Analyst Joyce Davis provided the committee with the October staff report.

*A copy of the material provided has been filed.*

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:04 p.m.