



City of Richmond

Work Session Minutes

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

Monday, August 2, 2021

3:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall
Virtual Meeting

Councilmembers Present

The Honorable Cynthia Newbille, President
The Honorable Ellen Robertson, Vice President
The Honorable Andreas Addison (late arrival)
The Honorable Michael Jones
The Honorable Katherine Jordan
The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert (early departure)
The Honorable Kristen Larson (late arrival and early departure)
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch (late arrival and early departure)
The Honorable Reva Trammell (late arrival)

Staff Present

Haskell Brown, Interim City Attorney
Joyce Davis, Interim Council Chief of Staff
Bill Echelberger, Council Budget Analyst
Samson Anderson, Council Budget Analyst
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Tabrica Rentz, Acting Deputy City Attorney
Steve Skinner, Council Public Information Manager
Steve Taylor, Council Policy Analyst
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Council President Cynthia Newbille called the work session to order at 3:03 p.m. and presided.

ELECTRONIC MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Deputy City Clerk RJ Warren, in accordance with Ordinance No. 2020-093, adopted April 9, 2020, as most recently amended by Ordinance No. 2021-181, adopted June 28, 2021, announced the work session would be held through electronic communication means, and stated that notice of the session was provided to the public through a public information advisory issued on July 27, 2021, and through Legistar on the city website in accordance with usual practice. He also stated there would be no opportunities for public comment and no public hearings during the session.

Interim Council Chief of Staff Joyce Davis provided Council with an overview of agenda items and goals to be discussed amongst Council during the work session.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch joined the work session at 3:06 p.m.

Discussion Items

Update from Administration on Current and Anticipated ARPA Round One Activities

Jeff Gray, Senior Policy Analyst to the Chief Administrative Officer, provided Council with an update regarding city administration's efforts to engage with the Richmond community to facilitate

an understanding about the community's preferred use of funds received from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). Mr. Gray stated that the goal was to share the information collected from surveys with Council, in order to collaborate on a plan regarding the use of ARPA funds.

Jason May, Budget and Strategic Planning interim director, informed Council that city administration was still waiting for the final guidelines, regarding the use of ARPA funds, to be provided by the United States Department of the Treasury. Mr. May also stated that the allocation spending reporting structure, required by the federal government, was also in the process of being finalized. Mr. May further stated that city administration was obtaining information from city departments regarding past and future improvement projects in need of funds for completion.

Peter Breil, Citizen Service and Response director, provided information regarding the city's use of the ARPA surveys to better understand the community's preference for ARPA fund allocation. Mr. Breil stated initial surveys were in digital formats, but that the city was working on non-digital methods to directly interact with citizens.

Councilor Michael Jones stated his concerns with the survey process beginning with digital-only methods. Mr. Jones also stated that many citizens experience barriers with electronic interactions with city government, and he added that he was worried some communities in the city were not being included in the process.

Vice President Ellen Robertson stated it was important that Council and city administration use the work session to solidify the process of identifying ARPA fund priorities.

Review of Guiding Principles from July 12th Work Session

Martha Marshall, Work Session Facilitator, led Council through a review of guiding principles and goals discussed at the previous Council work session on July 12, 2021. The guiding principles provided were as follows:

- To collaborate with the Administration to ensure Council's role in the recovery decision making process is clear, appropriate and timely
- To leverage recovery resources for the greatest impact
- To be data driven in understanding community challenges
- To actively engage the community so all can be heard
- To seek equity and inclusion when making decisions
- To ensure transparency throughout the process

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Vice President Ellen Robertson stated it was important that the city examine the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on citizens, to determine how best to use ARPA funds. Vice President Robertson suggested additions to the proposed guiding principles for Covid recovery and American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) funding decisions.

President Cynthia Newbille requested that Vice President Robertson's suggestions be included with the proposed guiding principles for Covid recovery and ARPA funding.

A copy of the updated material provided has been filed.

Review of Goals and Project Focus Areas

Martha Marshall, Work Session Facilitator, led Council through a review and discussion of goals and project focus areas.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Councilor Kristen Larson joined the work session at 3:50 p.m.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert confirmed that infrastructure projects, such as combined sewer overflow improvements, were included and eligible to receive funding.

Council requested that city administration's goals and priority areas for American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) and recovery funding, be included for comparison and collaboration purposes. City administration's goals and priority areas for ARPA and recovery funding were as follows:

1. Supporting Children and Families (Seniors)
2. Transforming Infrastructure, Neighborhoods, and Public Spaces
3. Investing in Jobs and Economic Recovery (Business)
4. Improving Government Resilience and Response
5. Safe and Secure Neighborhood

A copy of the updated material provided has been filed.

After review of Alexandria City and Richmond City administration's goals for ARPA funding allocation, Martha Marshall, Work Session Facilitator, led Council through a process of identifying Council's own goals and project focus areas for use of ARPA funding.

Councilor Michael Jones stated Council's own list of goals was necessary to better facilitate collaboration with city administration. Councilor Jones also referenced proposed funding commitments discussed during review of the city's FY2021-2022 budget, and he asked that Council keep the proposed projects in mind regarding ARPA funding.

President Cynthia Newbille informed Council that RES. 2021-R030 captured the projects that Councilor Jones referenced, and that the legislation was still pending before Council and scheduled to be reviewed at the September 7, 2021 Organizational Development Standing Committee meeting, and the September 13, 2021 Formal City Council meeting.

Councilor Katherine Jordan requested that "environment" be included on the list of project focus areas.

Ron Jordan, City Lobbyist, Advantus Strategies, provided Council with an overview of state and federal ARPA spending guidelines.

Council's list of goals and project focus areas to receive ARPA funding were identified as follows:

- Education
 - Workforce Development
- Information Technology Infrastructure
- Housing
- Health
- Economic Instability
- Recovery of Revenue Loss
- Infrastructure
- Environment
- Premium Pay

A copy of the updated material provided has been filed.

Council Planning and Moving Forward

Martha Marshall, Work Session Facilitator, led Council through a discussion regarding framework steps and projected target dates for American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) framework implementation.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert suggested that Council wait until the conclusion of the Virginia General Assembly special session before finalizing any target dates for implementation.

Councilor Andreas Addison joined the work session at 4:45 p.m.

Ron Jordan, City Lobbyist, Advantus Strategies, provided Council with an update regarding the ongoing Virginia General Assembly special session. Mr. Jordan also discussed certain spending categories and descriptions referenced in the budget bills pending before the Virginia General Assembly. Mr. Jordan discussed with Council specific categories that Council could apply to for project and improvement funding.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch stated it was important Council work quickly to identify funding categories where the city could request funding for certain projects and improvements.

Councilor Katherine Jordan suggested that Council utilize the previously announced public engagement schedule by city administration in determining Council's schedule for public engagement.

Councilor Kristen Larson inquired when priorities identified by Councilmembers independently prior to the work session, would be included within Council's ARPA framework. Councilor Larson also requested greater detail on city administration's ARPA goals.

Interim Council Chief of Staff Joyce Davis stated that the Office of the Council Chief of Staff would prepare documentation referencing Council's identified goals for its ARPA framework, and she also stated that staff would work with city administration to finalize dates necessary for Council to reach a conclusion on ARPA funding.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert inquired about the city's efforts to engage with the city's senior population.

Jeff Gray, Senior Policy Analyst to the Chief Administrative Officer, provided information regarding the city's efforts engaging with the city's senior population.

Interim Council Chief of Staff Joyce Davis stated that the Office of the Council Chief of Staff would work with city administration regarding the use of public hearings to help with the engagement of ARPA funding initiatives with citizens.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch stated it was important that Council work to identify funding needs as soon as possible, to better situate itself regarding funding requests from the state prior to the Virginia General Assembly's adoption of the 2022-2024 Virginia Biennium Budget.

Councilwoman Reva Trammell joined the work session at 5:08 p.m.

Councilor Kristen Larson left the work session at 5:09 p.m.

Ron Jordan, City Lobbyist, Advantus Strategies, provided Council with a timeline of the Virginia General Assembly's review of the 2022-2024 Virginia Biennium Budget, and he suggested that Council identify 2022 state funding priorities as soon as possible.

President Cynthia Newbille confirmed that funding priorities for the 2022-2024 Virginia Biennium Budget should be included in the framework schedule for Council's review of ARPA

funding. President Newbille also discussed scheduling goals for Council in preparation of finalizing ARPA framework goals and plans for Council's next work session regarding ARPA funding.

Vice President Ellen Robertson confirmed that Council staff would provide Council with finalized information regarding an ARPA framework by August 20, 2021.

Ron Jordan, City Lobbyist, Advantus Strategies, provided Council with additional information regarding the ongoing Virginia General Assembly special session, and specific allocations of federal stimulus funding. Mr. Jordan informed Council that much of the allocated money from the state would find its way to the city through previously established state run programs and agencies.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch left the work session at 5:33 p.m.

Councilor Andreas Addison provided Council with information regarding priorities identified by Virginia First Cities, and how the priorities might impact the city. Councilor Addison also stated that many of the city's decisions regarding ARPA and state funding might be predetermined based on requirements set forth by the Governor of Virginia's proposed budget.

Laura Bateman, City Lobbyist, Advantus Strategies, provided additional information regarding Virginia First Cities and the requirement that the city apply for funding from state programs and agencies.

Robert Steidel, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer of Operations, provided Council with information regarding the requirement that the city match the state's allocation of funding to address improvements needed for the combined sewer overflow system.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert left the work session at 5:43 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the work session adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

CITY CLERK