



# City of Richmond

## Meeting Minutes

### Public Safety Standing Committee

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Tuesday, January 26, 2021

12:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor – Virtual Meeting

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#### Committee Members and Staff in Attendance

The Honorable Reva Trammell – Chair  
The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert – Vice Chair  
The Honorable Ellen Robertson – Member  
The Honorable Andreas Addison – Alternate Member (*late arrival, early departure*)  
The Honorable Katherine Jordan – Council Member  
Lisa Braxton, Council Management Analyst  
Richard Hill, Senior Assistant City Attorney  
Jamie Isley, Assistant City Clerk  
Pamela Nichols, Senior Assistant City Clerk  
Candice Reid, City Clerk  
Steven Taylor, Council Policy Analyst  
Dominique Thaxton, Assistant City Clerk  
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

#### Call to Order

Chairwoman Reva Trammell called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m., and presided.

#### Electronic Meeting Announcement

Assistant City Clerk Jamie Isley, in accordance with Ordinance No. 2020-093, adopted April 9, 2020, as most recently amended by Ordinance No. 2020-232, adopted December 14, 2020, announced the meeting would be held through electronic communication means. Assistant City Clerk Isley stated notice of the meeting was provided to the public through a public information advisory issued on January 20, 2021, and through Legistar on the city website in accordance with usual practice. She also stated members of the public were encouraged to provide comments in writing prior to the meeting and all comments received prior to 10:00 a.m., on Tuesday, January 26, 2021, were provided to committee members. Ms. Isley indicated that members of the public who signed up to speak and provide comment would be called to speak at the appropriate time.

#### Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Assistant City Clerk Jamie Isley provided the citizen speaker guidelines.

#### Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

**Approval of Minutes**

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of Tuesday, October 27, 2020, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

**Board Vacancies**

Senior Assistant City Clerk Pamela Nichols reviewed board applications for consideration by the committee.

*Member Ellen Robertson recommended Dr. A'Tasha Christian be reappointed to the Capital Area Alcohol Safety Action Program (ASAP) Policy Advisory Board. Member Robertson also requested that the ASAP Policy Advisory Board provide a presentation to inform the committee of recent goals and accomplishments.*

*Vice Chair Ann-Frances Lambert inquired about 3<sup>rd</sup> District vacancies and opportunities for applicants from the 3<sup>rd</sup> District to apply for boards and commissions.*

*Senior Assistant City Clerk Nichols provided additional information regarding the boards and commissions appointment process.*

*Chairwoman Reva Trammell requested a notification email be sent to members of the committee regarding board vacancies.*

*Councilor Ellen Robertson requested Council Voter District information be provided for current members of boards and commissions within the board vacancy packet. Member Robertson also discussed examining the board structure of the Capital Area Alcohol Safety Action Program (ASAP) Policy Advisory Board at a future committee meeting.*

*Council Policy Analyst Steve Taylor was available to answer questions.*

*Vice Chair Lambert expressed hesitation about voting in the affirmative on appointment recommendations for the applications listed due to minimal knowledge of the applicants.*

**Member Ellen Robertson moved to forward the following appointment and reappointment applications to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved:**

<u>Board Name</u>	<u>Criteria for Appointment</u>	<u>Applicant Name</u>
<b>Capital Area Alcohol Safety Action Program (ASAP) Policy Advisory Board</b> (4 members appointed by Council)	*           (3 vacancies)	Dr. A'tasha Christian 7 <sup>th</sup> District Employment (reappointment)
		Andre W. Tolleris 5 <sup>th</sup> District Resident

*\*Applicants must either reside or work in the city.*

*Member Ellen Robertson informed the committee that the Citizen Advisory Commission on Alternatives to Incarceration was established in 2012, and has not held meetings for several years. Member Robertson further explained that more time is needed to clearly define the goals and objectives outlined in ORD. 2012-016-196. Member Robertson requested the committee refrain from making appointments to the commission until such time that revisions are made to the objectives of the Citizen Advisory Commission on Alternatives to Incarceration.*

**Member Ellen Robertson moved to continue consideration of the following appointment applications to the Citizen Advisory Commission on Alternatives to Incarceration to the March 23, 2021, Public Safety Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and unanimously approved:**

<b>Board Name</b>	<b>Criteria for Appointment</b>	<b>Applicant Name</b>
<b>Citizen Advisory Commission on Alternatives to Incarceration</b> (15 members)	At-Large Resident*	Kimberly Young 7 <sup>th</sup> District Resident
		Dr. Brian S. Maiden 7 <sup>th</sup> District Resident
		Andre W. Tolleris 5 <sup>th</sup> District Resident
	(1 vacancy)	

*\*Applicants must either reside or work in the city.*

Member Ellen Robertson asked if the Community Criminal Justice Board has any 7<sup>th</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> District representation.

Senior Assistant City Clerk Pamela Nichols advised that that there is no 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, or 9<sup>th</sup> District representation on the Community Criminal Justice Board.

Vice Chair Ann-Frances Lambert moved to continue consideration of the following board appointment applications for the Community Criminal Justice Board and the Richmond Ambulance Authority to the February 23, 2021, Public Safety Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and unanimously approved:

<b>Board Name</b>	<b>Criteria for Appointment</b>	<b>Applicant Name</b>
<b>Community Criminal Justice Board</b> (15 members)	Citizen Representative	Jewel Gatling 7 <sup>th</sup> District Resident
		Dr. Brian S. Maiden 7 <sup>th</sup> District Resident
		Dr. Andrew Ramsey 3 <sup>rd</sup> District Resident
	(1 vacancy)	

*\*Applicants must either reside or work in the city.*

<b>Board Name</b>	<b>Criteria for Appointment</b>	<b>Applicant Name</b>
<b>Richmond Ambulance Authority</b> (11 members)	*	Heather Ward 4 <sup>th</sup> District Resident
		Michael Dickenson 1 <sup>st</sup> District Resident
		Nathan Joyce 6 <sup>th</sup> District Resident
	(2 vacancies)	

*\*Applicants must either reside or work in the city.*

Member Ellen Robertson moved to forward the following appointment application for the Task Force on the Establishment of a Civilian Review Board to Council with recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved:

<b>Board Name</b>	<b>Criteria for Appointment</b>	<b>Applicant Name</b>
<b>Task Force on the Establishment of a Civilian Review Board</b> (9 members)	Tenant of public housing	Teenora Thurston 3 <sup>rd</sup> District Resident
	(1 vacancy)	

*\*Applicants must either reside or work in the city.*

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

## Presentations

There were no presentations.

## Papers for Consideration

### The following ordinance was considered:

#### ORD. 2020-272

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute an Agreement for Mutual Aid Fire and Rescue Services Among Designated Localities in Central Virginia between the City of Richmond, Virginia, and certain localities within the Commonwealth of Virginia and certain entities for the purpose of establishing cooperation between the City's Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the fire and rescue departments and agencies of certain localities and certain entities in the furnishing of certain fire and rescue services.

**Patron:** Mayor Stoney

*Fire Chief Melvin Carter introduced ORD. 2020-272, and informed the committee of the purpose of the proposed ordinance, which is to add additional regional partners to the established mutual aid agreement.*

*Chairwoman Reva Trammell asked whether the Richmond Department of Fire and Emergency Services (RFD) would have enough equipment to respond to incidents within the city without mutual aid assistance.*

*Fire Chief Carter explained the priority system for incoming RFD calls to the Department of Emergency Communications, and informed the committee of the high impact response protocol and that additional resources are attained from further regional partners if the Counties of Henrico or Chesterfield are unavailable to respond.*

There were no further comments or discussions and **Member Ellen Robertson moved to forward ORD. 2020-272 to the February 8, 2021, Council meeting with recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

### The following ordinance was considered:

#### ORD. 2020-273

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Commonwealth of Virginia, Virginia Department of Emergency Management, and the City of Richmond, on Behalf of the Richmond Department of Fire and Emergency Services Water Rescue Team Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Richmond, Virginia, and the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Emergency Management, for the purpose of establishing cooperation between the City's Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Emergency Management in the furnishing of certain swiftwater rescue services.

**Patron:** Mayor Stoney

*Fire Chief Melvin Carter introduced ORD. 2020-273, and informed the committee that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) authorizes the Richmond Department of Fire and Emergency Services (RFD) to spend a \$76,000 grant provided by the Commonwealth of Virginia to respond to water rescue events statewide.*

*Member Ellen Robertson inquired whether the MOU is a standard procedure for the RFD and if it occurs annually.*

*Fire Chief Carter stated that the process has occurred previously and that the RFD is one of the last entities to sign on to the MOU. Chief Carter also highlighted that the MOU resources are available to Richmond because the city is a locality with a deep water port. Chief Carter further stated that training and equipment consistency is ensured within the MOU.*

There were no further comments or discussions and **Member Ellen Robertson moved to forward ORD. 2020-273 to the February 8, 2021, Council meeting with recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

**The following ordinance was considered:**

ORD. 2020-274

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Virginia Port Authority Maritime Incident Response Team Operating Agreement between the City of Richmond, Virginia, and the Virginia Port Authority, for the purpose of establishing cooperation between the City's Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the Virginia Port Authority in the furnishing of certain maritime incident response services.

**Patron:** Mayor Stoney

*Fire Chief Melvin Carter introduced ORD. 2020-274, and stated that the proposed ordinance allows for the potential dispatch of rescue services at ports across the Commonwealth of Virginia. He further stated that ORD. 2020-274, increases the likelihood for future grants that directly support emergency response to Virginia ports.*

*Travis Preau, Richmond Department of Fire and Emergency Services assistant chief of special operations, informed the committee that the Memorandum of Understanding assists in aligning training and certifications across fire and emergency management agencies. Mr. Preau further explained that ORD. 2020-274 helps to ensure that outside entities responding to Richmond events will have the same training as Richmond emergency response entities.*

There were no further comments or discussions and **Member Ellen Robertson moved to forward ORD. 2020-274 to the February 8, 2021, Council meeting with recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

**The following ordinance was considered:**

ORD. 2020-117

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Records Management System User Agreement between the City of Richmond and Virginia Commonwealth University for the purpose of contracting for the use of equipment and materials as allowed by Va. Code § 15.2-1736 by allowing the Virginia Commonwealth University Police Department to become an operational user of the Department of Police's records management system for the input, retrieval, and storage of records and facilitating interoperability between the Department of Police and the Virginia Commonwealth University Police Department.

**Patron:** Mayor Stoney

Citizens were provided an opportunity to offer comments in writing regarding ORD. 2020-117, prior to the Public Safety Standing Committee meeting. All written comments received by the Office of the City Clerk were provided to members of the committee prior to the meeting and are included as an appendix to the January 26, 2021, Public Safety Standing Committee meeting minutes.

*Victoria Pearson, Richmond Police Department (RPD) senior deputy department director, introduced ORD. 2020-117, and informed the committee that the Virginia Commonwealth University Police Department (VCUPD) and the RPD have shared records management systems since 2012. Ms. Pearson further stated that the proposed ordinance does not expand the VCUPD's jurisdiction or authority, and that the RPD's purchase of a new records management system requires a new user agreement to continue sharing the system with the VCUPD. Ms. Pearson explained that the VCUPD will contribute \$38,000 towards the annual cost of the new records management system, maintain and track their own criminal records and will abide by the rules of the vendor and the terms of the city's contract. Ms. Pearson further stated that the agreement referenced in ORD. 2020-117, is much like the agreement between the VCUPD*

and the Richmond Department of Emergency Communications, as the VCUPD does not have its own 911 emergency communications center.

Vice Chair Ann-Frances Lambert asked if the records management system data will be used for surveillance purposes, and for information regarding potential consequences if the agreement does not occur.

Ms. Pearson informed the committee that the data will not be used for surveillance purposes and that the VCUPD does not have an independent criminal records system. Ms. Pearson further explained that the VCUPD is sub licensing the shared records management system which is the reason the entity pays an annual fee to the city. Ms. Pearson stated that RPD responds to and takes the lead during investigations of certain serious crime incidents within the VCUPD's jurisdiction and does not have access to private student data.

Vice Chair Lambert informed the committee of her receipt of over 100 emails regarding ORD. 2020-117, and requested commenters include their home address within emails to councilors. Vice Chair Lambert inquired whether the annual \$38,000 in revenue from the VCUPD is retained by the city.

Ms. Pearson stated that the city will receive the annual funds collected from the VCUPD to offset the annual cost of the records management system, and that the funds are not additional revenue.

Chairwoman Reva Trammell inquired about the total cost of the new records management system.

Ms. Pearson stated that the system will cost \$300,000 annually.

## **Opposition**

**Allan-Charles Chipman** spoke in opposition of ORD. 2020-117, and expressed concerns from the community regarding potential bias issues caused by the new records management system. He also asked the members of the committee to not recommend approval of the proposed ordinance.

**Kalia Harris, VA Student Power Network co-executive director**, spoke in opposition of ORD. 2020-117, and expressed concerns regarding predictive policing, the treatment of peaceful protesters over the summer and potential bias in the charges individuals faced along with possible surveillance. Ms. Harris also asked the members of the committee to not recommend approval of the proposed ordinance.

Member Ellen Robertson stated that ORD. 2020-117, does not address community concerns regarding over-policing and suggested the committee ask Mayor Stoney's Task Force on Reimagining Public Safety to provide a report at a future committee meeting. Member Robertson also suggested a special session to examine the Task Force on the Establishment of a Civilian Review Board's expectations, action work plan and method of decision making for Council recommendations regarding the Civilian Review Board. Member Robertson also stated that due to the history between the African American community and the police, it is important to ensure the fair and equitable treatment of individuals to build trust. Member Robertson informed the committee that ORD. 2020-117 is similar to items 1-3 on the committee agenda and stated that reports from the RPD and the VCUPD must be transparent to address community concerns. Member Robertson further informed the committee of other shared law enforcement databases already in use at the state level.

Vice Chair Ann-Frances Lambert expressed hesitation regarding ORD. 2020-117, due to the number of emails in opposition received by her office. Vice Chair Lambert stated that the public needs educational resources regarding the RPD's use of records management data, and suggested the proposed ordinance be continued to allow for more public engagement. Vice Chair Lambert also stated plans to abstain from voting on the proposed ordinance.

Acting Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Lincoln Saunders informed the committee that the mayor's Task Force on Reimagining Public Safety would be amenable to presenting a report to the committee. Acting CAO Saunders stated that ORD. 2020-117 is important to the continuity of operations for the RPD,

and discussed how collaborations with partners help to ensure public safety in times of emergency. Acting CAO Saunders further stated that there will be repercussions to both the RPD and the VCUPD if the proposed ordinance was not adopted.

Police Chief Gerald Smith informed the committee of the purpose of ORD. 2020-117, and reiterated the information provided by Ms. Pearson.

Member Ellen Robertson reviewed the legislative history of the proposed ordinance and asked whether the agreement extends the VCUPD's authority or provides the opportunity for surveillance. Member Robertson inquired what might occur if no action were taken by Council regarding ORD. 2020-117, in the next couple of months.

Police Chief Smith informed the committee that most of the information shared between the VCUPD and the RPD within the records management system is public information, and that the exchange of information helps the respective departments collaborate on incidents when jurisdictional boundaries cross. Police Chief Smith further stated his belief that the Commonwealth of Virginia would be the entity which could extend the VCUPD's authority. Police Chief Smith further explained that the exchange of information between the VCUPD and the RPD would not occur between the two entities, if ORD. 2020-117 were not adopted or acted upon within the next few months.

Vice Chair Lambert asked which crimes the RPD responds to within VCU jurisdiction.

Police Chief Smith stated that the RPD responds to serious crime within the VCU jurisdiction, such as homicides.

Vice Chair Lambert inquired about individuals whose guns were confiscated during Lobby Day.

Police Chief Smith informed the committee that there were multiple weapons violations city wide on Lobby Day that were not associated with Lobby Day events.

Acting CAO Saunders informed the committee that there is legislation being considered by the Virginia General Assembly concerning the enforcement of gun limitations around the capitol as there is an overlap of jurisdictions in the area.

Member Robertson thanked Vice Chair Lambert for her comments regarding residents emailing councilors, and she requested members of the public who are not residents, to list their connection to the city within emails to councilors. Member Robertson also highlighted the importance of addressing concerns from the community regarding equity and fair treatment by the RPD. Member Robertson suggested that an ongoing educational or communication program be implemented to provide information and answer questions from the community to build trust. Member Robertson further stated a preference for educational programming to occur organically and not as a reaction to legislation or a particular incident.

Chief Smith acknowledged that the RPD is currently seeking to increase communication and engagement between the RPD and the community.

Councilor Katherine Jordan suggested that members consider requesting a presentation be provided to the Public Safety Standing Committee regarding the enforcement of gun laws, particularly during Lobby Day.

Acting CAO Saunders informed the committee that city administration would draft a response to the emails received by councilors regarding ORD. 2020-117.

Member Robertson requested staff work with the Department of Information Technology to ensure that the emails regarding ORD. 2020-117, are sent to city administration properly. Member Robertson expressed support for ORD. 2020-117, and noted the importance of the agreement for the continuity of services. Member Robertson also requested information regarding any infractions made by the VCUPD or the RPD in the sharing of information within the records management system.

There were no further comments or discussions and **Member Ellen Robertson moved to forward ORD. 2020-117 to the February 8, 2021, Council meeting with recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved:** Ayes 2, Robertson, Trammell. Noes 1, Lambert.

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

There were no items for discussion.

### **Staff Report**

Steve Taylor, Council policy analyst, provided the committee with the January staff report.

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

*Member Ellen Robertson requested a discussion item be added to the agenda of the next committee meeting regarding ORD. 2020-155. Member Robertson also requested the mayor's Task Force on Reimagining Public Safety provide a report at the next committee meeting.*

*Councilwoman Reva Trammell spoke in support of the RPD, and expressed gratitude for the department's work city wide.*

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 1:46 p.m.



**From:** [iluvmintchip@aol.com](mailto:iluvmintchip@aol.com)  
**To:** [City Clerk's Office](#)  
**Subject:** NO on Ord. 2020-117  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 26, 2021 8:41:30 AM

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**CAUTION:** This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Public Safety Council,

Please consider this NO vote to ordinance 2020-117. The last thing we need is *expanded* police power and surveillance capabilities. The police already have ample resources. What they lack is the WILL to change, and the CAPACITY to do a better job under the current system.

The good ones are intimidated into silence. And the bad ones have too much power with no accountability, and a justice system that functions to protect and serve THEM first and foremost. Consider that, per the FBI, **white supremacists have been infiltrating police departments nationwide for decades now**. You think Richmond is immune to this? And yet you are ready to confer MORE power upon these people, who time and again abuse their immense power over vulnerable citizens. Not only will this be a failure in your obligations towards public safety — it will be in direct contradiction thereof.

**Do not support 2020-117.**

Thank you,  
Andrew Baroody

P.S. Receipts, re: white supremacist infiltration of law enforcement:

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/aug/27/white-supremacists-militias-infiltrate-us-police-report>

<https://theintercept.com/2020/09/29/police-white-supremacist-infiltration-fbi/>

**From:** [Kyle Dosier](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk's Office](#)  
**Subject:** No on ORD.2020-117  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 26, 2021 9:06:42 AM

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Hello,

My name is Kyle J Dosier, and I am a Richmond City resident at [REDACTED], in Church Hill. I'm reaching out to the members of the City Council Public Safety Committee to urge them to vote NO on ordinance ORD. 2020-117 that would execute a Records Management System User Agreement between the City of Richmond and Virginia Commonwealth University.

This appears to be primarily a way for two police departments to cooperate more fully with each other in Richmond City, effectively increasing the level of surveillance and policing in our community. I and many others in the city have been loudly proclaiming for months and years that police forces in our community should be given fewer resources, not more. We want to defund the police department, which is an inherently racist structure, and shift resources to community programs that legitimately make or neighborhoods safer. The best way to reduce police violence is to reduce police interactions.

Furthermore, the Richmond Police Department in particular has resisted or undermined efforts to remove bad actors from its ranks; to give up guidance and decision-making authority to a civilian review board with subpoena power; and to increase the safety of community members they interact with. I have watched in horror as RPD has continually and intentionally arrested members of my community for nonviolent misdemeanor charges, knowing that they will be sent to a jail where there is a high risk of contracting Covid-19; where food and medical resources are abysmal; and where inmates are routinely subjected to 23 hours of isolation and 1 hour per day to shower, make calls, etc, because of the virus threat. Because of the purposefully slow and draconian process within the jail and the backlog of cases moving through the courts, these people are routinely locked up for days and weeks before seeing a judge, who almost universally orders their immediate release. Any new tools, such as data sharing with VCU PD, that would increase the likelihood of our neighbors being caught up in our broken jail and courts system, must be withheld for the safety of our community, and especially its most vulnerable.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Kyle J Dosier

**From:** [Sandy Williams](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk's Office](#)  
**Subject:** Ordinance 2020-117  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 26, 2021 8:49:59 AM

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**CAUTION:** This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I am a resident of Richmond. I am asking that yall please vote NO on ordinance 2020-117 today.

Thank you,  
Sandy Williams

**From:** [Colleen Howarth](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk's Office](#)  
**Subject:** Vote NO to 2020-117  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 26, 2021 8:44:25 AM

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CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Public Safety Council,

Please consider this NO vote to ordinance 2020-117. As a public health and social work professional, I can say with full confidence that expanded police surveillance capabilities is not in the best interest of community members. RPD and VCUPD already receive far more money and resources than the people of this city do for vital things like education and healthcare.

We must work to dismantle systems of oppression and white supremacy, not build them up and support them further. The people of Richmond, especially those most vulnerable, have suffered enough from the brutality of the police and should not be further subjected to a surveillance state that makes no one any safer. This ordinance is unjust and does not serve anyone.

RPD and VCUPD do not deserve more power as they continue to fail the people they were supposed to be helping and uphold racist practices.

Do not support 2020-117.

Thank you,  
Colleen

**From:** [Kalia Harris](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk's Office](#)  
**Subject:** Written Comment for Ord 2020-117  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 26, 2021 4:42:14 AM

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Good morning City Clerk Reid,

I am writing in to express my opposition to Ord 2020-117 in written comment form. If there is an option to speak, please do let me know as I would like to sign up.

My written comment is below:

Greetings Public Safety committee and welcome to the new members. My name is Kalia Harris and I am co-Executive Director of Virginia Student Power Network, a statewide organization with a large base of VCU students, including the current student body president of the university. I am here to urge you all to vote **no on ordinance 2020-117** which would allow VCU PD and RPD to share a records management system.

This summer, we saw what happens when RPD, VCU PD and other law enforcement agencies work hand in hand to brutalize young people in our city. Their teamwork resulted in the brutal arrests of many Black and brown VCU students and Richmond youths, many for just standing at Monroe Park or being at Marcus David Peters Circle. These students, who were charged with all types of crimes, have largely seen their charges dropped - which just goes to show the abuse of power that is happening within our police forces. VCU has one of the nation's largest campus police forces, a fact that is touted proudly on the VCU police website. The students themselves are speaking out about VCU PD. Not only that, but Richmond city council expanded the jurisdiction of the VCU PD in 2019 which has led to increased criminalization, over-policing and surveillance of our communities. This collaboration between a university police force and the city police force is cause for concern. It is absolutely possible for the police to use separate records management systems.

What makes our city safe isn't increased police access to records and bloated police budgets, but resources into our communities. Please do not continue to arm the police with more tools to brutalize us. I ask that you take into account the many Richmond residents who have already spoken out against this issue as you vote today. **Vote no on Ordinance 2020-117 today!**

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Best,

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**Kalia Harris**  
Social Justice & Human Rights | M.A. Interdisciplinary Studies  
George Mason University

*"The transformative power of love is the foundation for all meaningful social change." -bell hooks*

**From:** [Yohance Whitaker](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk's Office](#)  
**Subject:** Written Comment for Public Safety Committee  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 26, 2021 9:39:59 AM  
**Attachments:** [RTAP - Task Force Letter of Recommendation 01.26.21.pdf](#)

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Ms. Reid,

I hope you are in good spirits. In lieu of providing oral comment, I would like to submit this written comment for the Public Safety Committee on behalf of the Richmond Transparency & Accountability Project. We enthusiastically support Ms. Thurston's recommendation and appointment to the CRB Task Force.

Thank you.

Take care,  
Yohance

--

Yohance Whitaker (he/him)  
Organizer, Civil Rights & Racial Justice Program  
Legal Aid Justice Center

[REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]  
Mobile: [REDACTED]  
Email: [yohance@justice4all.org](mailto:yohance@justice4all.org)

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*The Richmond Transparency and Accountability Project (RTAP) was established in 2017 and works to build safer, healthier communities by disrupting mass incarceration at its source: police policies and procedures. We organize Black and brown people, legal experts, and policy analysts to achieve policing practices that reduce physical, economic, and emotional trauma on the most policed neighborhoods in the city.*

**The Richmond Transparency and Accountability Project enthusiastically recommends that City Council appoint Ms. Teenora Thurston to serve on the Task Force on the Establishment of a Civilian Review Board.** Since 2017, we have advocated for meaningful civilian oversight of the Richmond Police Department as a tool to build community power. Historically, civilian oversight has not been a powerful tool in Virginia. When local officials create police oversight systems without engaging the communities most impacted by those systems, they are ineffective. The aforementioned community leaders will play a vital role in gathering broad based community input that will inform the recommendations regarding the model of civilian oversight as well as the powers necessary for the body to meet community identified needs. This diverse group of leaders brings experiences and expertise that will edify the task force and our city. We fully endorse their applications.

**Ms. Teenora Thurston** is a longtime resident of Gilpin Court and is affectionately known as a community mother. She is an active member of the Gilpin Court Tenant Council and helps coordinate meal distributions throughout all RRHA properties with the community group Richmond Youth Peace Team. Ms. Thurston believes that it is part of her mission to seek the healing of her neighborhood and help resolve trauma. Toward this end, she is a student in the program “In Healing Us” which teaches people how to spot trauma and helps protect people. She would like to model this program in other places so that communities will not have to rely solely on the police department to respond to crisis. In many ways, she is a voice for people who have been left out.

Richmond Transparency and Accountability Project | RTAP



**From:** [Isley, Jamie N. - Clerk's Office](#)  
**To:** [Isley, Jamie N. - Clerk's Office](#)  
**Subject:** Public Safety Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 3, 2021 9:38:14 AM

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**From:** Naomi Isaac [<mailto:naomi@marijuanajustice.org>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 26, 2021 12:24 PM  
**To:** Thaxton, Dominique J. - Clerk's Office <[Dominique.Thaxton@richmondgov.com](mailto:Dominique.Thaxton@richmondgov.com)>  
**Subject:** Re: Richmond City Council Public Safety Public Participation Instructions

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Naomi Isaac <[naomi@marijuanajustice.org](mailto:naomi@marijuanajustice.org)>  
**Date:** Tue, Jan 26, 2021 at 9:37 AM  
**Subject:** Public Comment 1/26/2021 - Public Safety Committee  
**To:** <[CityClerksOffice@richmondgove.com](mailto:CityClerksOffice@richmondgove.com)>

Councilmembers,

My name is Naomi Isaac, I am a resident of the 5th district, and a member of the youth campus organizing collective, Virginia Student Power Network, and I urge you all to vote "no" to ORD 2020-117 which seeks to expand policing and surveillance in the city of Richmond.

The community continues to call on the city to make a commitment to racial justice by taking the efforts necessary to dismantle policing, yet ORD 2020-117 seeks to strengthen RPD and VCU PD's capacity to surveil Black and Brown people. VCU PD is currently one of the largest campus police forces in the country, and they have already been allowed to expand their jurisdiction to parts of the City that extend well beyond VCU's campus.

Data shows that 1-in-6 Black people will have interactions with law enforcement and 70% of all suspicious activity reports by RPD are Black Richmonders. ORD 2020-117 would increase the likelihood of these interactions with law enforcement, which has proven many times to be deadly for BIPOC.

At a time where police departments across the Commonwealth have yet to stop killing, criminalizing, and over-policing Black youth, authorizing a Records Management System User Agreement between VCU and Richmond police will only be to the detriment of Black students and our neighbors.

As we still lament the murdered siblings we have lost due to hyper-criminalization and over-policing, such as Xzavier Hill, Marcus David Peters, Alvin Lamont Baum II, and Deon Kay, we have not forgotten the brutality imposed against us by the RPD and VCU PD. We cannot continue to give them more power when they continue to use that power to harm our community members. It is for these reasons that I am asking the Committee members present to recognize this pattern of anti-Black violence and vote "no" to ORD 2020-117 so that we

may avoid losing yet another Black life.