



# City of Richmond

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## **DRAFT Meeting Minutes Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee**

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Wednesday, April 16, 2025

2:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor – City Hall

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### **Committee Members and Other Council Members in Attendance**

The Honorable Ellen Robertson – Chair  
The Honorable Nicole Jones – Vice Chair  
The Honorable Kenya Gibson – Councilmember (early departure)  
The Honorable Reva Trammell – Councilmember

### **Absent**

The Honorable Stephanie Lynch – Member

### **Staff in Attendance**

Tori Cotman, Assistant City Attorney  
Laura Drewry, City Attorney  
Nahdiah Muhammad, Assistant City Clerk  
Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst  
Will Perkins, Senior Council Legislative Services Manager  
Candice Reid, City Clerk  
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

### **Call to Order**

Chair Ellen Robertson called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m., and presided.

### **Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement and Public Speaker Guidelines**

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

### **Public Comment Period**

There were no public comment speakers.

## Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of March 3, 2025 Special meeting and March 19, 2025 committee meeting, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2025.117](#) March 3, 2025 - Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee Special Meeting Minutes

**Attachments:** [20250306 Finance Special Meeting Minutes - DRAFT](#)

[CD.2025.102](#) March 19, 2025 - Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee Meeting Minutes

**Attachments:** [20250319 Finance Minutes - DRAFT](#)

## Paper(s) for Consideration

**Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to continue the following ordinance to the May 21, 2025, Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting:**

1. [ORD. 2025-032](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Grant Agreement between the City of Richmond, Refuge Apartments, LP, and the Economic Development Authority of the City of Richmond for the purpose of facilitating the construction of an affordable housing development located at 5015 Snead Road, 5009 Rear Snead Road, and 5015 Rear Snead Road, or a site resulting from any such consolidation of the aforementioned parcels. (9th District)

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

**Attachments:** [Ord. No. 2025-032](#)

**The motion was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.**

**The following ordinance was considered:**

2. [ORD. 2025-056](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a CARITAS Grant Agreement between the City of Richmond and CARITAS for the purpose of funding the creation and implementation of a Peer Recovery Specialist training program.

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

**Attachments:** [Ord. No. 2025-056](#)

Michael Fatula, Human Services Policy Advisor for the Opioid Response Coordination, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance.

*Chair Ellen Robertson stated that she is in support of the proposed ordinance providing opioid treatment services in the city with no fiscal impact.*

### **Public Hearing**

Benjamin Carr, Director of Recovery Services for CARITAS, addressed the committee regarding the proposed ordinance. Mr. Carr stated that the Peer Recovery Specialist Academy will produce a minimum of 40 Peer Recovery Specialists to provide support for individuals battling opioid addiction.

**There were no further discussions and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2025-056 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.**

### **The following ordinances were considered:**

3. [ORD. 2025-064](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a McShin Foundation Grant Agreement between the City of Richmond and the McShin Foundation for the purpose of funding peer recovery specialist services to combat the opioid crisis in the city of Richmond.

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

**Attachments:** [Ord. No. 2025-064](#)

4. [ORD. 2025-065](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Saint Luke Legacy Center Grant Agreement between the City of Richmond and the Saint Luke Legacy Center for the purpose of funding peer recovery specialist services to combat the opioid crisis in the city of Richmond.

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

**Attachments:** [Ord. No. 2025-065](#)

5. [ORD. 2025-066](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute an Atlantic Outreach Group Grant Agreement between the City of Richmond and Atlantic Outreach Group, Inc. for the purpose of funding peer recovery specialist services to combat the opioid crisis in the city of Richmond.

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

**Attachments:** [Ord. No. 2025-066](#)

6. [ORD. 2025-067](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute an Opportunity, Alliance, and Reentry of Richmond Grant Agreement between the City of Richmond and Opportunity, Alliance, and Reentry for the purpose of funding peer recovery specialist services to combat the opioid crisis in the city of Richmond.

**Patrons:** Mayor Avula

**Attachments:** [Ord. No. 2025-067](#)

Michael Fatula, Human Services Policy Advisor for the Opioid Response Coordination, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinances.

*Chair Ellen Robertson asked if the city had previously worked with the organizations referenced in the proposed ordinances.*

Mr. Fatula stated the city had previously worked with some of the organizations but that it would be the first time the city granted them funding regarding opioid treatment, if approved. Mr. Fatula also stated that all the organizations are non-profits, and he provided the committee with additional information regarding the selection process.

*Chair Robertson asked if the city planned to do outreach to other organizations in the city that provide opioid addiction treatment services.*

Mr. Fatula stated that Human Services worked closely with the Richmond Opioid Task Force, and monthly meetings provided Human Services with the opportunity to connect with other organizations.

*Chair Robertson stated the importance for the city to be aware of the investments being made to combat the opioid crisis in the city and to ensure the provision of proper guidance and treatment. Chair Robertson asked for regular updates regarding the organizations' opioid treatment services.*

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2025-064, ORD. 2025-065, ORD. 2025-066 and ORD. 2025-067 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.

The following ordinance was considered:

7. [ORD. 2025-068](#) To amend and reordain City Code § 26-355, concerning the levy of tax on real estate, to establish a tax rate of \$1.16 for the tax year beginning Jan. 1, 2026.

**Patrons:** Ms. Trammell

**Attachments:** [Ord. No. 2025-068 - Withdrawn 20250428](#)

*Councilor Reva Trammell provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance.*

*Chair Ellen Robertson requested city administration to provide a fiscal impact analysis of the proposed ordinance. Chair Robertson also requested advice from the City Attorney's Office regarding the budget impact of the proposed ordinance.*

There were no further comments or discussions and Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward ORD. 2025-068 to Council with no recommendation, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Robertson, Jones.

## Presentation(s)

### Upcoming Real Estate Assessment Freeze

Sabrina Joy-Hogg, Interim Chief Administrative Officer, and Richie McKeithen, City Assessor, presented the committee with the upcoming real estate assessment freeze.

[CD.2025.123](#) April 16, 2025 - Upcoming Real Estate Assessment Freeze

**Attachments:** [20250416 Upcoming Real Estate Assessment Freeze Presentation](#)

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

*Chair Ellen Robertson asked if the September 2025 land book values would remain the same for the next two years.*

Mr. McKeithen stated that the September 2025 land book values would remain the same for the next two fiscal years, and he presented information concerning the upcoming real estate assessment freeze to the committee.

Interim CAO Joy-Hogg provided the committee with further information regarding the upcoming real estate assessment freeze.

*Chair Robertson asked if the September 2025 land book values would be the used to establish the budget in March 2026. Chair Robertson also asked if the budget introduced in March 2028, would be based on the same September 2025 book values.*

Interim CAO Joy-Hogg stated that the 2028 budget would be set using the land book values initiated in July 2027.

*Chair Robertson asked if the FY 2029 budget would be based on new land book values and if billing dates would remain the same.*

Interim CAO Joy-Hogg stated that the FY 2029 budget would be based on new land book values, and that the billing dates would remain the same.

*Councilor Reva Trammell asked about a projected 6% increase in land book values and the property taxes due based on the increase.*

Mr. McKeithen stated the projection was a 6% increase across the board in taxable real property and that assessment notices would be issued on September 1, 2025. Mr. McKeithen provided the committee with the differences between the tax bill and assessment notices.

*Councilor Trammell asked how assessments and billing information would be given to residents and landlords.*

Interim CAO Joy-Hogg stated that the notification process would require a multi-departmental approach, and all parties involved would not receive the same notice. Ms. Joy-Hogg also stated that a third party would be hired to assist with a communications strategy.

*Chair Robertson asked when would the third party company be contracted and how much would it cost the city.*

Interim CAO Joy-Hogg stated the scope of work had not been issued yet, and it was intended to have a contractor by summer 2025. Ms. Joy-Hogg also stated it would cost an estimated \$200,000.

Interim CAO Joy-Hogg stated the Department of Strategic Communications, the Department of Finance, the Chief Administrator's Office and the City Assessor's Office would be responsible for outreach efforts.

*Vice Chair Nicole Jones asked for additional clarity regarding land book value assessments and increases.*

Mr. McKeithen provided the committee with additional information regarding land book value assessments, projected increases and timelines.

*Vice Chair Jones stated her concerns regarding displacement due to increased assessments and educating city residents.*

Interim CAO Joy-Hogg stated that an extensive messaging campaign would be launched to provide clarity to residents on the projected increase of real estate rates in 2028.

*Councilor Kenya Gibson expressed her concerns over the impact of the new assessment timeline and increased 2028 assessment rates. Councilor Gibson stated that the change in the assessment timeline would however, create more accountability during the city budget process.*

### **Financial Impacts of Collective Bargaining**

Tyrome Alexander, Director of Human Resources, presented the committee with a presentation regarding the financial impacts of collective bargaining.

[CD.2025.122](#) April 16, 2025 - Financial Impacts of Collective Bargaining

Attachments: [20250416 Financial Impacts of Collective Bargaining Presentation](#)

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

*Vice Chair Nicole Jones asked if the review of the effects of the collective bargaining agreement had been conducted by the mayor per city code.*

Mr. Alexander stated that city administration was working on the bargaining agreements to gather the data needed for the required reports. Mr. Alexander also stated that the requirement would be met by July.

*Councilor Kenya Gibson asked if there would be an opportunity to quantify the savings produced by a decrease in the job vacancies, turnover, outsourcing and overtime rates.*

Mr. Alexander stated he could provide the committee with additional information after more research is conducted.

### **Board Vacancies**

Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst, reviewed board vacancies and applications for consideration by the committee.

[CD.2025.103](#) April 16, 2025 - Finance and Economic Development Board Vacancy Report

Attachments: [20250416 - Finance Board Vacancy Report](#)

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

**Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward the following board reappointment and appointment applications to Council with a recommendation to approve:**

Minority Business Enterprise and Emerging Small Business Advisory Board:  
Adrienne Whitaker (reappointment)  
Shemicia Bowen

Participatory Budgeting Steering Commission:  
Tiffany Beatrice Gunn

**The motion was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Robertson. Noes None.**

*Councilor Kenya Gibson departed the meeting at 3:27 p.m.*

### **Discussion Item(s)**

There were no discussion items.

### **Staff Report**

Council staff provided the committee with the April Finance and Economic Development staff report.

[CD.2025.129](#) April 16, 2025 - Finance and Economic Development Staff Report

**Attachments:** [20250416 Finance and Econmic Development Staff Report](#)

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

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.