



Richmond City Council

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

Budget Work Session Minutes

Monday, March 23, 2026

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 Nicole Jones
The Honorable Ellen Robertson (late arrival)
The Honorable Reva Trammell

Members Absent

The Honorable Stephanie Lynch

Others in Attendance

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

Call to Order

Council President Cynthia Newbille called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement

Upon the President's request, Pamela Nichols, Council Management Analyst, provided information on the appropriate way to evacuate the Council Chamber in an emergency.

Councilor Ellen Robertson arrived at 1:08 p.m., and was seated.

RJ Warren, Council Chief of Staff, provided Council with an overview of the approved standard operating procedures established for the budget work sessions. Mr. Warren reported the work session topics included Finance, Administration and Virginia/State Constitutional Offices.

Commonwealth's Attorney Colette McEachin, Sheriff Antionette Irving, Clerk of the Circuit Court Edward Jewett and Treasurer Nichole Armstead were present to respond to questions regarding their departments.

Overview of Finance, Administration, and State Constitutional Offices Budgets

Tanikia Jackson, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer of Finance and Administration, provided the fiscal year 2027 proposed budget presentation, focusing on the following:

- Departmental updates including Budget, Finance, Human Resources, Procurement, RVA 311, Information Technology, Minority Business Development, and Risk Management
- Procurement savings
- AI capabilities and cybersecurity improvements
- Improvements to the disbursement of real estate tax bills
- Increased costs to risk management
- Realignment of the Office of Minority Business Development under Finance and Administration portfolio

Following the presentation, Ms. Jackson responded to questions from Council regarding the proposed budget and the topics discussed.

A copy of the presentation provided has been filed.

[CD.2026.091](#) Budget Work Session Documents - Finance & Administration

Councilor Reva Trammell asked about RVA 311 integration with the Division of Property Maintenance and Code Enforcement and Zoning systems. Councilor Trammell requested clarity on how RVA 311 assigns tickets to departments and how it tracks requests by Council district.

Councilor Ellen Robertson requested information on the Finance Department's vacancies, salary levels and difficulty filling key finance positions, special and enterprise funds, implementation timeline for the Disparity Study, prior debt service, credit card fee waiver policies and reporting system modernization.

Councilor Andrew Breton raised questions regarding RVA 311 system integration, budget funding for system upgrades, temporary staffing costs, Finance Department restructuring, risk management claims, delinquent tax collection improvements, and procurement-related financial matters. Councilor Breton also requested information regarding the Commonwealth's Attorney's request for additional positions to support the Family Justice Center.

City Administration responded to questions regarding the restructuring of the City's Finance Department, and the Commonwealth's Attorney provided details supporting the request for seven additional positions.

Councilor Sarah Abubaker raised questions regarding procurement cost increases, vendor spending concentration, measurable outcomes for Minority Business Development initiatives, criteria for expanding services on the RVA 311 platform, and the RVA Gap Grant program.

City Administration responded to questions regarding procurement cost increases, vendor spending concentration and measurable outcomes for Minority Business Development initiatives.

Councilor Kenya Gibson requested information on Finance Department temporary staffing expenditures, salary ranges for vacant positions, compliance with the City Code requirement to publish the payment registry, and severance authority provisions in the pay plan ordinance. Councilor Gibson also requested a comparative analysis of severance policies.

City Administration addressed questions regarding the publication of the city's payment registry and severance payouts of senior officials.

Councilor Nicole Jones requested information on the structure, capacity, and alignment of the Minority Business Development program with the City's procurement processes. Councilor Jones also inquired about strategies to support small business owners beyond contracting opportunities.

Vice President Katherine Jordan requested updates on the hiring of the Revenue Director and plans to improve revenue collection efficiency, as well as clarification regarding third-party support for revenue forecasting and financial reconciliation. She also inquired about opportunities for joint contracting initiatives with Richmond Public Schools.

City Administration responded to questions relative to plans to create joint contracting opportunities with Richmond Public Schools and election resource needs.

Council President Cynthia Newbille requested updates on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) expenditures, including potential underspending of funds allocated for the homeownership assistance to city employees. President Newbille noted interest in the outcomes and future planning for the Participatory Budgeting process. She also requested clarification regarding standards for community benefits agreements.

Council members expressed their appreciation to staff, the constitutional officers, CAO Donald, DCAO Jackson, and all city departments for their work and preparation in developing the Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed Budget.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

CITY CLERK