



City of Richmond

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

DRAFT Meeting Minutes Public Safety Standing Committee

Thursday, May 28, 2026

1:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor – City Hall

Committee Members in Attendance

The Honorable Reva Trammell – Chair
The Honorable Sarah Abubaker – Member
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch – Vice Chair

Staff and Others in Attendance

Greg Lukanuski, Deputy City Attorney
Kiley Kesecker, Deputy City Clerk
Nahdiah Muhammad, Assistant City Clerk
Steve Taylor, Council Policy Analyst

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:07 p.m.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement and Public Speaker Guidelines

Assistant City Clerk Nahdiah Muhammad provided information on the appropriate way to evacuate the Council Chamber in an emergency along with public speaker guidelines.

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of March 24, 2026, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2026.106](#) March 24, 2026 - Public Safety Standing Committee Meeting Minutes

Public Comment Period

Monique Wyatt addressed the committee regarding medical care at the Richmond City Justice Center. She alleged deficiencies in medical treatment and dietary accommodations for inmates with documented medical conditions and requested an independent audit of the facility's medical practices.

The committee addressed Ms. Wyatt's comments and requested additional information.

Antionette Irving, Richmond City Sheriff, noted that the Richmond City Justice Center recently passed its Board of Local and Regional Jails audit and stated that the facility provides medical care and security services in accordance with applicable standards. Sheriff Irving explained that medical care is overseen by healthcare providers, a risk manager, nursing staff, accreditation personnel, and a dietitian, who work together to ensure compliance with state requirements and national correctional healthcare standards. She added that special diets are provided when medically necessary and are coordinated through medical staff and the facility's food service provider.

Board Vacancies

Kiley Kesecker, Deputy City Clerk, reviewed board vacancies and reappointment application for consideration by the committee.

[CD.2026.107](#) May 28, 2026 - Public Safety Board Vacancy Report

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Chair Reva Trammell moved to forward the following reappointment application to Council with a recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Advisory Board for the Assessment of Towing Fees and the Storage of Vehicles:

Abin Thomas (reappointment)

Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinance was considered:

1. [ORD. 2026-059](#) To amend City Code 2-728, concerning the Department of Emergency Communications, Preparedness, and Response, to require the routing of E-911 calls for emergency medical services to the Richmond Ambulance Authority by the Department of Emergency Communications, Preparedness, and Response.

Patrons: Ms. Trammell, Ms. Abubaker, Ms. Gibson and Ms. Lynch

Stephen Willoughby, Director of the Department of Emergency Communications, Preparedness, and Response (DECPR), provided an introduction to the proposed ordinance. He stated that maintaining the current single emergency call center model improves response times and supports nationally accredited protocols. He noted that a dual center model would increase costs due to duplicated licensing, infrastructure, and training. Mr. Willoughby added that staff review of disputed calls found them largely compliant with standards and stated that the administration opposes the proposed ordinance.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

Chip Decker, Chief Executive Officer of the Richmond Ambulance Authority (RAA), noted that while DECPR is accredited, RAA is accredited in its call taking systems and software by the International Academy of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) for call taking. Mr. Decker stated that RAA remains prepared to provide additional capacity, expertise, and accuracy to the city's call taking operations and urged approval of the ordinance.

Member Sarah Abubaker inquired about the fiscal impacts of the proposed ordinance and asked for clarification on information provided by the State.

Mr. Decker stated that state statute requires staff to be trained in Public Safety Answering Points in emergency medical dispatch. He noted that the state guidance does not specify which entity must provide the service or assume operational responsibility. He further stated that, in his view, the administration's interpretation referenced by the mayor is incorrect and that the intent of the statute is not to reduce service quality in order to meet compliance requirements.

Vice Chair Stephanie Lynch requested clarification on the data, citing Exhibit A from DECPR showing a 34% reduction in average time to determine call outcomes and the accuracy rate.

Mr. Decker stated that 911 calls are initially screened and dispatched using software protocols based on reported symptoms. He added that additional questions continue after dispatch to ensure accuracy and emphasized that the process prioritizes correct classification over speed.

Mr. Willoughby stated that both agencies use IAED standards to measure accuracy. He noted that the key difference is that DECPR can dispatch more quickly because calls are handled directly by a certified emergency medical dispatcher upon the initial 911 call.

There were no further comments and Vice Chair Stephanie Lynch moved to forward ORD. No. 2026-059 to Council with a recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Presentation(s)

Richmond Fire Department Response Times and Updates

Jeffrey Segal, Chief of Fire and Emergency Services, presented updates on Richmond Fire Department operations and response times. He reported investments in new units, fire stations, training infrastructure, and capital improvement projects. He stated that the department is using predictive data and dynamic staffing to improve response efficiency and manage demand, while also addressing overtime and staffing challenges through recruitment and retention efforts.

Chief Segal emphasized community risk reduction efforts, including public education, smoke alarm installations, and door to door outreach, as well as expanded training for hazardous materials and active shooter response. He concluded that the department is focused on prevention, improved staffing stability, and operational efficiency to meet the city's growing public safety needs.

[CD.2026.156](#) Richmond Fire Department Response Times and Updates

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Vice Chair Stephanie Lynch thanked the fire department for its work and noted strong positive feedback from residents on the door to door outreach.

Member Sarah Abubaker praised the fire department's performance and leadership. She asked how the city is using data to plan for growth and whether additional support should be considered due to the unique demands placed on fire services. She inquired whether there are policy or legislative solutions the council could consider to improve fire department access to buildings and support faster emergency response.

Chief Segal stated that the department offsets financial shortfalls through grant funding, totaling approximately \$5.2 million over the past three years. He added that existing legislation requires key holders to respond within a specified time frame to provide access to buildings. He indicated that the department prioritizes ensuring timely building access and offered to follow up with additional data regarding key holder response compliance.

Chair Reva Trammell asked for clarification regarding the location of the fire department's burn tower, smoke alarm distribution, and active shooter training.

Chief Segal stated that the Fire Department provides fire safety education throughout the community, including in apartments and high rise buildings. He noted that while landlords are responsible for maintaining smoke alarms in rental properties, the department will install smoke alarms when needed to ensure resident safety. He also stated that the department works closely with the police department during active shooter incidents, serving as part of a rescue task force focused on providing emergency medical care.

Traffic Enforcement and Safety

Rick Edwards, Chief of Police, presented updates on crime trends, traffic enforcement, and active shooter preparedness. He reported decreases in several major violent crime categories and highlighted ongoing traffic safety efforts, including speed and red light camera enforcement, targeted traffic blitzes, and digital ticketing. Chief Edwards also emphasized the Police Department's partnership with the Fire Department through rescue task force training.

[CD.2026.155](#) Traffic Enforcement and Safety

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Chair Reva Trammell asked whether firefighters participating in rescue task force operations are armed.

Chief Edwards stated that firefighters participating in rescue task force operations are not armed and are paired with armed police officers who provide security and protection during emergency responses.

Vice Chair Stephanie Lynch asked what strategies or initiatives the department is implementing to address the increase in domestic violence related incidents.

Chief Edwards stated the department is prioritizing domestic violence cases by tracking and actively pursuing outstanding warrants. He also expressed support for a Family Justice Center to provide centralized services and reduce barriers for victims leaving abusive situations.

Vice Chair Lynch requested additional information on the potential implementation of a second responders program to support domestic violence response and prevention efforts.

Discussion Item(s)

There were no discussion items.

Staff Report

Council staff provided the committee with the May Public Safety staff report.

[CD.2026.160](#) Public Safety Staff Report

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:41 p.m.