



Richmond City Council

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

Budget Work Session Minutes

Monday, April 21, 2025

1:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Council Members Present

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

Others in Attendance

Laura Drewry, City Attorney
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Tabrica Rentz, Deputy City Attorney
Matthew Slaats, Interim Council Chief of Staff
Daniel Wagner, Interim Deputy Council Chief of Staff
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Call to Order

Council President Cynthia Newbille called the meeting to order at 1:12 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement

Upon the President's request, Deputy City Clerk RJ Warren provided information on the appropriate manner in which the Council Chamber is to be evacuated in the event of an emergency.

Electronic Participation

Pursuant to Rule III(D)(4)(b) of Council's Rules of Procedure, Councilor Sarah Abubaker 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 Council members present were required to adopt a motion to approve Councilor Abubaker'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 Councilor Abubaker's participation in the meeting by electronic communication means.

Councilor Kenya Gibson moved to allow Councilor Sarah Abubaker to participate in the meeting by electronic communication means. The motion was seconded and approved: Ayes 7, Breton, Gibson, Jones, Robertson, Trammell, Jordan, Newbille. Noes None. Lynch had not yet arrived. Abubaker was awaiting approval to participate through electronic communication means.

Discussion of Proposed Capital Amendments to the FY 2026 Budget

Matthew Slaats, Interim Council Chief of Staff (CCOS), provided Council with a presentation that addressed Council's FY 2026 Budget review and amendment process status.

A copy of all material provided has been filed.

[CD.2025.148](#) April 21, 2025 - FY 2026 Budget Amendment Work Session Documents

Councilor Kenya Gibson requested additional information regarding revenue projects and its relation to previous annual comprehensive financial reports (ACFR).

Councilor Stephanie Lynch arrived at 1:30 p.m.

Interim Deputy Council Chief of Staff (CCOS) Daniel Wagner provided information regarding proposed capital reductions and enhancements. Interim CCOS Wagner stated that Council staff proposed funding Richmond People's Budget projects by reducing the city's fleet vehicle replacement capital funding. Interim CCOS Wagner also stated that the proposed strategy to fund requested Council capital enhancements was to first agree on capital reductions.

Meghan Brown, Director of Budget and Strategic Planning, informed Council that the proposed fleet reductions would impact the city's ability to purchase emergency response vehicles and solid waste vehicles.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch discussed her proposal to reduce by half the proposed city redevelopment funding for Mayo Island by spreading project funding over two budget years.

Chris Frelke, Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities, provided city administration's response to the proposed reduction and stated that the entire proposed funding of \$16,000,000 was necessary for the project to move forward.

Maggie Anderson, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, provided additional information regarding the city's partnership with state government and city requirements to move forward with the Mayo Island redevelopment.

President Cynthia Newbille confirmed that Council did not have consensus to move forward with reducing funding for the Mayo Island redevelopment.

Council and city administration continued to discuss proposed enhancements and reductions to capital budget funding.

It was the consensus of Council to not reduce funding for fleet vehicle replacements for public safety or solid waste vehicles.

It was the consensus of Council to move forward with reducing the capital budget funding for a Laburnum Widening project and to reallocate the project's \$959,617 funding towards Council proposed capital budget enhancements.

Vice President Katherine Jordan stated her support for the proposal of using the Department of Public Works (DPW) budget to fund selected projects from the Richmond People's Budget. Vice President Jordan also stated Council could then find reductions and use reallocation to help fund any remaining Richmond People's Budget projects.

President Cynthia Newbille recessed the meeting at 3:24 p.m.

President Cynthia Newbille reconvened the meeting at 4:03 p.m.

Council and staff reviewed proposed capital enhancements to the FY 2026 Budget.

Chris Frelke, Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities, and Bobby Vincent, Director of Public Works, provided feedback and responses to proposed capital reductions and enhancements.

Meghan Brown, Director of Budget and Strategic Planning, informed Council that \$800,000 from the previous year's budget for the Mobile Home Repair and Replacement program would be rolled over into the FY 2026 Budget.

Council discussed the qualifications and purpose of the Mobile Home Repair and Replacement program.

Councilor Reva Trammell stated that she received comments from concerned residents about the Mobile Home Repair and Replacement program, and asked why there is not a similar type of program available to other residents that do not live in mobile homes.

It was the consensus of Council to end discussion about proposed capital reductions and enhancements.

Discussion of Proposed Operating Amendments to the FY 2026 Budget

Councilor Kenya Gibson discussed FY 2026 revenue projections and their relation to previous annual comprehensive financial reports (ACFR). Councilor Gibson stated her concerns about the city often relying on budget amendments to address surpluses.

Meghan Brown, Director of Budget and Strategic Planning, provided a response to Councilor Gibson's concerns about revenue projections and their impact on budget planning.

Interim Deputy Council Chief of Staff (CCOS) Daniel Wagner provided information regarding proposed operating reductions and enhancements.

Council and staff discussed proposed reductions, including personnel reductions and limiting eligibility of the mayor's proposed 3.25 percent salary increase.

Councilor Ellen Robertson stated her concerns about the impact of proposed personnel reductions to the Office of Community Wealth Building.

Councilor Sarah Abubaker stated her concerns about higher salary employees being eligible for the proposed 3.25 percent salary increase. Councilor Abubaker stated she did not believe the increase was equitable to other employees and that it was impacting available funds in the FY 2025 Budget.

Councilor Reva Trammell stated that city services had improved, and that she supported city leadership receiving the proposed 3.25 percent salary increase.

City administration provided responses to the discussion about limiting eligibility for the 3.25 percent salary increase.

Closed Session

The scheduled closed session did not occur at the meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

CITY CLERK