

INTRODUCED: June 2, 2025

AN ORDINANCE No. 2025-136

To repeal City Code §§ 2-29, 2-31, 2-32, and 2-33, concerning the classifications of Council liaison, Council Policy Analyst, Council Budget Analyst, and the Council Public Relations Specialist, respectively, and to amend City Code § 2-30, concerning the Council Chief of Staff appointment and duties, for the purpose of providing for the appointment of employees in such classifications by the Council Chief of Staff.

Patrons – Vice President Jordan, President Newbille, Mr. Breton, Ms. Lynch, Ms. Jones, Ms. Abubaker, and Ms. Robertson

Approved as to form and legality
by the City Attorney

PUBLIC HEARING: JUN 23 2025 AT 6 P.M.

THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEREBY ORDAINS:

§ 1. That sections 2-29, 2-31, 2-32 and 2-33 of the Code of City of Richmond (2020) be and are hereby as **repealed** as follows:

[Sec. 2-29. -- Council liaisons.

~~(a) — The City Council may provide for the appointment of a Council liaison for each member of the Council to assist the members with administrative support and responding to constituent concerns.~~

AYES: _____ NOES: _____ ABSTAIN: _____

ADOPTED: _____ REJECTED: _____ STRICKEN: _____

~~(b) — Any such Council liaison shall be appointed by the Council for an indefinite term and shall be a member of the unclassified service.~~

~~(c) — The City Council shall provide for training and coordination of assignments for each liaison. The City Council shall also provide for the maintenance of evaluation information on each liaison and the provision of such evaluation information to the City Council at the time that the Council conducts its evaluation of other Council appointees.]~~

~~[Sec. 2-31. — Council Policy Analyst; appointment; duties.~~

~~The City Council may provide for the appointment of a Council Policy Analyst to assist the Council with the analysis of current and proposed policies of the City. The Council Policy Analyst shall be appointed by the City Council for an indefinite term and shall be a member of the unclassified service. The Council Policy Analyst shall be responsible for conducting research, assessments and comparative analysis on current and proposed policies of the City and for the development and distribution of position papers and impact statements relating to such policies. The Council Policy Analyst shall annually develop and distribute for Council's consideration legislative proposals that require action by the Virginia General Assembly. The Council Policy Analyst shall also perform such other duties as may be assigned by the City Council or any member thereof.~~

~~Sec. 2-32. — Council Budget Analyst; appointment; duties.~~

~~(a) — The City Council may provide for the appointment of a Council Budget Analyst to assist the Council with the analysis of current and proposed policies and legislation that affect the City's budgets. The Council Budget Analyst shall be appointed by the City Council for an indefinite term and shall be a member of the unclassified service. The Council Budget Analyst shall be responsible for:~~

~~(1) — Reviewing all appropriation items recommended in the proposed annual budgets presented to the City Council and in any amendments thereto;~~

~~(2) — Analyzing the fiscal impact of actual or proposed changes in City agency programs;~~

~~(3) — Providing the members of the City Council with periodic comparative analyses showing the distribution of City spending per Council district pursuant to the annual budget and any amendments thereto;~~

~~(4) — Assisting the Council in setting budget priorities and making budget allocations based upon performance;~~

~~(5) — Analyzing tax abatement and deferral programs to determine their fiscal impact on the City; and~~

~~(6) — Conducting quarterly financial and performance reviews and submitting reports thereof to the Council.~~

~~(b) — The Council Budget Analyst shall also perform such other duties as may be assigned by the City Council or any member thereof.~~

Sec. 2-33. — Council Public Relations Specialist; appointment; duties.

~~The City Council may provide for the appointment of a Council Public Relations Specialist to assist the Council with media relations. The Council Public Relations Specialist shall be appointed by the City Council for an indefinite term and shall be a member of the unclassified service. The Council Public Relations Specialist shall be responsible for the development of a comprehensive program to distribute to the media information concerning the City's policies, programs and goals. The Council Public Relations Specialist shall be responsible for the preparation and distribution of news releases and advisories, the organization of press conferences~~

~~for Council members and the development and publication of newsletters and shall supervise all media relations and media communications for the Council members. The Council Public Relations Specialist shall coordinate all special events and awards ceremonies for members of the Council and shall also perform such other duties as assigned by the City Council or any member thereof.]~~

§ 2. That section 2-30 of the Code of City of Richmond (2020) be and is hereby **amended** and reordained as follows:

Sec. 2-30. Office of the Council Chief of Staff; appointment of Council Chief of Staff; duties.

(a) There shall be an Office of the Council Chief of Staff, which shall consist of a Council Chief of Staff and such employees organized into such divisions or units as may be provided by ordinance or by the Council Chief of Staff. The City Council may provide for the appointment of a Chief of Staff for the Council. The Chief of Staff shall be appointed by the City Council for an indefinite term and shall be a member of the unclassified service. The Chief of Staff shall have general management and control over the affairs of the City Council, including the following:

- (1) Assistance to the Council with formulation of the Council's strategic plan and evaluation;
- (2) Budget development;
- (3) Budget policy analysis;
- (4) Public information services;
- (5) Public policy research and analysis;
- (6) Program reporting and performance evaluation; and
- (7) Coordination of Council-appointed agencies' services.

(b) The Chief of Staff shall also serve as a liaison between the Council, the Mayor's Office, the Chief Administrative Officer, Deputy Chief Administrative Officers, City agency heads, other governmental entities, community organizations and others as required. The Chief of Staff shall serve as the appointing authority for the employees of the Office of the Council Chief of Staff and, in that capacity, shall appoint and remove all employees of the Council Chief of Staff, including, but not limited to, Council liaisons, policy analysts, budget analysts, and public relations specialists, as may be necessary to fulfill the requirements of this section. The Chief of Staff shall provide general supervision over other positions that may be established and assigned to the Chief of Staff by the Council. The Chief of Staff shall perform such other duties as assigned by the Council through an ordinance, resolution, motion or vote. The Chief of Staff shall also perform such other duties as assigned by any member of the Council, to the extent permitted by any applicable policies and procedures of the Council.

(c) While the Chief of Staff serves as the appointing authority for Council liaisons, each City Council member shall select such Council member's liaison. Each Council liaison shall be appointed for an indefinite term and shall be a member of the unclassified service. A Council member may appoint or dismiss such Council member's liaison by so directing the Chief of Staff in writing. Upon receipt of the written notice from a Council member, the Chief of Staff shall effectuate the Council member's personnel decision. The selecting Council member shall be responsible for providing training and coordinating assignments for such Council member's liaison. The selecting Council member shall also be responsible for supervising, evaluating the performance of, and taking any corrective action that may be necessary concerning such Council member's liaison.

(d) Ultimate responsibility for hiring, removal, and other personnel decisions relating to employees of the Council Chief of Staff, except for Council liaisons, shall reside in the Chief of Staff.

(e) The appointment and removal powers granted to the Chief of Staff in subsection (b) shall apply to all of the employees and other positions identified in that subsection who were appointed or employed by the City on, before, or after the date upon which the ordinance providing for this subsection was adopted.

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

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Tabrica C. Rentz
CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE



Richmond City Council

The Voice of the People

Richmond, Virginia

Office of the Council Chief of Staff

Ordinance/Resolution Request

TO Laura Drewry, City Attorney

THROUGH Matthew Slaats, Interim Council Chief of Staff
Office of the Council Chief of Staff

FROM Will Perkins, Senior Legislative Services Manager
Office of the Council Chief of Staff

COPY Katherine Jordan, Councilmember, 2nd District
Cynthia Newbille, Councilmember, 7th District
Tabrica Rentz, Deputy City Attorney
Alphonso Simon, Assistant City Attorney

DATE May 22, 2024

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TITLE Amendments to Chapter 2, Article II (City Council) of Richmond City Code

This is a request for the drafting of an **Ordinance** ☒ **Resolution** ☐

REQUESTING COUNCILMEMBER/PATRON

Patrons: Katherine Jordan,
Cynthia Newbille;
Co-Patrons: Andrew Breton,
Stephanie Lynch, Nicole Jones, Sarah
Abubaker, and Ellen Robertson

SUGGESTED STANDING COMMITTEE

Government Operations

ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION SUMMARY

This ordinance amends several sections of Chapter 2, Article II (City Council) of City Code to make all Council liaisons and Office of Council Chief of Staff employees into appointees of the Council Chief of Staff to avoid the need for public votes and discussion of personnel matters best left to Human Resources.

Individual Councilmembers will retain the power to select, supervise, train, evaluate, and remove their District liaison, but this change makes it so that any personnel actions (hiring, firing, etc.) are handled administratively rather than via introduction and adoption of a public Council resolution.

Additionally, this change empowers the Chief of Staff to better manage his/her office including the power to select, supervise, train, and evaluate all Office of Council Chief of Staff employees and more nimbly organize positions and job responsibilities without the need to amend City Code in each instance.

Specifically, the ordinance includes the following amendments:

- Amends Sec. 2-30 (Council Chief of Staff; appointment; duties) to make the Chief of Staff the appointing authority for all Council employees (liaisons) and Office of Council Chief employees. Further it adds three subsections to make clear that each Councilmember retains the power to select his/her liaison via written notice to the Chief of Staff (c), that the Council Chief of Staff is ultimately responsible for personnel decisions for Council employees other than liaisons(d), and that the Chief of Staff is now the appointing authority for all Council and Office of Council Chief of Staff employees.
- Repeals Sec. 2-29, 2-31, 2-32, and 2-33 (Council Liaisons, Council Policy Analyst, Budget Analyst, and Public Relations Specialist).

BACKGROUND

In 2004, the City of Richmond shifted from a Council-Manager to a Mayor-Council form of government. These changes provided for a directly elected Mayor with the right to hire and fire a Chief Administrative Officer with the responsibility to manage the day-to-day operations of city government. Following these changes, there were attempts by the Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer to dismiss City Council staff. In response, the Council created a series of positions to be appointed (or removed) only by a vote of the full Council:

- Ord. 2004-360-330 created Council Liaisons
- Ord. 2004-361-353 created Council Chief of Staff
- Ord. 2004-362-354 created Council Policy Analyst
- Ord. 2004-363-355 created Council Budget Analyst
- Ord. 2004-364-356 created Council Public Relations Specialist

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Fiscal Impact Yes ☐ No ☒

Budget Amendment Required Yes ☐ No ☒

Estimated Cost or Revenue Impact

None

Attachment/s No ☒