



City of Richmond

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

Infomal Meeting Minutes DRAFT

Monday, March 23, 2026

4:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Council Members Present

The Honorable Cynthia Newbille, President
The Honorable Katherine Jordan, Vice President (late arrival and early departure)
The Honorable Sarah Abubaker
The Honorable Andrew Breton (late arrival)
The Honorable Kenya Gibson
The Honorable Nicole Jones (early departure)
The Honorable Ellen Robertson
The Honorable Reva Trammell

Absent

The Honorable Stephanie Lynch

Staff Present

Lisa Braxton, Council Management Analyst, Principal
Laura Drewry, City Attorney
Kiley Kesecker, Deputy City Clerk
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 4:02 p.m. and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Announcement

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

Docket Review

Council Management Analyst Lisa Braxton reviewed the following agenda items as indicated:

Consent Agenda:

1. Ord. 2025-258 – retained on Consent Agenda
2. Ord. 2026-003 – retained on Consent Agenda
3. Ord. 2026-042 – retained on Consent Agenda

Councilor Andrew Breton arrived at 4:04 p.m. and was seated.

4. Ord. 2026-051 – retained on Consent Agenda
5. Ord. 2026-052 – retained on Consent Agenda

At the request of Councilor Ellen Robertson, it was the consensus of Council to waive committee referral of Ords. 2026-052, 2026-054 and 2026-055 and instead consider all legislation later that evening during the Formal Session of Council.

6. Ord. 2026-053 – retained on Consent Agenda
7. Ord. 2026-054 – retained on Consent Agenda
8. Ord. 2026-055 – retained on Consent Agenda
9. Ord. 2026-056 – retained on Consent Agenda
10. Res. 2026-R003 – to be continued to Monday, April 27, 2026
11. Res. 2026-R013 – to be continued to Monday, April 27, 2026

Regular Agenda:

12. Ord. 2025-215 – to be continued to Monday, April 13, 2026
13. Ord. 2025-282 – to be continued to Monday, April 27, 2026

Budget-Related Papers:

14. Ord. 2026-063 – to be continued to Monday, April 13, 2026
15. Ord. 2026-064 – to be continued to Monday, April 13, 2026
16. Ord. 2026-065 – to be continued to Monday, April 13, 2026
17. Ord. 2026-066 – to be continued to Monday, April 13, 2026
18. Ord. 2026-067 – to be continued to Monday, April 13, 2026

19. Ord. 2026-068 – to be continued to Monday, April 13, 2026
20. Ord. 2026-069 – to be continued to Monday, April 13, 2026
21. Ord. 2026-070 – to be continued to Monday, April 13, 2026
22. Ord. 2026-071 – to be continued to Monday, April 13, 2026

President Cynthia Newbille requested that the budget public hearing time limit for each speaker be reduced to two minutes to accommodate all in attendance providing comments later that evening during the Formal Session of Council.

Councilor Kenya Gibson objected to the proposed reduced time limit. Councilor Gibson also stated that she will abstain from the vote of Ord. 2026-003 later that evening during the Formal Session of Council.

There were no further comments or discussions concerning Consent, Regular Agenda and Budget-Related items reviewed.

Other Discussion Item(s)

FY 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR)

Chief Administrative Officer Odie Donald addressed Council regarding the FY 2025 ACFR, expressing confidence in the completion of the audit. CAO Donald noted that the delay did not impact budget decisions and that the city remained in compliance with state requirements. CAO Donald attributed the delay of the ACFR to audit reconciliation processes, leadership transitions, late component unit data, new accounting standards (GASB 101 and 102), and staffing constraints, while emphasizing on a commitment to timeliness for FY 2026. Mr. Donald introduced the city's external audit partner, CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA), LLP's Greg Miller, who presented the audit results, explaining audit scope, standards, and procedures, including financial statement review and compliance testing. Mr. Miller reported that the city received an unmodified (clean) opinion of its FY 2025 finances with only one material weakness related to the Economic Development Authority bond reporting. A copy of the presentation has been filed.

[CD.2026.094](#) FY 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report Presentation

Vice-President Katherine Jordan arrived at 4:19 p.m. and was seated.

Councilor Kenya Gibson questioned whether surplus calculations could be included in the ACFR, to which Mr. Miller mentioned that surplus is not a (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) GAAP-defined measure and may be better addressed through internal or agreed-upon procedures rather than an audit. Councilor Gibson also raised concerns

regarding discrepancies between the ACFR and budgeted revenue figures, and she inquired about departmental overspending, especially within the Department of Fire and Emergency Services.

CAO Donald agreed to provide a written response regarding the \$10 million difference between the ACFR and the budgeted general tax revenues. Mr. Donald noted overtime and staffing needs as contributing factors to certain department budget overages but stated it was not the primary driver of surplus changes.

Councilor Sarah Abubaker identified a potential error in reported real estate growth figures in the ACFR. Councilor Abubaker requested a list of component units with missing data at the time of the surplus estimate.

Councilor Andrew Breton raised questions regarding higher-than-expected real estate tax collections, to which CAO Donald agreed to provide additional information.

President Cynthia Newbille directed members to submit follow-up questions in writing for coordinated responses through the council chief of staff.

Closed Session

At 5:00 p.m., Councilor Nicole Jones moved that the Council go into a closed meeting pursuant to subdivision (A)(19) of section 2.2-3711 of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act to discuss briefings concerning specific cybersecurity threats to the public safety and the City's information technology system.

The motion was seconded and approved: Ayes 7, Breton, Gibson, Jones, Robertson, Trammell, Abubaker, Newbille. Noes None. Jordan was excused.

Vice President Katherine Jordan and Councilor Nicole Jones departed the closed session and did not rejoin the meeting.

Councilor Kenya Gibson motioned to exit closed session. The motion was seconded and approved: Ayes 6, Breton, Gibson, Robertson, Trammell, Abubaker, Newbille. Noes None.

Councilors reconvened in open session at 5:43 p.m.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

March 23, 2026

WHEREAS, the Council has convened in closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Council that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law:

NOW, THEREFORE,
BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Council hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge (i) only public matters lawfully exempt from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certifying resolution applies; and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Council.

WITNESS the following vote of Council members, as recorded by Candice D. Reid, City Clerk:

CERTIFYING:

- Cynthia I. Newbille, President
- Katherine L. Jordan, Vice President (early departure)
- Andrew S. Breton
- Kenya J. Gibson
- Sarah M.A. Abubaker
- Stephanie A. Lynch (absent)
- Ellen F. Robertson
- Reva M. Trammell
- Nicole Jones (early departure)

DECLINING TO CERTIFY:

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:44 p.m.

CITY CLERK