



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 8, 2026

2:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Committee and Other Council Members In Attendance

The Honorable Stephanie Lynch - Chair
The Honorable Nicole Jones - Vice Chair
The Honorable Andrew Breton - Member

Staff in Attendance

Kiley Kesecker, Deputy City Clerk
Kimberly Morris, Assistant City Clerk
Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst
Janet Palmer, Deputy City Attorney
Will Perkins, Senior Council Legislative Services Manager
Candice Reid, City Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Stephanie Lynch called the meeting to order at 2:07 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement and Public Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Chair's request, Assistant City Clerk Kimberly Morris 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.

Presentation(s)

Positive Youth Development Fund and Annual Update

[CD.2025.373](#) Positive Youth Development

Attachments: [OCF - PYD Updated Jan 26 EHS](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Traymanesha Lamy, President and CEO of NextUp RVA, spoke about the additional engagements between NextUp and the Positive Youth Development Fund (PYD), which included the Middle School Alliance, the Safer Communities program, and the Human Services Summit.

Member Andrew Breton asked how the intermediary relationship compared with the non-departmental grant program.

Eva Colen, Senior Policy Advisor with the Office of Children and Families, stated that one of the differences was that city grant contracts with NextUp focused on the outcomes that were sought, and the organization was not contracted to be a grant making agency, but by the scope of work and not the grant making itself.

Dominic Barrett, Senior Policy Advisor, Neighborhood and Community Services, stated that NextUp was doing more than just providing a service as a grant maker, they delivered a broader wrap around program.

Vice Chair Nicole Jones asked how many students participated in the Positive Youth Development program, where they lived, where the program deserts were, and how PYD was working to provide programs in those areas.

Ms. Colen stated that 1,555 students participated in 2024-2025, and 70% lived in qualified census tracts.

Ms. Lamy stated that according to a landscape survey, the deserts are in North Side, South Side and the East End. She stated that they were working to strategically make a plan to fill in those gaps with programs in those areas.

Discussion Item(s)

Richmond Public Schools (RPS) Updates

Jason Kamras, RPS Superintendent, presented an update on the state's accountability system. Superintendent Kamras addressed the following items:

- Richmond Community High School had the highest score in the region
- J.L. Francis Elementary School was in the top five for reading growth
- Mary Munford Elementary School was in the top five for all of region one
- Albert Hill, Martin Luther King, and Thomas Henderson Middle Schools were in the top five for all of central Virginia
- Open High School was fourth in all of region one
- The four year graduation rate top three high schools for all of region one were Community, Open and John Marshall High Schools

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

Amy Popovich, DCAO for Human Services, presented an update on the inclement weather shelter, the Department of Social Services ribbon cutting ceremony, and Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities Master Plan. DCAO Popovich reported that over the last month, there were 138 individuals per night utilizing the inclement weather shelter, transportation improvements, and 35 residents transitioned to permanent housing from CARITAS because of city funding. She also reported that there was free parking at the new Social Services building and the site would be open to the public on January 15, 2026. She further stated the Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities Master Plan draft was online and will stay open for public input until March 6, 2026.

Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinance was considered:

1. [ORD. 2025-275](#) To amend Ord. No. 2025-057, adopted May 12, 2025, which adopted the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Special Fund Budget and made appropriations thereto, by (i) transferring \$1,100,000.00 from the “Safer Communities” special fund for the Department of Justice Services, (ii) creating two special funds for the Department of Justice Services called “Safer Communities - YWCA” and “Safer Communities - Next Up”, (iii) appropriating \$600,000.00 of the transferred funds to the Department of Justice Services’ “Safer Communities - YWCA” special fund, and (iv) appropriating \$500,000.00 of the transferred funds to the Department of Justice Services’ “Safer Communities - Next Up” special fund, all for the purpose of supporting the City’s Gun Violence Prevention and Intervention Framework.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-275](#)

Public Hearing

There were no speakers.

Greg Hopkins, Director of the Office Gun Violence Prevention, provided an update on the Safer Communities - NextUp and Safer Communities - YWCA special funds. Director Hopkins outlined the following:

- Grants and sub award agreements
- Performance metrics and quarterly reports
- Monitored site visits
- Grant monitoring for individual associated grantees, internal city organizations, and external partners.

Vice Chair Nicole Jones asked if there were any outlines for the grant monitoring process and what would happen after the grant period ends on June 30, 2026.

Director Hopkins stated that according to reports, Richmond was one of four localities that became safer from the time the program was first developed. He also stated that grantees have 12 months to spend the money, which was a short window for such a large amount of money, however, his department drafted the ordinance for committee review in the spirit of transparency.

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2025-275 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 3, Breton, Jones and Lynch. Noes, 0.

The following ordinance was considered:

3. [ORD. 2025-277](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Regional Cooperative Partnership Agreement between the City of Richmond and the Counties of Henrico and Chesterfield, for the purpose of supporting a recovery academy initiative funded by the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-277](#)

Public Hearing

There were no speakers.

Vice Chair Nicole Jones asked how many students from Richmond Public Schools (RPS) were enrolled at the Chesterfield Recovery Academy.

Anna Jones, Opioid Response Strategist with the Office of Opioid and Substance Use Response, stated that seven students from RPS had attended the academy, two received diplomas, and one was slated to graduate.

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward ORD. 2025-277 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 3, Breton, Jones and Lynch. Noes, 0.

The following ordinance was considered:

2. [ORD. 2025-276](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute an Outside Agency Contract between the City of Richmond and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Richmond for the purpose of funding the expansion of life skills programming at Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2025-276](#)

Public Hearing

There were no speakers.

Member Andrew Breton asked if the program was a one-time funding or part of a repeating contract.

Eva Colen, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Children and Families, stated that it was one-time funding that was done outside the normal non-departmental process.

Chair Stephanie Lynch asked if the original organization's name was being replaced by the Boys and Girls Club.

Ms.Colen stated that the program was called Life Skills Programming at Martin Luther King Middle School, however, there was no original name.

Vice Chair Jones asked if the city funded any life skills programs at MLK.

Ms.Colen stated that there were no funds provided by the city specifically for life skills programming at MLK by the city.

Chair Lynch stated that MLK seemed to receive a disproportionate share of city funds for programs, and asked if a review could be done to possibly distribute funds to other schools for their programs. She also stated that the city did provide such funding in 2023 and 2024 for the UBU100 program.

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to continue Ord. 2025-276 to the February 12, 2026 Education and Human Services Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 3, Breton, Jones and Lynch. Noes, 0.

Staff Report

[CD.2026.004](#) Education & Human Services Standing Committee January 8, 2026 Staff Report

Attachments: [January 2026 EHS Committee Mtg Prep](#)

Council staff provided the committee with the January Education and Human Services Standing Committee staff report.

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of November 13, 2025, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2025.385](#) November 13, 2025 - Education & Human Services Standing Committee Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [20251113 EHS Minutes \(Draft\)](#)

Board Vacancies

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

[CD.2026.001](#) Education and Human Services Standing Committee Boards & Commissions Vacancy Report Thursday, January 8, 2026

Attachments: [20260108 EHS Board Vacancy Report](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Vice Chair Nicole Jones moved to forward the following appointment and reappointment applications to Council with a recommendation to approve, and to continue consideration of one Lewis Botanical Garden, Inc. vacancy to the April 9, 2026 meeting, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 3, Breton, Jones, Lynch. Noes None.

Advisory Board of Recreation and Parks:
Cessely Nixon

Aging and Disabilities Advisory Board:
Charles Barker (reappointment)
Mary Mason (reappointment)
Glynis Boyd Hughes (reappointment)
Autumn Richardson
Sara Link

Community Policy and Management Team:

Brian Chizuk

Human Rights Commission:

Thomas Mundy

Maggie L. Walker Initiative Citizens Advisory Board:

Zenobia Cardwell (reappointment)

Clarence McGill

Richmond Behavioral Health Authority:

Shanteny Jackson

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:18 p.m.