



City of Richmond

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

Informal Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 25, 2023

3:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Councilmembers Present

The Honorable Michael Jones, President
The Honorable Kristen Nye, Vice President
The Honorable Katherine Jordan (late arrival)
The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch (late arrival)
The Honorable Cynthia Newbille
The Honorable Ellen Robertson
The Honorable Reva Trammell

Absent

The Honorable Andreas Addison

Staff Present

Lisa Braxton, Council Management Analyst, Principal
Laura Drewry, City Attorney
LaTasha Holmes, Council Chief of Staff
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Tabrica Rentz, Deputy City Attorney
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Call to Order

Council President Michael Jones called the meeting to order at 3:11 p.m. and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Announcement

Upon the President's request, Council Management Analyst Lisa Braxton provided information on the appropriate manner in which the Council Chamber is to be evacuated in the event of an emergency.

Excellence in Economic Development Awards

Leonard Sledge, Economic Development director, informed Council of the following 2023 IEDC (International Economic Development Council) Excellence in Economic Development awards received by the city and its partners, honoring efforts in creating positive change in urban, suburban, and rural communities:

- Commercial Area Revitalization Effort (CARE) Program – Neighborhood Development (Gold Award)
- Activation Capital – Innovation Programs and Initiatives (Gold Award)
- STARTUP Virginia – Entrepreneurship (Gold Award)
- www.RichmondEDA.com – General Purpose Website (Silver Award)
- Façade Improvement Program – Neighborhood Development (Silver Award)
- Moxy Richmond Downtown – Real Estate Redevelopment and Reuse (Silver Award)
- Venture Richmond – Multi-year Economic Development (Silver Award)
- FY 2022 Annual Report – Annual Report (Bronze Award)
- Strategic Plan for Equitable Economic Development (SPEED) – Economic Equity and Inclusive (Bronze Award)

[CD.2023.307](#) International Economic Development Council 2023 Excellence in Economic Development Awards Presentation

A copy of the presentation has been filed.

Members of Council thanked Mr. Sledge, the Economic Development team, and the city's partners for their efforts regarding economic development throughout the city.

Docket Review

Council Management Analyst Lisa Braxton reviewed the following agenda items as indicated:

Consent Agenda:

1. Ord. 2022-191 – to be continued to Monday, December 11, 2023
2. Ord. 2022-205 – to be continued to Monday, November 13, 2023
3. Ord. 2023-237 – retained on the Consent Agenda

Council Management Analyst Lisa Braxton explained that Ord. 2023-237 is to be continued to the next Education and Human Services Standing Committee meeting due to a lack of a quorum of committee members during the September meeting.

Vice President Kristen Nye informed Council of Councilor Stephanie Lynch's request to consider Ord. 2023-237 later that evening during the Formal Session of Council, instead of the mentioned continuance.

It was the consensus of Council to approve a motion to instead consider Ord. 2023-237, later that evening during the Formal Session of Council.

4. Ord. 2023-238 – retained on the Consent Agenda
5. Ord. 2023-239 – retained on the Consent Agenda
6. Ord. 2023-240 – retained on the Consent Agenda
7. Ord. 2023-241 – retained on the Consent Agenda
8. Ord. 2023-242 – retained on the Consent Agenda
9. Ord. 2023-243 – retained on the Consent Agenda
10. Ord. 2023-244 – retained on the Consent Agenda
11. Ord. 2023-245 – retained on the Consent Agenda
12. Ord. 2023-246 – retained on the Consent Agenda
13. Ord. 2023-247 – retained on the Consent Agenda
14. Ord. 2023-248 – retained on the Consent Agenda

Chief Administrative Officer Lincoln Saunders provided an introduction of Ord. 2023-247 and stated that he will investigate a matter involving reimbursements to the Sister Cities Commission.

15. Ord. 2023-249 – retained on the Consent Agenda
16. Ord. 2023-250 – retained on the Consent Agenda
17. Ord. 2023-251 – retained on the Consent Agenda
18. Ord. 2023-252 – retained on the Consent Agenda
19. Ord. 2023-253 – retained on the Consent Agenda
20. Ord. 2023-255 – retained on the Consent Agenda
21. Ord. 2023-256 – retained on the Consent Agenda
22. Ord. 2023-257 – to be continued to Tuesday, October 10, 2023

23. Ord. 2023-258 – to be continued to Tuesday, October 10, 2023

24. Res. 2023-R048 – retained on the Consent Agenda

Councilor Ellen Robertson requested a continuance of Ords. 2023-257 and 2023-258, which was supported by Chief Administrative Officer Saunders.

It was the consensus of Council to continue Ords. 2023-257 and 2023-258 to the October 10, 2023 Council meeting, later that evening during the Formal Session of Council.

25. Res. 2023-R049 – retained on the Consent Agenda

Vice President Kristen Nye and Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert requested to be added as co-patrons of Res. 2023-R048.

Regular Agenda:

26. Ord. 2023-196 – retained on the Regular Agenda

27. Ord. 2023-235 – retained on the Regular Agenda

28. Res. 2023-R050 – retained on the Regular Agenda

Councilor Ellen Robertson requested to be added as a co-patron of Res. 2023-R050.

Vice President Kristen Nye expressed the need to receive additional information regarding Res. 2023-R050 prior to Council's consideration of the proposed legislation. Vice President Nye asked that the paper be continued for two weeks, which she shared was also Councilor Stephanie Lynch's desire.

Councilor Cynthia Newbille also requested to be added as a co-patron of Res. 2023-R050 and expressed concern with delaying the process for supporting the election of the city to join the Virginia Retirement System (VRS). Councilor Newbille noted several factors for moving forward with considering the proposed legislation, later that evening during the Formal Session of Council.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert expressed her support for Res. 2023-R050; however, agreed to the requested continuance, citing additional time needed to decision on a huge undertaking.

Councilor Robertson, expressing support for Res. 2023-R050, provided background information and declared the election to join VRS as a major milestone for the city.

Councilor Katherine Jordan arrived at 3:57 p.m. and was seated.

Chief Administrative Officer Lincoln Saunders addressed Council regarding Res. 2023-R050 and shared that the requested continuance would affect the proposed transition to VRS from January 1, 2024, to July 1, 2024, delaying most employees an opportunity to elect a greater retirement benefit.

Roland Kooch and Greg Stump, city's financial advisors, Davenport and Company, were available to answer questions regarding the suggested transition to VRS.

Vice President Nye stated that her concern is regarding the timeline for making a massive financial decision and not VRS.

President Michael Jones inquired regarding his colleagues' expected outcome from the requested continuance.

Councilor Katherine Jordan expressed her willingness to consider Res. 2023-R050 later that evening during the Formal Session of Council, if there is a commitment to ensure that the Richmond Retirement System will become fully funded.

Councilor Cynthia Newbille reiterated her request to move forward with considering Res. 2023-R050 later that evening at the Formal Session of Council.

CAO Saunders stated that the proposed transition to VRS will incur a cost-saving for the city in the next budget cycle.

Councilor Reva Trammell also suggested Res. 2023-R050 be considered later that evening.

After acknowledging the lack of a consensus to continue Res. 2023-R050, as previously requested, President Jones asked that city administration provide Council with the fiscal impact of the proposed VRS transition and responses to any other questions forwarded to the Council Chief of Staff Office from Councilmembers.

There were no further comments or discussions concerning Consent and Regular Agenda items.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch arrived at 4:28 p.m. and was seated.

Closed Session

At 4:29 p.m., Councilor Cynthia Newbille moved that the City Council go into a closed meeting pursuant to subdivision (A)(1) of Section 2.2-3711 of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act to discuss, consider, and interview prospective candidates for employment as City Auditor.

The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Councilor Ellen Robertson motioned to exit closed session. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Councilors reconvened in open session at 5:41 p.m.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING
September 25, 2023

WHEREAS, the Council has convened in closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Council that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law:

NOW, THEREFORE,
BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Council hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge (i) only public matters lawfully exempt from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certifying resolution applies; and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Council.

WITNESS the following vote of Council members, as recorded by Candice D. Reid, City Clerk:

CERTIFYING:
Michael J. Jones, President
Kristen Nye, Vice President
Katherine Jordan
Ann-Frances Lambert
Cynthia I. Newbille
Stephanie A. Lynch
Ellen F. Robertson
Reva M. Trammell

DECLINING TO CERTIFY:

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

CITY CLERK