

INTRODUCED: December 8, 2014

AN ORDINANCE No. 2014-257-2015-9

To amend ch. 42, art. I of the City Code by adding therein a new section 42-14, concerning the publication of the City's payment register, to require that the City's payment register be published on the City's website.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patrons – Mr. Baliles, President Samuels, Mr. Agelasto and Ms. Robertson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Approved as to form and legality  
by the City Attorney  
\_\_\_\_\_

PUBLIC HEARING: JAN 12 2015 AT 6 P.M.

THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEREBY ORDAINS:

§ 1. That Chapter 42, Article I of the Code of the City of Richmond be and is hereby amended and reordained by **adding therein a new section** numbered 42-14 as follows:

**Sec. 42-14. Publication of payment register.**

(a) *Definitions.* The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this section, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this subsection unless the context clearly requires the application of a different meaning.

(1) *Payment.* "Payment" means a disbursement by the City to any person for operating purposes. "Payment" does not include disbursements by the City to any

AYES:            9            NOES:            0            ABSTAIN: \_\_\_\_\_

ADOPTED:    JAN 12 2015    REJECTED: \_\_\_\_\_    STRICKEN: \_\_\_\_\_

employee of the City, a constitutional officer of the City, or any other entity for which the City manages accounts payable for personnel purposes except for reimbursement of expenses of an operating nature.

(2) *Person.* “Person” means a person as defined by Code of Virginia, § 1-230.

(3) *Register.* “Register” means a record, derived from the City’s financial records, of all payments during a month that states for each payment the following:

- a. The name of the payee.
- b. The check number, wire number, or electronic funds transfer number.
- c. The date of the payment.
- d. The amount of the payment.
- e. The invoice description.
- f. The fund code.
- g. The cost center.
- h. The account code.
- i. The payment document used.
- j. The type of the disbursement.

(b) *Publication required.* The Director of Finance shall cause to be published on the City’s website a read-only, searchable version of each month’s register accessible to the general public beginning no later than the month beginning July 1, 2015. The Director of Finance shall cause each month’s register to be published on the City’s website at the time of the close of that month and shall maintain that month’s register on the City’s website for the period of time that

the City is required to maintain that month's register pursuant to the Virginia Public Records Act, Code of Virginia §§ 42.1-76 through 42.1-90.1. The Director of Finance may redact particular fields for particular payments only if and to the extent required by law or permitted by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Code of Virginia, §§ 2.2-3700 through 2.2-3714, provided that nothing in this section shall require the Director of Finance to redact any of the information in the register simply because the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Code of Virginia, §§ 2.2-3700 through 2.2-3714, so permits.

§ 2. This ordinance shall be in force and effect upon adoption.



# Richmond City Council

The Voice of the People

Richmond, Virginia

Office of the Council Chief of Staff

## Ordinance/Resolution Request

**TO** Allen Jackson, Richmond City Attorney  
Richmond Office of the City Attorney

**THROUGH** Lou Brown Ali *V. Jones for Lou Brown Ali*  
Council Chief of Staff

**FROM** Meghan Brown, Council Budget Analyst *MKB*

**COPY** Mr. Jonathan T. Baliles, 1<sup>st</sup> District Council Member  
Haskell Brown, Deputy City Attorney  
Vincent Jones, Deputy Council Chief of Staff  
Yueh "Eli" H. Wong, 1<sup>st</sup> District Liaison

**DATE** November 26, 2014

**PAGE/s** 1 of 2

**TITLE** Require Publication of City's Payment Register on the City Website

**RECEIVED**  
NOV 26 2014

OFFICE OF CITY ATTORNEY

This is a request for the drafting of an  Ordinance  Resolution

**REQUESTING COUNCILMEMBER/PATRON**

Councilman Baliles

**SUGGESTED STANDING COMMITTEE**

Government Operations

**ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION SUMMARY**

The patron requests an ordinance to establish a new section in the City Code that the City of Richmond shall maintain an official, searchable report accessible to all residents via the City's website that discloses all appropriate information, in a timely manner, in the form of a payment registry.

**BACKGROUND**

"Transparency" is government's obligation to share information with residents that is needed to make informed decisions and hold officials accountable. Governments that take a proactive lead in disclosing payment register information hold themselves accountable to constituents. Publishing a payment register online makes it easy for people to see this information rather than require them to make a request. Check registers and other such information is subject to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and must be disclosed to anyone who asks. Publishing the City's payment register should lessen the burden of data collection, reproduction of documentation, etc., of FOIA requests and reduces the cost to residents and media requesting such information as it will be available and widely accessible on the City's website.

Recently Richmond Public Schools has begun posting its check registry on its website. The information is presented in a searchable format and is available to be exported to excel. The online registry is updated twice weekly.

"Payment Register" means a record or listing of all payments, cash payments, wire transfers, electronic funds transfer, and any other outlays of cash during an accounting period. The payment register shall include (i) vendor name, (ii) check number, wire number, or electronic funds transfer number, (iii) payment date, (iv) payment amount, (v) invoice description, (vi) fund code, (vii) cost center, (viii) account code, (ix) payment document used, (x) disbursement type. The register shall be updated, at a minimum, during the close of each accounting period (i.e. each fiscal month).

The register shall contain all operational payment (i.e. Account Codes 70000-99999) thus excluding all payroll and personnel payments unless those payments to personnel or employees are operational in nature (i.e. travel reimbursement, etc.) The register shall comply with all provisions pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2, Chapter 37 – Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Fiscal Impact Yes  No

Budget Amendment Required Yes  No

Estimated Cost or Revenue Impact \$

**Fiscal Summary:**

There may be some additional staff time needed to review the register for compliance with Virginia Freedom of Information Act. That review should be the only manual time needed as the City's financial system has a standard payment register report that can be run at any time.

**Attachment/s** Yes  No