



City of Richmond

900 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219
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Meeting Minutes Education and Human Services Standing Committee

Thursday, June 8, 2023

2:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Committee Members and Others in Attendance

The Honorable Stephanie Lynch – Chair
The Honorable Cynthia Newbille – Vice Chair (early departure)
The Honorable Andreas Addison – Member
The Honorable Katherine Jordan – Councilmember

Joyce Davis, Council Policy Analyst
Nahdiah Muhammad, Assistant City Clerk
Janet Palmer, Deputy City Attorney
Candice Reid, City Clerk
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Stephanie Lynch called the meeting to order at 2:07 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Announcement and Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Chair's request, Assistant City Clerk Nahdiah Muhammad provided information on the appropriate manner in which the Council Chamber is to be evacuated in the event of an emergency along with citizen speaker guidelines.

Discussion Item(s)

Richmond School Board Update

Cheryl Burke, Vice Chair of the Richmond City School Board, provided the committee with updates on the behalf of the board.

Councilor Katherine Jordan joined the meeting at 2:12 p.m.

Vice Chair Burke stated that Huguenot High School had 300 graduates in attendance at the Tuesday, June 6, 2023 graduation ceremony. Ms. Burke also stated the Richmond City School Board and Richmond Public Schools (PRS) administration will be contacting all 300 families to extend grief counseling services, following the shooting that occurred at the Huguenot High School graduation. Ms. Burke further stated the remaining RPS graduations will be conducted at each individual high school, with the exception of Open High School. Ms. Burke informed the committee that the vote for the renaming of schools will take place Tuesday, June 20th, for the following schools: John B. Cary Elementary School, Ginter Park Elementary School, George Wythe High School, and Binford Middle School. Ms. Burke also stated that RPS is working on obtaining a tax credit for the rebuilding of Fox Elementary School.

Chair Stephanie Lynch stated there is a RPS trauma healing response fund that has been established to help with various expenditures regarding the events that occurred during the Huguenot High School graduation.

Ms. Burke stated that the funds available in the RPS trauma healing fund are donation based and can help with the burial expenses.

Chair Lynch inquired about an update on the Children's Budget.

Presentation(s)

Inclement Weather Shelter - Run Rate and Response to Questions

Sherrill Hampton, Director of Housing and Community Development, provided the committee with a presentation regarding the city's inclement weather shelter.

Chair Stephanie Lynch inquired about the remaining appropriations available.

Sherrill Hampton stated that the remaining balance of \$2.9 million dollars will decrease as more unpaid invoices are processed. Ms. Hampton had continued discussion with the committee regarding the remaining funds for Fiscal Year 2023.

Chair Lynch stated that committee members are concerned about not having a shelter available in time for the winter season. Chair Lynch also stated that opening up the scattered sites will help get individuals the services they need. Chair Lynch further stated she is willing to negotiate a reasonable monthly budget with providers.

Ms. Hampton stated that all remaining funds from last year and future appropriations will be needed to operate and provide 160 beds for shelter. Ms. Hampton had further discussion with the committee regarding the cost of operating scattered site facilities.

Sharon Ebert, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Planning and Economic Development, stated that city administration is currently in the process of reviewing the remaining balance of the funds. Ms. Ebert also stated that when the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) was issued last year, it was issued for a two-year cycle. Ms. Ebert further stated that if the three organizations that previously provided services are willing to participate this winter, then current contracts can be amended. Ms. Ebert had continued discussion with the committee regarding current contracts with providers.

Chair Lynch stated that setting up a shelter site soon would be more beneficial for case management services.

Vice Chair Cynthia Newbille departed the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Member Andreas Addison stated he shares the same concerns as his fellow Council members regarding shelter sites and the efforts it will take to keep them in operation, and provide needed case management.

Stephen Harms, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, stated the inclement weather shelters typically do not have a lot of resources and are typically only open during the night. Mr. Harms also stated the resources that are appropriated can help to alleviate the cost burden to operate the inclement weather shelters.

Chair Lynch stated that the need for shelters can vary, and not just for emergencies or inclement weather. Chair Lynch also stated that resources and space are available for year-round shelters, but effort is needed to develop the space and programs.

[CD.2023.218](#) Inclement Weather Shelter Report

Attachments: [Inclement Weather Shelter Report](#)

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Public Comment Period

Nancy Williams stated her appreciation for shelters in the city and the staff that run the facilities. Ms. Williams also stated that the community should be notified when shelters are opening and in operation. Ms. Williams further stated her concerns regarding operation hours and the city's crisis line.

Joe Reeves, Pastor for Tabernacle of Praise Ministries, spoke regarding the services that Tabernacle of Praise Ministries has provided the homeless population. Mr. Reeves also asked if anything can be done to help organizations, like Tabernacle of Praise Ministries, to continue to serve the homeless population.

Willie Fields spoke regarding the shelter regulations, hours of operation, and treatment of individuals that are in need of services.

Tracey Anderson spoke regarding her current experiences with homelessness as a mother of five children.

Bridgette Whitaker spoke regarding her advocacy work with the homeless population in the city, and noted her concerns with the number of homeless individuals assisted by the city.

Laurie Hunter spoke regarding her concerns with organizational staff that provide services for the homeless population in the city.

Savanday Brown addressed the committee and requested that the city provide a building to use as a shelter space.

Tinay Burrell, Lead Case Manager for RVA Sister's Keeper, spoke regarding allocated time allowed for case workers to provide case management to homeless individuals. She stated that it was difficult to provide case management in the brief time allowed.

Rhonda Sneed, Blessing Warriors Executive Director, spoke regarding the city's proposal to operate 150 tents for the homeless population in the city and the hours of operation available to provide case management services.

Michael Dunz spoke regarding his current experience as a homeless individual, and he informed the committee of his concerns for the safety of the homeless population in the city.

Gerri Archer and Kia Player, Co-Owners of RVA Sister's Keeper, stated that RVA Sister's Keeper is currently undergoing an audit. Ms. Player stated that RVA Sister's Keeper are open to partnering with other organizations to provide case management services for the homeless population.

Sharon Gobble spoke regarding her experiences of homelessness and stated that the city needed to do more to provide shelter.

Anita Bennett, Chief Executive Officer of Daily Planet Health Services, spoke regarding the case management services provided by Daily Planet Health Services.

Dr. Arlene Simmons, Chief Operations Officer of Inspirations Community Development Corporation, spoke regarding the case management services provided by her organization and the combined efforts of other organizations.

Paper(s) for Consideration

There were no papers for consideration.

Board Vacancies

There were no board vacancies.

Approval of Minutes

There were no corrections or amendments to the meeting minutes of the Thursday, May 11, 2023 committee meeting, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2023.209](#) May 11, 2023 Education and Human Services Standing Committee Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [20230511- EHS Minutes](#)

Staff Report

None

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.