



City of Richmond

Minutes

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

Education and Human Services Standing Committee

Thursday, June 10, 2021

2:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor – Virtual Meeting

Committee Members and Staff in Attendance

The Honorable Stephanie Lynch – Chair

The Honorable Ellen Robertson – Vice Chair

The Honorable Katherine Jordan – Committee Member (early departure)

The Honorable Cynthia Newbille – Alternate Member (late arrival and early departure)

The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert – Councilmember (late arrival)

Joyce Davis, Interim Council Chief of Staff

Pamela Nichols, Senior Assistant City Clerk

M. Janet Palmer, Deputy City Attorney

Candice Reid, City Clerk

Dominique J. Thaxton, Assistant City Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Stephanie Lynch called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m., and presided.

Electronic Meeting Announcement

Assistant City Clerk Dominique J. Thaxton, in accordance with Ordinance No. 2020-093, adopted April 9, 2020, as most recently amended by Ordinance No. 2020-232, adopted December 14, 2020, announced the meeting would be held through electronic communication means. Assistant City Clerk Thaxton stated notice of the meeting was provided to the public through a revised public information advisory issued on June 2, 2021, and through Legistar on the city website in accordance with usual practice. She also stated members of the public were encouraged to provide comments in writing prior to the meeting and all comments received prior to 10:00 a.m., on Thursday, June 10, 2021, were provided to committee members. Ms. Thaxton indicated that members of the public who signed up to speak and provide comment would be called to speak at the appropriate time.

Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Chair's request, Assistant City Clerk Dominique J. Thaxton provided citizen speaker guidelines.

Public Comment

There were no public comment speakers.

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the minutes of the Thursday, March 25, 2021 special meeting, the Thursday, April 22, 2021 special meeting and the Thursday, May 6, 2021 meeting, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

Board Vacancies

There were no board vacancies.

Discussion Item

Update on Homelessness

Sherrill Hampton, Department of Housing and Community Development Director, provided an overview of the current homelessness situation in the city. Ms. Hampton shared information from the Greater Richmond Continuum of Care (GRCoC) on the most recent data, reflecting the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in the city. Ms. Hampton outlined the allocation of fund sources for several homeless services and the various outputs of the services.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert joined the meeting at 2:10 p.m.

Chair Stephanie Lynch inquired about plans for addressing homelessness during the summer months of 2021.

Ms. Hampton provided information on plans for addressing homelessness during the summer months and stated that the administration will provide Council with an update in July of 2021.

Dianne Wilmore, City Library Community Services Manager and Homeless Services Liaison, shared further detail on plans to assist individuals experiencing homelessness during the summer months of 2021.

Chair Lynch asked for details on outreach efforts for homeless individuals who are unable to get access through the homeless crisis line.

Ms. Wilmore provided information on various outreach program services, including a partnership with the Richmond Police Department's Homeless Outreach Partnerships Enforcement (HOPE) unit. Ms. Wilmore also shared that a large percentage of the city's homeless population are from surrounding localities and states.

Ms. Hampton shared the coordinated outreach and service efforts made by the GRCoC to connect individuals experiencing homelessness with resources.

Chair Lynch shared information on the complexities of providing resources and public assistance benefits to individuals experiencing homelessness who are not residents of Virginia.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson shared that the city's Strategic Plan to End Homelessness 2020-2030 as outlined in RES. 2020-R031, adopted May 11, 2020, detailed a strategy to provide supportive housing opportunities rather than non-emergency shelter spaces. Vice Chair Robertson requested a breakdown of the city's homeless population that are neither residents of the city nor

Virginia. Ms. Robertson also requested information on homeless individuals that are experiencing mental health or addiction crises, to ensure that they are receiving adequate care. Vice Chair Robertson further requested a breakdown of the total amount of resources that the city is spending to address homelessness. Ms. Robertson asked for a meeting with Ms. Wilmore to discuss the planned action to take place at the coliseum regarding homeless encampments.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert asked for clarification on the number of shelter beds planned for the proposed use of the Budget Inn of Richmond. Ms. Lambert also inquired if all homeless service providers are utilizing the coordinated service system.

Sherrill Hampton, Department of Housing and Community Development Director, shared that the proposed use of the Budget Inn of Richmond would be for forty shelter beds and clarified that service providers are utilizing the coordinated service system. Ms. Hampton stated that the administration is working with surrounding localities to develop a regional approach to homelessness. Ms. Hampton provided information on the federal and local fund allocations for homeless services.

Vice Chair Robertson stated that if the city is bearing the financial responsibility of the surrounding localities homeless population, the city should receive an increase in the federal allocations for providing homeless services.

Ms. Hampton stated that a breakdown of the local and federal fund allocations for homeless services will be provided to Council as soon as it becomes available.

A copy of all material provided has been filed.

Papers for Consideration

The following resolution was considered:

RES. 2021-R032

To express the City's support for achieving equity and justice in access to resources and opportunities through the implementation of the City of Richmond's Equity Agenda.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney

Maggie Anderson, Acting Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor, provided an overview of RES. 2021-R032.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson inquired about plans for measuring and reporting success of the Equity Agenda, as outlined in RES. 2021-R032.

Ms. Anderson shared that the newly established Office of Equity and Inclusion will be tasked with measuring and reporting the success of the Equity Agenda.

Vice Chair Robertson stated the need for clear benchmark goals to measure the success of the Equity Agenda, and asked if Ms. Anderson can provide a presentation on the Equity Agenda to the Maggie L. Walker Initiative Citizens Advisory Board.

Ms. Anderson shared that she will provide a presentation to the Maggie L. Walker Initiative Citizens Advisory Board and emphasized the importance of an equity assessment tool.

Member Katherine Jordan left the meeting at 3:03 p.m.

Chair Stephanie Lynch expressed support for RES. 2021-R032 and commended the level of community engagement that went into the development of the city's Equity Agenda. Chair Lynch requested to be added as a co-patron to RES. 2021-R032.

There were no further comments or discussions and Chair Stephanie Lynch moved to forward RES. 2021-R032 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Lynch, Robertson. Noes None. Jordan had left the meeting.

The following resolution was considered:

RES. 2021-R033

To express the Council's intent, to the extent permitted by law, to support improved homeless services with funds received pursuant to the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 by appropriations to the Greater Richmond Continuum of Care and other such grantees of the City who provide homeless services, including shelter and homeless prevention programs.

Patrons: Ms. Lynch

Alternate Member Cynthia Newbille joined the meeting at 3:15 p.m.

Chair Stephanie Lynch provided an overview of RES. 2021-R033.

Alternate Member Cynthia Newbille departed the meeting at 3:18 p.m.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson asked if the intent of RES. 2021-R033 is to provide year round emergency shelter services and the varying fund sources.

Chair Lynch shared that RES. 2021-R033 is to be funded through the HOME Investment Partnerships Program funds from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The HUD funding is being provided to localities as a supplemental allocation from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP).

Sherrill Hampton, Department of Housing and Community Development Director, shared that traditionally HOME Investment Partnership Program funds were not permitted to be used for homeless services, and that the city has not received the full guidance on the newly expanded use of the HOME Investment Partnership Program funds to include homeless services.

Vice Chair Robertson inquired when the regulations of the HOME Investment Partnership Program funds are expected to be received, and she stated the importance of receiving guidance before making decisions on fund allocation.

Chair Lynch provided information on the broadly accepted uses of the HOME Investment Partnership Program funds. Chair Lynch stated that ORD. 2021-140, introduced May 24, 2021, outlines the administrations intended uses of Home Investment Partnership Program funds and suggested that RES. 2021-R033 be addressed at the June 14, 2021 Council meeting, along with ORD. 2021-140.

Ms. Hampton provided clarification on ORD. 2021-140, and stated that the HOME Investment Partnership Program funds received were a part of an annual federal allocation and the newly expanded use to include homeless services was not included in this group of federal funds. Ms. Hampton also stated that guidance regarding the expanded use of the Home Partnership Program funds are not expected to be received from HUD until July 2021.

Vice Chair Robertson requested to be added as a co-patron of RES. 2021-R033 and asked for follow-up conversation related to the goals of one-time federal relief funding.

There were no further comments or discussions and Member Ellen Robertson moved to forward RES. 2021-R033 to Council with no recommendation, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Lynch, Robertson. Noes None. Jordan had left the meeting.

Discussion Item

Update on Richmond Public School Board

Cheryl Burke, Chair of the Richmond Public School Board, provided the committee with an update on the Richmond Public School's graduation rates and requested the opportunity to share detailed information at the July Education and Human Services Standing Committee meeting.

Staff Report

Joyce Davis, Interim Council Chief of Staff, provided the committee with the June report.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:47 p.m.