



Richmond City Council

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

Budget Work Session Minutes

Monday, April 14, 2025

1:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Councilmembers Present

The Honorable Cynthia Newbille, President
The Honorable Katherine Jordan, Vice President
The Honorable Andrew Breton
The Honorable Sarah Abubaker
The Honorable Kenya Gibson
The Honorable Nicole Jones
The Honorable Ellen Robertson
The Honorable Reva Trammell

Absent

The Honorable Stephanie Lynch

Others in Attendance

Laura Drewry, City Attorney
Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Tabrica Rentz, Deputy City Attorney
Matthew Slaats, Interim Council Chief of Staff
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Call to Order

Council President Cynthia Newbille called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement

Upon the President's request, Council Management Analyst Pamela Nichols provided information on the appropriate manner in which the Council Chamber is to be evacuated in the event of an emergency.

FY26 Richmond Capital Improvement Plan Overview

Interim Chief Administrative Officer Sabrina Joy-Hogg provided Council with copies of FY 2026 Budget in Brief booklets, and city administration's response to operating and capital requests from members of City Council. Ms. Joy-Hogg then presented an overview of proposed investments in facilities and infrastructure improvements captured in the FY2026 – FY2029 proposed Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Ms. Joy-Hogg explained that funding sources for CIP projects included general obligation (G.O.) bonds, utility revenue bonds, cash (pay-as-you-go), and prior year appropriations. Ms. Joy-Hogg reviewed the city's current credit ratings and factors which could lead to the ratings being downgraded. Ms. Joy-Hogg noted that adding the cost for a new courthouse would violate the city's debt management policies.

Councilwoman Reva Trammell inquired whether the current proposed budget included funding for maintenance and repairs to the John Marshall Courts Building.

Ms. Joy-Hogg reviewed additional CIP projects in the areas of transportation, maintenance, education, capital vehicles and equipment, and investment opportunities. Ms. Joy-Hogg reported that nongeneral funded CIP projects for gas, stormwater, sanitary sewer and water totaled a little more than a billion dollars over a five-year period.

A copy of all material provided has been filed.

[CD.2025.120](#) Council Budget Work Session Documents - April 14, 2025

Scott Morris, Department of Public Utilities Director, provided an update on the federal government's cancellation of the anticipated \$12 million in grant money, for repairs to the city's water treatment plant. Mr. Morris reported that the city was in contact with members of the United States House of Representatives from Virginia regarding the matter.

Councilwoman Trammell expressed concern that the loss of funding will have a negative impact on city residents.

President Cynthia Newbille informed Council that the FY 2026 Operating and Capital priorities/requests were submitted in December 2024; however, it is anticipated city administration will provide responses to requests which were recently submitted.

In response to a question from Councilwoman Trammell, Ms. Joy-Hogg stated the project for the water treatment plant will still move forward because the project was factored into the city's water bill rate structure.

Council Vice President Katherine Jordan inquired whether there were CIP projects, such as the Mayo Island project, where the city could reallocate funds for improvements to the water treatment plant.

Lisa Richardson, Deputy Director of Capital Improvement Program for the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities, presented information on demolition and park plans for Mayo Island.

A copy of all material provided has been filed.

[CD.2025.154](#) Council Budget Work Session Documents - April 14, 2025 - Mayo Island

Councilor Kenya Gibson expressed interest in the use of the city's Downturn Reserve Fund to supplement some of the city's financial needs. She stated the use of the fund will reduce the financial impact on city residents. Councilor Gibson also inquired about the city's financial obligation for the construction of the new baseball stadium.

Ms. Joy-Hogg explained that the city's Fund Balance Policy specifies the use of the Downturn Reserve Fund, and the current financial state of the city would not warrant the use of the fund.

Mr. Morris reported that the funding for the repairs to the water treatment's system was included in the water rate structure, and if the city is awarded the \$12 million, the money will be used to reduce the rate increase.

Councilor Sarah Abubaker asked for an explanation on the differences between projected budgets for certain CIP projects versus actual budgets.

John "Billy" Vaughan, Department of Public Utilities Deputy Director, was present to respond to questions.

Councilor Ellen Robertson inquired about the reappropriation of funds from previously approved CIP projects.

Meghan Brown, Director of Budget and Strategic Planning, explained that some CIP projects require a longer timeframe than others and active projects showing a balance could be in the preliminary stages of the projects.

Councilor Robertson requested an update on CIP projects with prior year availability of funds.

Bobby Vincent, Department of Public Works Director, provided a brief explanation of the categories and funding for the FY 2026 CIP funds for Complete Streets projects.

Councilor Andrew Breton inquired about the increase to the pay-as-you-go funding source.

Councilor Kenya Gibson expressed support of funding for The People's Budget. Councilor Gibson further asked for clarification on Council's budget amendment process.

President Newbille explained that prior to the preparation of the current proposed budget, city administration met with members of City Council to discuss their priorities and budget requests, and some of the requests were included in the mayor's FY 2026 proposed budget.

Matthew Slaats, Interim Council Chief of Staff, provided a brief overview of the deadlines for Council's submission of its priorities, and an overview of the budget review process.

Councilor Gibson requested that Council's proposed amendments be immediately made available for review by city residents, and that Council schedule another budget public hearing prior to Council's adoption of the budget.

President Newbille advised City Council of the upcoming schedule for the budget work sessions and/or public hearing(s).

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:46 p.m.

CITY CLERK