



Richmond City Council

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

Informal Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 28, 2025

4:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Councilmembers Present

The Honorable Cynthia Newbille, President
The Honorable Katherine Jordan, Vice President
The Honorable Sarah Abubaker (early departure)
The Honorable Andrew Breton
The Honorable Kenya Gibson
The Honorable Nicole Jones
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch (late arrival)
The Honorable Ellen Robertson
The Honorable Reva Trammell (early departure)

Staff Present

Lisa Braxton, Council Management Analyst, Principal
Tori Cotman, Assistant City Attorney
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Tabrica Rentz, Deputy City Attorney
RJ Warren, Council Chief of Staff

Call to Order

Council President Cynthia Newbille called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Announcement

Upon the President's request, Council Management Analyst Lisa Braxton provided information on the appropriate way to evacuate the Council Chamber in an emergency.

Docket Review

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

Consent Agenda:

1. Ord. 2024-312 – to be continued to Monday, September 8, 2025

Councilor Stephanie Lynch arrived at 4:04 p.m. and was seated.

2. Ord. 2025-014 – to be continued to Monday, September 8, 2025
3. Ord. 2025-025 – to be continued to Monday, September 8, 2025
4. Ord. 2025-046 – to be continued to Monday, September 8, 2025

Prior to the start of the meeting, Councilor Kenya Gibson requested that Ords. 2025-046 and 2025-080 be continued to the September 8, 2025 Council meeting.

5. Ord. 2025-079 – to be continued to Monday, September 8, 2025
6. Ord. 2025-080 – to be continued to Monday, September 8, 2025
7. Ord. 2025-081 – to be continued to Monday, September 8, 2025
8. Ord. 2025-113 – to be continued to Monday, September 8, 2025
9. Ord. 2025-120 – retained on Consent Agenda
10. Ord. 2025-136 – to be amended and continued to Monday, September 8, 2025
11. Ord. 2025-138 – to be continued to Monday, September 8, 2025

After an inquiry regarding Ord. 2025-138, Councilor Sarah Abubaker explained the proposed residency waiver provision.

12. Ord. 2025-144 – retained on Consent Agenda
13. Ord. 2025-145 – retained on Consent Agenda
14. Ord. 2025-146 – retained on Consent Agenda
15. Ord. 2025-147 – retained on Consent Agenda
16. Ord. 2025-148 – retained on Consent Agenda
17. Ord. 2025-149 – retained on Consent Agenda
18. Ord. 2025-150 – to be continued to Monday, September 8, 2025
19. Ord. 2025-151 – retained on Consent Agenda

- 20. Ord. 2025-152 – retained on Consent Agenda
- 21. Ord. 2025-153 – retained on Consent Agenda
- 22. Ord. 2025-154 – retained on Consent Agenda
- 23. Ord. 2025-155 – to be amended and continued to Monday, September 8, 2025
- 24. Ord. 2025-156 – retained on Consent Agenda
- 25. Ord. 2025-157 – to be amended and continued to Monday, September 8, 2025

Vice President Katherine Jordan informed her colleagues of her intent to forgo the proposed amendment to Ord. 2025-157 and instead consider the legislation in its current form, later that evening during the Formal Session of Council. Vice President Jordan explained that due to the increasing rate by which vape businesses are being established within the city limits, she preferred the immediate enactment of Ord. 2025-157 and requested the proposed amendment be considered at a later time.

- 26. Ord. 2025-158 – retained on Consent Agenda
- 27. Ord. 2025-159 – retained on Consent Agenda
- 28. Ord. 2025-160 – retained on Consent Agenda
- 29. Ord. 2025-162 – retained on Consent Agenda
- 30. Ord. 2025-163 – retained on Consent Agenda
- 31. Ord. 2025-164 – retained on Consent Agenda
- 32. Ord. 2025-165 – retained on Consent Agenda
- 33. Res. 2025-R020 – to be continued to Monday, September 8, 2025
- 34. Res. 2025-R030 – retained on Consent Agenda
- 35. Res. 2025-R031 – retained on Consent Agenda
- 36. Res. 2025-R032 – retained on Consent Agenda

Regular Agenda:

- 37. Ord. 2024-187 – retained on Regular Agenda

38. Ord. 2025-100 – to be continued to Monday, September 22, 2025

39. Ord. 2025-161 – to be continued to Monday, September 22, 2025

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

Other Discussion Item(s)

Updates from Mayor Danny Avula

Mayor Danny Avula provided Council with an update regarding his six months in office, which included the following:

- Key appointments to his administrative team, especially the hiring of Chief Administrative Officer Odie Donald
- Assessments and strategies, which included M.A.P. (mayoral action plan) and the (7) seven thriving pillars (City Hall, Neighborhoods, Families, Economy, Inclusive Communities, Sustainable Built Environment and Storytelling)
- FY 2026 “Look for it, Find it, Fix it” initiatives, such as the p-card program reset, Finance department rebuild, non-departmental redesign process, revamped budget review timeline
- Water crisis and public utilities modernization

Councilors thanked Mayor Avula and requested additional information regarding the employee survey analysis, water system statistics and future environmental forecast planning.

Closed Session

At 4:47 p.m., Councilor Nicole Jones moved that the City Council go into a closed meeting pursuant to subdivision (A)(7) and (A)(29) of section 2.2-3711 of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act to (i) consult with legal counsel concerning probable litigation, because consultation in an open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the City and (ii) discuss the award of a contract or contracts involving the expenditure of public funds relating to state lobbying and legislative services and the terms and scope of such contract or contracts, because discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the City.

The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Vice President Katherine Jordan motioned to exit closed session. The motion was seconded and approved: Ayes 6, Breton, Gibson, Jones, Robertson, Jordan, Newbille. Noes None. Lynch, Trammell and Abubaker had not rejoined the meeting.

Councilors reconvened in open session at 5:58 p.m.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch rejoined the meeting.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

July 28, 2025

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:

- Cynthia I. Newbille, President
- Katherine L. Jordan, Vice President
- Andrew S. Breton
- Kenya J. Gibson
- Sarah M.A. Abubaker (early departure)
- Stephanie A. Lynch
- Ellen F. Robertson
- Reva M. Trammell (early departure)
- Nicole Jones

DECLINING TO CERTIFY:

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

CITY CLERK