



City of Richmond

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

Draft Meeting Minutes Public Safety Standing Committee

Tuesday, September 23, 2025

1:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor – City Hall

Committee Members in Attendance

The Honorable Reva Trammell – Chair
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch – Vice Chair (late arrival)
The Honorable Sarah Abubaker – Member

Staff and Others in Attendance

Greg Lukanuski, Deputy City Attorney
Kiley Kesecker, Deputy City Clerk
Nahdiah Muhammad, Assistant City Clerk
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Steve Taylor, Council Policy Analyst

Call to Order

Chair Reva Trammell called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement and Public Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Chair's request, Assistant City Clerk Nahdiah Muhammad provided information on the appropriate way to evacuate the Council Chamber in an emergency along with public speaker guidelines.

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of July 22, 2025, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2025.271](#) July 22, 2025 - Public Safety Standing Committee Meeting Minutes

Public Comment Period

There were no public comment speakers.

Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinance was considered:

1. [ORD. 2025-221](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept funds in the amount of \$250,000.00 from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and to amend the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Special Fund Budget by creating a new special fund for the Department of Emergency Communications, Preparedness, and Response called the "FY26 SHSP Radio Repeater Special Fund," and to appropriate the increase to the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Special Fund Budget by increasing estimated revenues and the amount appropriated to the Department of Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response's "FY26 SHSP Radio Repeater Special Fund" by \$250,000.00 for the purpose of purchasing and installing radio repeater equipment.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Jonathan Fetterman, Senior Manager for the Department of Communications, Preparedness and Response (DECPR), provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance. Mr. Fetterman stated the proposed ordinance would allow DECPR to accept funds for the purpose of purchasing and installing radio repeater equipment.

Chair Reva Trammell asked about how many radio repeaters would be installed.

Mr. Fetterman stated that DECPR would confirm the total number but that the department anticipated the installation of four radio repeaters.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

There were no further comments or discussions, and Member Sarah Abubaker moved to forward ORD. 2025-221 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Abubaker, Trammell. Noes None.

The following ordinance was considered:

2. [ORD. 2025-222](#) To amend City Code § 27-302, concerning towing and storage fees, for the purpose of modifying the limits on fees charged for the towing, storage, and safekeeping of certain vehicles removed from private property.

Patrons: Mayor Avula

Lynne Lancaster, Deputy Director for the Department of General Services, provided an introduction and additional background information regarding the proposed ordinance, stating that the proposed ordinance would modify the limits on fees charged for the towing, storage, and safekeeping of vehicles removed from private properties. She also stated that the maximum towing fees resulting from vehicles towed from private property have not been increased in seven years.

Chair Reva Trammell requested the details of current towing fees.

Ms. Lancaster stated that the state caps towing fees at \$210, yet the city's maximum towing fee is \$135, and that the proposed ordinance would increase the maximum fee to \$195. She also stated the proposed ordinance would increase the fee for the towing of vehicles from 7 p.m. to 8 a.m., from \$25 to \$30, and the maximum charge for the storage of vehicles overnight in after a 24-hour period, would increase from \$45 to \$50. She further stated the maximum that could be charged for administrative fees would increase from \$50 to \$75, and could only be charged if vehicles are left in tow yards for more than 72 hours.

Member Sarah Abubaker stated that the committee did not have sufficient time to review the proposed ordinance and asked if the increases were necessary.

Ms. Lancaster stated that industry stakeholders requested that the fee maximum be increased to \$210, and the towing board agreed to raise the max fee to \$195 as a compromise.

Member Abubaker asked how much of the towing fees would go to the city and towing operators.

Ms. Lancaster stated that all of the towing fees would go to the operators and is separate from the city's current contract with Seibert's Towing.

Chair Trammell asked how long the city had been in discussions about towing fees before the proposed ordinance was introduced.

Ms. Lancaster stated that city administration had been working with the city's Advisory Board for the Assessment of Towing and the Storage of Vehicles, since July to get approval for the proposed increase.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

There were no further comments or discussions, and Member Sarah Abubaker moved to continue ORD. 2025-222 to the November 25, 2025, Public Safety Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Abubaker, Trammell. Noes None.

Presentation(s)**Shockoe Bottom Update**

Chief of Police Rick Edwards presented the committee with information regarding Shockoe Bottom, year-to date violent and property crime stats, and arrests in Shockoe Bottom.

[CD.2025.247](#) September 23, 2025 - Shockoe Bottom Update

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Vice Chair Stephanie Lynch arrived at 1:25 p.m., and was seated.

Chair Reva Trammell inquired about the number of officers assigned to patrol Shockoe Bottom on weekends, and she requested information regarding the deployment of additional police officers for patrols in the Southside area.

Chief Edwards stated that mandatory overtime is required for officers patrolling Shockoe Bottom. He reported that four officers are assigned to mandatory overtime shifts on Friday and Saturday nights, and that depending on the level of activity in Shockoe Bottom, officers may be redirected to patrol other areas of the city. Chief Edwards further stated that the Richmond Police Department (RPD) is currently reevaluating the city's patrol boundaries with the assistance of Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), and considering the James River as a potential natural boundary.

Chair Trammell inquired about the current number of police officers that RPD requires.

Chief Edwards stated that RPD has 590 available officers and that the department is authorized to have 755 officers.

Chair Trammell requested that Chief Edwards provide additional information regarding the study conducted by VCU to reevaluate the city's boundaries.

Chief Edwards stated that he can provide the committee with additional information and that RPD will not be able to implement the study into the records management system until the end of 2026.

Member Sarah Abubaker inquired whether RPD will continue the distribution of steering wheel locks.

Chief Edwards stated that he would provide the committee with additional information regarding the availability of steering wheel locks moving forward and noted that the community responded positively to the initial distribution of steering wheel locks for Honda vehicles.

Member Abubaker asked about strategies to decrease the amount of firearms in Shockoe Bottom.

Chief Edwards discussed the possibility of implementing legislation to prohibit the carrying of firearms in the area.

Member Abubaker inquired about introducing legislation to establish an entertainment overlay district, aimed at providing law enforcement with additional enforcement tools.

Chief Edwards stated that establishing entertainment overlay districts would equip officers with additional enforcement tools. He further stated that most individuals would likely refrain from carrying firearms if they were aware it was prohibited by law.

Member Abubaker requested the most up-to-date data on speed enforcement.

Chief Edwards stated that he would provide the committee with additional information on speed enforcement. He further stated that red light cameras will be implemented as an additional tool to address speeding, and that an officer has been hired specifically to operate radar cameras.

Vice Chair Stephaine Lynch asked for guidance about the option of implementing other zoning tools like an outdoor refreshment area (ORA) as a tool to help with violence in the area. She stated that state law does not allow the city to restrict the open carry of firearms.

Board Vacancies

There were no board vacancies.

Discussion Item(s)

There were no discussion items.

Staff Report

Council staff provided the committee with the September Public Safety staff report.

[CD.2025.294](#) September 23, 2025 - Public Safety Staff Report

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Adjournment

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