



City of Richmond

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

Meeting Minutes Education and Human Services Standing Committee

Thursday, January 11, 2024

2:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Committee and Other Council Members in Attendance

The Honorable Cynthia Newbille - Vice Chair

The Honorable Nicole Jones - Member

Absent

The Honorable Stephanie Lynch - Chair

Staff and Others in Attendance

Joyce Davis, Council Policy Analyst

Nahdiyah Muhammad, Assistant City Clerk

Janet Palmer, Deputy City Attorney

Candice Reid, City Clerk

RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Call to Order

Vice Chair Cynthia Newbille called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement and Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Vice Chair's request, Assistant City Clerk Nahdiyah Muhammad provided information on the appropriate manner in which the Council Chamber is to be evacuated in the event of an emergency along with citizen speaker guidelines.

Electronic Participation

Pursuant to Rule III(D)(4)(b) of Council's Rules of Procedure, Committee Chair Stephanie Lynch made a request to participate in the meeting via Microsoft Teams from her home, due to a medical condition that prevented her physical attendance. The committee members present were required to adopt a motion to approve Chair Lynch's participation in the meeting by electronic communication means if it appeared to the body that her request complied with Rule III(D) of Council's Rules of Procedure. A motion was solicited from those members physically assembled to approve Chair Lynch's participation in the meeting by electronic communication means.

Member Nicole Jones moved to allow Chair Stephanie Lynch to participate in the meeting by electronic communication means. The motion was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Newbille. Noes None.

Chair Stephanie Lynch did not join the meeting via Microsoft Teams.

Public Comment Period

Kimberly Ann Myers addressed the committee regarding homelessness in the city and the lack of a sufficient inclement weather shelter. Ms. Myers also addressed her recent experience with homelessness.

Rhonda Sneed, Blessing Warriors Executive Director, addressed the committee regarding the impact of severe weather on the homeless population within the city, and the need for more inclement weather options for unhoused families in the city.

Nancy Williams, Three Gifts to You Ministries, gave thanks to Council for allowing collaboration with the city to address emergency shelter needs. Ms. Williams stated that there is a need for more services that offer showers for the unhoused population.

Bridgette Whitaker stated appreciation to Council for moving forward with addressing homelessness in the city, and she stated her concerns about the need for continued work in the future.

Cassie Knight addressed the committee regarding the unhoused population in the city, and she stated her concerns about barriers preventing residents from securing permanent housing.

Vice Chair Cynthia Newbille stated her appreciation for individuals that provided comments to the committee. Vice Chair Newbille also stated that progress has been made, but that more work will be necessary.

Approval of Minutes

There were no corrections or amendments to the meeting minutes of the Thursday, November 9, 2023, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2023.371](#) November 9, 2023 - Education & Human Services Standing Committee Meeting Minutes

Board Vacancies

Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst, informed committee members that Chair Stephanie Lynch had requested that the committee continue its review of board vacancies and applications to the February 8, 2024 Education and Human Services Standing Committee meeting.

Member Nicole Jones moved to continue consideration of applications for appointment and reappointment to the February 8, 2024 Education and Human Services Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Newbille. Noes None.

[CD.2024.001](#) Board Vacancy Report - Education & Human Services

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Presentations

Needs Assessment for Older Adults

Traci DeShazor, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) for Human Services, introduced Natasha Houpe, Office of Aging and Disability Services Program Manager.

Natasha Houpe, Office of Aging and Disability Services Program Manager, provided the committee with a presentation regarding a needs assessment for older adults.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

[CD.2024.011](#) Needs Assessment for Older Adults - EHS Presentation

Vice Chair Cynthia Newbille gave thanks to the Office of Aging and Disability Services for their work with the aging population.

Member Nicole Jones gave thanks to Natasha Houpe for her presentation, and she stated she looked forward to future collaboration.

Vice Chair Newbille stated that she looks forward to more strategy being developed to assist the aging population in areas with the highest concentration and greatest need.

Children's Funding Project Update

Joyce Davis, Council Policy Analyst, provided the committee with an update regarding the Children's Funding Project.

Richmond Public Schools and Richmond School Board Updates

Jason Kamras, Richmond Public Schools Superintendent, and Stephanie Rizzi, Richmond School Board Chair, provided the committee with an update regarding Richmond Public Schools (RPS).

Vice Chair Cynthia Newbille gave thanks to Superintendent Kamras and School Board Chair Rizzi for their continued work with RPS.

Member Nicole Jones stated that she hoped her experience with RPS can help bridge collaboration between the city and RPS.

Update from the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) for Human Services

Traci DeShazor, DCAO for Human Services, provided the committee with an update regarding Human Services. DCAO DeShazor also provided an update regarding the Richmond Outdoor and Prosperity Fund. DCAO DeShazor also stated she would follow up with individuals that provided comment during the meeting's Public Comment Period.

[CD.2024.007](#) Richmond Outdoor & Prosperity Fund (ROPF) Update

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Vice Chair Cynthia Newbille inquired if organizations that previously received funding from for the Richmond Outdoor and Prosperity Fund could reapply for additional funding.

DCAO DeShazor stated that she will provide the committee with additional information at a later date.

Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinance was considered:

1. [ORD. 2023-371](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Fulton Montessori School grant contract between the City of Richmond and Fulton Montessori School for the purpose of stabilizing, continuing, and expanding operations of a licensed early childhood care and education program in Fulton Hill.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney, Ms. Lynch, Ms. Newbille and Ms. Robertson

Forwarded to the January 22, 2024 Council meeting with recommendation to approve

Eva Colen, Manager of the Office of Children and Families, provided the committee with an introduction regarding ORD. 2023-371.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

Vice Chair Cynthia Newbille stated that the findings from the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) study suggested a need for more early childhood care within the city.

Eva Colen stated that city administration will continue to work closely with organizations and agencies that provide support to early childhood education and care.

There were no further comments or discussions and Member Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2023-371 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Newbille. Noes None.

The following ordinance was considered:

2. [ORD. 2023-372](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Nurture grant contract between the City of Richmond and The OmMama Resource Center, Inc., doing business as Nurture, for the purpose of developing and promoting a web-based directory containing a searchable database of local pregnancy, birth, and early parenting resources.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney, Ms. Lynch and Ms. Robertson

Forwarded to the January 22, 2024 Council meeting with recommendation to approve

Eva Colen, Manager of the Office of Children and Families, provided the committee with an introduction regarding ORD. 2023-372.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

Vice Chair Cynthia Newbille stated action was needed to address the recent increase in infant mortality and youth health conditions. Vice Chair Newbille also stated that having different types of access to available health information was important. Vice Chair Newbille inquired about Spanish language accessibility regarding resources.

Leslie Lytle, Nurture RVA Executive Director and Founder, confirmed that they are in the process of language translation of health resources.

There were no further comments or discussions and Member Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2023-372 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Newbille. Noes None.

The following ordinances were considered:

3. [ORD. 2024-002](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Grant Contract Southside ReLeaf, a Non-Stock Corporation between the City of Richmond and Southside ReLeaf for the purpose of providing workforce development opportunities through the creation of greenspaces in the southside of the city of Richmond.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney, Ms. Lynch and Ms. Robertson

Forwarded to the January 22, 2024 Council meeting with recommendation to approve

4. [ORD. 2024-003](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Grant Contract Groundwork RVA, Inc.

between the City of Richmond and Groundwork RVA, Inc., for the purpose of providing workforce development opportunities through the creation of greenspaces in the southside of the city of Richmond.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney, Ms. Lynch and Ms. Robertson

Forwarded to the January 22, 2024 Council meeting with recommendation to approve

5. [ORD. 2024-004](#)

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Grant Contract Virginia Community Voice, a Non-Stock Corporation between the City of Richmond and Virginia Community Voice for the purpose of providing workforce development opportunities through the creation of greenspaces in the southside of the city of Richmond.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney, Ms. Lynch and Ms. Robertson

Forwarded to the January 22, 2024 Council meeting with recommendation to approve

Ryan Rinn, Economic Development Business Services Manager, Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities, provided the committee with an introduction regarding ORD. 2024-003, ORD. 2024-004 and ORD. 2024-005.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

Member Nicole Jones stated that she looks forward to learning more about the upcoming projects in the 9th District.

Vice Chair Cynthia Newbille inquired if the green spaces will be used for agricultural growing.

Ryan Rinn stated that each community will decide what will be done with the new green spaces.

Vice Chair Newbille inquired about the remaining resources to continue the project once the pilot is completed. Vice Chair Newbille also inquired about student engagement.

Ryan Rinn stated that the pilot was supported by funds received from the United States Department of Labor. Mr. Rinn also stated that if the pilot program is successful, there will be more access to more funding. Mr. Rinn further stated that there will be student engagement.

There were no further comments or discussions and Member Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2024-002, ORD. 2024-003 and ORD. 2024-004 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Newbille. Noes 0.

Staff Report

Joyce Davis, Council Policy Analyst, provided the committee with the meeting staff report.

[CD.2024.012](#) Education & Human Services Staff Report

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:06 p.m.