



# City of Richmond

## Work Session Minutes

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

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Monday, October 4, 2021

4:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

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### **Councilmembers Present**

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

### **Staff Present**

Joyce Davis, Interim Council Chief of Staff  
Candice Reid, City Clerk  
Tabrica Rentz, Acting Deputy City Attorney  
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Council President Cynthia Newbille called the work session to order at 4:12 p.m. and presided.

### **Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan**

Upon the President's request, City Clerk Candice Reid provided information on the appropriate manner in which the Council Chamber is to be evacuated in the event of an emergency.

### **Discussion Items**

#### **Review of the American Rescue Plan Act Spending Plan**

Acting Chief Administrative Officer Lincoln Saunders discussed city administration's responses to recommended spending plan adjustments raised by Council, regarding the Mayor's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) spending proposal. Mr. Saunders provided information regarding requested ARPA funding requests by Council that would be addressed through programs and funding opportunities not associated with ARPA. Mr. Saunders also stated that the Greater Richmond Transit Center (GRTC) was undergoing review of current policies and practices, and he suggested not dedicating ARPA funds towards GRTC until the review was complete.

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

*Councilor Michael Jones stated his concerns with certain recommended reductions to the Mayor's ARPA spending proposal put forward by members of Council.*

*Councilor Andreas Addison arrived at 4:28 p.m. and was seated.*

Mr. Saunders stated that city administration planned to use additional fleet management funds in the future to address Council's requests to initiate a green fleet plan. Mr. Saunders also stated that Council's request to fund urban gardens could be addressed by ARPA funds dedicated to beautification and climate control efforts.

*Councilwoman Reva Trammell inquired about recommended reductions to the TB Smith Community Center and a proposed community center at Lucks Field. Councilwoman Trammell also inquired about current Capital Improvement Projects located within the 8<sup>th</sup> Voter District. Councilwoman Trammell stated she believed the proposed improvements to community centers would benefit the entire city.*

Chris Frelke, Parks and Recreation Director, provided Council with information regarding funding and timelines for proposed projects in the 8<sup>th</sup> Voter District.

*Councilor Michael Jones addressed his concerns with proposed funding reductions to community centers. Councilor Jones informed Council that he believed the community center projects would help reduce gun violence and improve the lives of citizens. Councilor Jones stated he was not in favor of the proposed funding reductions to community centers and other Parks and Recreation projects.*

*Councilor Kristen Larson requested that city administration commit to funding Council requests, such as the Downtown Riverfront Plan, with funding that becomes available after the implementation of the ARPA spending proposal.*

*Councilor Andreas Addison stated he wanted additional information regarding the TB Smith Community Center and a proposed community center at Lucks Field. Councilor Addison requested more information on building costs and building details, stating he wanted a better understanding of costs and necessary funding. Councilor Addison also stated his concerns with allocating the necessary ARPA funding prior to spending deadlines.*

*Vice President Ellen Robertson stated it was important that Council dedicate ARPA funding to help individuals and communities that were most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Vice President Robertson also stated Council must address health disparities in the city.*

Chris Frelke, Parks and Recreation Director, informed Council that much research took place in identifying community centers and other parks and recreation projects. Mr. Frelke stated the projects were chosen to improve the health and quality of life of citizens in areas of high poverty and low life expectancy.

*Councilor Larson stated her concerns that the community center projects were not sufficiently planned or researched prior to city administration seeking approval for the proposed ARPA allocation. Councilor Larson also stated her concerns with Parks and Recreation's plans for existing facilities that she believed were underutilized.*

Acting Chief Administrative Officer Lincoln Saunders informed members that Council would receive finalized plans and costs for the proposed community centers prior to the final allocation of project funding. Mr. Saunders stated his concerns that Council requests to fund the proposed community centers with funding from the Capital Improvement Budget, would greatly impact the city's ability to address other needed improvements in the future.

*Councilor Stephanie Lynch stated it was important Council use ARPA funding to address the immediate needs of citizens and help communities most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.*

Tariq Waajid, Parks and Recreation Program and Operations Manager, informed Council of his experiences working for the city within the Department of Parks and Recreation. Mr. Waajid addressed staffing issues within the department, and he stated that providing parks and recreation with necessary resources would help improve the lives of citizens and decrease violence in the city.

*Councilor Katherine Jordan inquired about city partnerships with outside organizations related to the community centers.*

Mr. Frelke stated the partnerships would mostly address programming and not capital costs.

*Councilor Andreas Addison inquired about the redistribution of allocated funding if the final costs of the community center projects are completed under budget.*

Mr. Saunders stated any additional funds could be allocated by Parks and Recreation to other identified projects in need of funding.

*It was the consensus of Council that ARPA spending proposal reductions to the TB Smith Community Center and a proposed community center at Lucks Field projects not be requested of city administration.*

*Councilor Michael Jones stated it was important Council and city administration plan to allocate and spend ARPA funding prior to any required deadlines to avoid the loss of provided ARPA funding. Councilor Jones recommended that the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee address the issue and provide Council with recommendations.*

*President Cynthia Newbille requested that the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee address the issue and decide upon the appropriate manner for moving forward, and also review necessary reports and special funding designations.*

*Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert stated that she supported the proposed community center projects, but was concerned with the proposed funding amounts*

Mr. Saunders informed Council that city administration would examine other proposals put forward by members and would provide additional feedback on possible adjustments to the Mayors ARPA spending proposal.

*President Cynthia Newbille confirmed that city administration planned to introduce legislation regarding the Mayor's ARPA spending proposal, with the expectation that Council would consider the legislation at a future special meeting of Council, tentatively scheduled for October 25, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.*

*Councilor Andreas Addison inquired if city administration could examine the establishment of a small businesses loan fund.*

Mr. Saunders informed Council that citizen input received at community engagement sessions would be taken into consideration before introduction of legislation.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the work session adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

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CITY CLERK