



# Richmond City Council

*The Voice of the People*

*Richmond, Virginia*

## Office of the Council Chief of Staff

### Organizational Development Standing Committee

October 6, 2025

### Staff Prep Document for Councilmembers

**Previous Meeting:** September 2, 2025

**Next Meeting:** November 3, 2025

Legistar Link: [City of Richmond - Meeting of Organizational Development Standing Committee on 10/6/2025 at 4:00 PM](#)

#### Agenda Overview:

##### Administration Reports:

1. FY2027 Non-Departmental Process Development ~ Amy Popovich, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Human Services
2. Legislative Proposals for the Virginia General Assembly 2026 Session ~ Devon Cabot, Vice President, Two Capitols Consulting

##### Ordinances & Resolutions:

[None]

##### Reports of Standing Committees:

1. Education and Human Services
2. Finance and Economic Development
3. Government Operations
4. Land Use, Housing, and Transportation
5. Public Safety

FY2027 Non-Departmental Process Development ~ Amy Popovich, DCAO HS

- Goal: improved outcomes, reduced administrative burden, strengthen public trust by distancing from political process while preserving Council's budget authority, equity framework
- Takes effect in Fiscal Year 2027.
- Identifying four intermediary orgs with four areas of subject matter expertise:
  - Economic mobility
  - Children and education
  - Arts and culture
  - Health
- Modeled after current Health Equity Fund and Positive Youth Dev. Funds
- Please outline our engagement with grantees and community about this shift.
- Will allocations be evenly distributed across each of the four areas?
- Does the new process increase overhead/administrative costs? If so, why is that increased investment worth it?

2025-08 Non-Departmental Audit Recommendations – all currently considered “Open”

We recommend that the CAO collaborate with City Council to develop and implement comprehensive policies and procedures for the non-departmental grant award process. These policies and procedures should:

- Establish a centralized, standardized framework governing the application review and grant award process for all non-departmental charitable organizations.
- Include specific requirements for application deadlines, scoring criteria, conflict-of-interest management, and document retention.
- Ensure that all reviewers document and justify funding recommendations when deviating from established criteria or scoring thresholds.

Additionally, the CAO should:

- Ensure that these policies are thoroughly documented and consistently applied by all departments involved in the process.
- Effectively communicate the process in the application materials.
- Establish a monitoring mechanism to ensure compliance with the new policies and procedures and periodically review their effectiveness in achieving a fair and transparent grant award process

We recommend that the CAO collaborate with City Council to establish a funding mechanism for determining the total amount available for non-departmental charitable organization grants. This amount should be provided to reviewers before the award review process begins to support informed decision-making and, if feasible, made available to applicants to promote transparency.

We recommend that the CAO facilitate regular communication with City Council to ensure their informational needs are met for future funding decisions on non-departmental grants. At a minimum, the CAO should:

- Implement a system to collect and maintain detailed performance and financial data from all grantees to support accurate and comprehensive reporting to City Council.
- Develop a detailed template that includes performance data for each grantee, a comparison of achievements against grant contract requirements, financial data on expenditures and balances, and

progress updates on current-year allocations, ensuring comprehensive coverage of all departments managing non-departmental grants.

- Establish a formal process within the CAO's office to ensure compliance with City Code requirements for reporting on non-departmental charitable organizations. If the current City Code is not feasible to follow, the CAO should collaborate with City Council and the City Attorney's Office to update the Code.

We recommend that the CAO enforce the deadlines stated in grant application materials or formally document the approval of any extensions. Additionally, if a deadline extension is granted, it should be publicly communicated and made available to all potential applicants.

We recommend that the Program Manager develop and deliver routine training programs for all staff involved in the grant review process, covering:

- How to evaluate applications objectively.
- Proper documentation and records retention practices.
- Ethical considerations, including conflict-of-interest management

We recommend that the CAO develop and implement a process to ensure all grant contracts include specific, measurable, and objective performance measures aligned with program goals. Additionally, City staff should review and approve grantee-developed performance measures to ensure they are clear, actionable, and aligned with the City's objectives.

We recommend that the CAO develop and implement comprehensive grant monitoring policies and procedures. These policies and procedures should establish a risk-based approach to grant management and address the following: • Criteria for determining when site visits, desk reviews, or other forms of verification are required. • Specific information to review during monitoring procedures, including performance and financial data.

- Proper documentation practices for recording the results of monitoring activities.
- Guidelines for determining when and how funds should be recovered if performance measures are not met or if funds are used inappropriately.
- We recommend that the CAO develop and implement a process to enforce reporting and documentation requirements in grant contracts. At a minimum, this process should:
- Require grantees to submit interim and final performance and financial reports as stipulated in their contracts.
- Include a checklist for grant managers to review and verify submitted reports for completeness and accuracy.
- Establish a formal follow-up process to address missing or incomplete reports and ensure compliance.
- Track organizations that consistently fail to submit required reports or refuse to comply and make available to all reviewers for consideration in future grant evaluations. For such organizations, additional oversight measures, such as site visits or a full audit, should be conducted to ensure accountability and compliance with grant agreements.

We recommend that the CAO assess staffing needs for proper grant monitoring and then develop and deliver training programs for grant managers on oversight best practices, including monitoring techniques, performance evaluation, and financial accountability. Training should also include specific guidance on identifying and addressing potential fraud, waste, and abuse.

*Staff summaries provided for convenience ...*

Education and Human Services:

*Last Month Meeting Summary (Thu, 9/11):*

- Shunda Giles, Director of DSS shared an overview of the agency and a review of metrics for customer service including that the department serves over 100,000 recipients of SNAP, TANF, or Medicaid benefits as a “Level III” agency (the largest tier) in the Central Region of Virginia. Ms. Giles shared data on Richmond DSS’s processing timeliness compared to state benchmarks and against peer localities in the region and other level III agencies. Ms. Giles cited issues with staffing, system latency, and missing documents as typical causes for delays in processing applications. Notably, the federal government has announced that beginning October 2027, states with SNAP payment accuracy rates above 6% will be required to contribute a state match for SNAP benefits (currently VA’s error rate is 11.5% and Richmond’s is 14.1%).
- Jason Kamras, Superintendent of RPS shared that the division’s SOL scores are up, including economically disadvantaged students who out-perform the state’s average for that demographic group. Mr. Kamras also shared that graduation data will be released soon and that RPS expects to receive a feasibility study for its new technical center in October.
- Amy Popovich, DCAO HS formally introduced three new staff members: Homeless Services Manager, Office of Substance Use Response, and Equity and LGBT Adviser and shared invitations to join ribbon cuttings for newly modernized recreational facilities.
- The Committee heard three resolutions (two approving participation in opioid-related settlements and a third to approve RBHA’s two-year performance contract) and forwarded all with a recommendation to approve.

*This Month Meeting Plans (Thu, 10/9)*

- DNCS on Inclement shelter update
- Humankind on Family Crisis Fund update

## Finance and Economic Development:

### *Last Month Meeting Summary (Wed, 9/17)*

- The committee continued consideration of [board vacancies](#) until next month.
- The committee forwarded six papers to the full Council with recommended approval: Ord. 2025-187, Ord. 2025-204, Ord. 2025-205, Ord. 2025-206, Ord. 2025-207, and Res. 2025-R040.
- The committee forwarded two papers to the full Council with no recommendation: Ord. 2025-100 and Ord. 2025-208.
- The Administration declined to provide the presentation about FY25 Q4 financials requested by Chair Robertson for the stated reason of not wanting to publicly share unaudited year-end figures, though Finance Director Letitia Shelton provided an overview of her background, an update on progress in the department since her arrival, and some revenue and expenditure figures from Q3 of FY25. Per the presentation (slide 6), some additional information from a "30-day assessment" of the department will be shared by CAO Donald. The Administration has not yet followed up on the 30-day assessment results.
  - Chair Robertson welcomed Director Shelton back to Richmond government and expressed a desire to work collaboratively with her and her colleagues to examine and develop proposals to improve the city's financial reporting requirements, particularly in terms of reports required to be submitted to Council.
- Angie Rodgers, Director of Economic Development, provided a presentation with updates about the Diamond District project, including approximately \$10 million in unanticipated infrastructure costs her team will be working to resolve.
  - Chair Robertson similarly welcomed Director Rodgers and expressed a similar desire to work collaboratively with her and other economic development staff within the Administration to improve the way information about economic development — not only project and programmatic updates but also information related to revenues and ROI — is shared with Council.

### *This Month Meeting Plans (Wed, 10/15)*

- Chair Robertson requested that written memos be submitted to the committee in lieu of several previously scheduled presentations. We initially requested the memos by COB 9/30 and then extended the deadline to 10/3. The topics for these memos are:
  - Delinquent tax collections and RVA Pay
  - Tax relief program performance
  - Risk management and claims
- Accordingly, Chair Robertson intended the prep meeting time slot on Wednesday, 10/8 to be used as a work session for the committee instead. If the memos are not received by COB 10/3, review and discussion of the memos will need to take place during the regular committee meeting 10/15.

## Government Operations:

### *Last Month Meeting Summary (Wed, 9/24):*

- DPW Deputy Director Torrence Robinson shared an overview of the Operations and Maintenance Division that he leads including its six main sub-divisions: urban forestry, street cleaning, grounds maintenance, solid waste, roadway maintenance, and streetlights. Councilmembers asked him to elaborate on his team's work to fight illegal dumping (surveillance cameras), a review of open audit recommendations, and the forthcoming citywide tree plan.
- City Auditor Riad Ali shared an overview of his office and its FY25 annual report. Mr. Ali explained that his office performs periodic audits that provide independent analysis of city programs but also may refer matters to the OIG if they believe fraud may have occurred. Councilmembers asked about ongoing audits including a project on the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and efforts to hire staff with public utilities experience.
- Interim Inspector General Foster Curtiss shared an overview of his office including recent improvements like new software, and proper safety/investigative gear. Mr. Curtiss shared a breakdown of investigations by category including fraud (43%), abuse (15%), and waste (12%) as well as "other" which is primarily referrals to other investigative agencies.
- Members considered four papers and recommended one for approval (Ord. 2025-223 (Avula, Canoe Run Park storage tank)) and recommended continuing three others:
  - Ord. 2025-209 (Gibson & Abubaker, disclosure forms) to make several amendments per advice from the City Clerk.
  - Ord. 2025-210 (Gibson & Abubaker, FOIA library) received six public comments in support, but the administration shared fiscal and implementation concerns and requested a continuance to discuss further.
  - Ord. 2025-211 (Gibson & Abubaker, procurement open data) was continued without discussion.

### *This Month Meeting Plans (Wed, 10/22):*

- OOS on Joint Energy Team overview + update on Sustainable Design Standards
- DGS on Green fleet plan update
- HR on FY26 Q1 vacancy report

Land Use, Housing and Transportation:

*Last Month Meeting Summary (Tue, 9/16):*

- The Committee disposed of 16 papers, forwarding them to the Council. Most significantly, Ord No. 2025-161 regarding rental inspections districts, was “amended” in Committee. Committee Staff and City Attorney Staff are working on an amended version to introduce on Tuesday, October 14<sup>th</sup>.

*This Month Meeting Plans (Tue, 10/21):*

- The Fall Line Trail w/ Recreation and Parks. Requested presentation/discussion items include updates on trail and greenspace utilization, Fall Line Trail and Parks & Recreation updates.
- The Maggie Walker Land Trust w/ The Maggie Walker Land Trust. Requested presentation/discussion items include updates on numbers of units developed and planned, and economic impacts on residents.

## Public Safety

### *Last Month Meeting Summary (Thu, 9/23)*

- Ordinance No 2025-221 Authorizes the CAO to accept \$250K from VDEM and amends the FY 25-26 Budget to establish a special fund for those funds for purchasing emergency radio equipment for the Department of Emergency Communications, Preparedness, and Response. The Committee recommended approval of the ordinance, 2-0.
- Ordinance No 2025-222 Amends the City Code to increase towing fees for vehicles on private property. An accompanying presentation was given by Lynne Lancaster. The Committee recommended Continuing the paper for 60 days, 2-0.
- RPD Chief Edwards gave the Committee an update on efforts to police Shockoe Bottom and a brief general update on crime stats for the City. He reports that violent crime in the City is generally down. RPD remains concerned about open firearm displays, recent shootings, and fights in Shockoe Bottom.

### *This Month Meeting Plans (Tue, 10/28)*

- RPD Chief Edwards and Planning and Development Review Director Vonck on policing the impact of VAPE shops on surrounding communities.
- Members requested follow-up with Admin (RPD and Planning) on alternative ways of addressing safety concerns in Shockoe Bottom using zoning or other means.