



City of Richmond

Informal Meeting Minutes

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

Monday, November 8, 2021

4:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Councilmembers Present

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

Staff Present

Lisa Braxton, Council Management Analyst
Haskell Brown, Interim City Attorney
Joyce Davis, Interim Council Chief of Staff
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Tabrica Rentz, Acting Deputy City Attorney
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Council President Cynthia Newbille called the meeting to order at 4:09 p.m. and presided.

Upon the President's request, Council Management Analyst Lisa Braxton provided information on the appropriate manner in which the Council Chamber is to be evacuated in the event of an emergency.

Docket Review

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

Consent Agenda:

1. Ord. 2021-230 – retained on the Consent Agenda
2. Ord. 2021-261 – retained on the Consent Agenda
3. Ord. 2021-265 – to be continued to Monday, December 13, 2021
4. Ord. 2021-270 – to be continued to Monday, December 13, 2021
5. Ord. 2021-272 – retained on the Consent Agenda
6. Ord. 2021-273 – retained on the Consent Agenda
7. Ord. 2021-274 – retained on the Consent Agenda
8. Ord. 2021-275 – retained on the Consent Agenda
9. Ord. 2021-276 – retained on the Consent Agenda

10. Ord. 2021-277 – retained on the Consent Agenda
11. Ord. 2021-278 – retained on the Consent Agenda
12. Ord. 2021-279 – retained on the Consent Agenda
13. Ord. 2021-280 – to be continued to Monday, December 13, 2021
14. Ord. 2021-281 – retained on the Consent Agenda
15. Ord. 2021-282 – retained on the Consent Agenda
16. Ord. 2021-283 – retained on the Consent Agenda
17. Ord. 2021-284 – retained on the Consent Agenda
18. Ord. 2021-285 – retained on the Consent Agenda
19. Ord. 2021-287 – retained on the Consent Agenda
20. Ord. 2021-288 – retained on the Consent Agenda
21. Ord. 2021-289 – retained on the Consent Agenda
22. Ord. 2021-290 – retained on the Consent Agenda
23. Ord. 2021-292 – retained on the Consent Agenda
24. Ord. 2021-293 – retained on the Consent Agenda
25. Ord. 2021-295 – retained on the Consent Agenda
26. Ord. 2021-296 – retained on the Consent Agenda
27. Ord. 2021-297 – retained on the Consent Agenda
28. Ord. 2021-298 – retained on the Consent Agenda
29. Ord. 2021-299 – to be amended and continued to Monday, December 13, 2021

Councilor Katherine Jordan implored her colleagues to support a request to move Ord. 2021-299 to the Regular Agenda for consideration without the proposed amendment, later that evening at the Formal Session of Council.

30. Ord. 2021-300 – to be amended and continued to Monday, December 13, 2021
31. Res. 2021-R036 – retained on the Consent Agenda
32. Res. 2021-R065 – to be continued to Monday, December 13, 2021
33. Res. 2021-R074 – to be continued to Monday, December 13, 2021

Regular Agenda:

34. Ord. 2019-275 – to be continued to Monday, December 13, 2021
35. Ord. 2019-276 – to be continued to Monday, December 13, 2021

Councilor Andreas Addison requested a continuance of Ords. 2019-275 and 2019-276 to allow for the introduction of an amendment to the proposed legislation that would reflect aspects of the City of Norfolk's current policy regarding technology businesses.

36. Ord. 2021-097 – to be continued to Monday, December 13, 2021

37. Ord. 2021-189 – to be continued to Monday, December 13, 2021

Councilor Andreas Addison introduced Ord. 2021-189.

Nancy Thomas, Retail Merchants Association president and chief executive officer, was available to answer questions regarding the potential impact and benefits of Ord. 2021-189.

Councilor Kristen Larson arrived at 4:24 p.m. and was seated.

Chief Administrative Officer Lincoln Saunders addressed Council regarding Ord. 2021-189 and spoke of a prior recommendation to raise the business, professional and occupational license (BPOL) taxation threshold, in an effort to assist small businesses looking to startup or relocate within the city limits. Mr. Saunders expressed city administration's willingness to collaborate BPOL efforts.

It was the consensus of Council to continue Ord. 2021-189 and refer the proposed legislation back to the Finance and Economic Development Standing committee for further discussion and consideration.

38. Ord. 2021-208 – to be continued to Monday, December 13, 2021

39. Ord. 2021-235 – retained on the Regular Agenda

40. Ord. 2021-257 – retained on the Regular Agenda

41. Ord. 2021-286 – to be stricken

Councilwoman Reva Trammell requested that Council support a motion to override the Finance and Economic Development Standing committee's recommendation to strike Ord. 2021-286 and instead, to allow for discussion and consideration of the proposed legislation later that evening during the Formal Session of Council.

Chief Administrative Officer Lincoln Saunders addressed Council regarding Ord. 2021-286, raising concerns regarding the city's revenue growth and obligations for the next several years.

Councilor Kristen Larson stated she could not currently support Ord. 2021-286; however, she would like a discussion regarding lowering future real estate taxes.

Councilor Michael Jones expressed the importance of having a conversation concerning Ord. 2021-286 later that evening during the Formal Session of Council and asked that a prior real estate tax analysis be shared with his colleagues for discussion.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch also agreed to support further discussion surrounding Ord. 2021-286.

42. Ord. 2021-294 – retained on the Regular Agenda

Dironna Moore Clarke, Office of Equitable Transit and Mobility administrator, provided a presentation regarding a temporary transfer site at 8th and Clay Streets. A copy of the presentation provided has been filed.

Vice President Ellen Robertson stated she supports the relocation of the temporary transfer station; however, she voiced concern regarding the termination clauses referenced in Ord. 2021-294, which she identified as a greater commitment from the city to construct the permanent transfer center in her district. Vice President Robertson requested her involvement in any future developments occurring in the 6th District and the continuance of the proposed legislation.

Interim City Attorney Haskell Brown and Chief Administrative Officer Lincoln Saunders were available to answer questions pertaining to Ord. 2021-294.

Ms. Moore Clarke apprised Council of (GRTC) Greater Richmond Transit Company's impending January 17, 2022 deadline for vacating the current temporary transfer site.

Mr. Saunders informed Council that with the proposed continuance, there is a possibility the city would not have an operational temporary transfer center for a brief period of time.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch inquired regarding a strategy plan for a permanent transfer site.

President Cynthia Newbille requested Julie Timm, GRTC chief executive officer, be available to answer questions regarding Ord. 2021-294, later that evening at the Formal Session of Council.

43. Res. 2021-R026 – to be continued to Monday, December 13, 2021

44. Res. 2021-R075 – retained on the Regular Agenda

There were no further comments or discussions concerning Consent and Regular Agenda items reviewed.

Consideration of Appointments to Boards, Commissions and Similar Entities

Councilor Michael Jones requested an opportunity to meet with Boards and Commissions Administrator Jamie Isley, to develop a citizen engagement process for board appointments.

After discussion, Councilor Kristen Larson moved to continue consideration of appointing a member of the business community/reside or work in the city to the Audit Committee, to the January 3, 2022 Organizational Development Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 8, Addison, Lambert, Larson, Lynch, Trammell, Jones, Robertson, Newbille. Noes None. Jordan was excused.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert moved to appoint Jimez Ashby, Christopher E. West and Whitney Brown to the Human Rights Commission, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 8, Addison, Lambert, Larson, Lynch, Trammell, Jones, Robertson, Newbille. Noes None. Jordan was excused.

CoR Legislative Items for the 2022 General Assembly Session

Ron Jordan, council lobbyist, Advantus Strategies, provided an update regarding the city's legislative proposals for the Virginia General Assembly (GA) 2022 regular session as well as requested items not recommended for inclusion. A copy of the information provided has been filed.

Review of Proposed Charter Amendments

Ron Jordan, council lobbyist, Advantus Strategies, advised Council concerning a past and present request to open the city charter in order to amend certain provisions. Mr. Jordan recommended Council continue their collaborative work to gain consensus with the GA delegation, and to wait until next year to move forward with a cohesive proposal for introduction.

President Cynthia Newbille expressed approval of the suggested delay, given the change in political leadership in the 2022 GA delegation and awaiting the creation of a charter review committee.

Councilor Katherine Jordan inquired regarding an alternative approach to creating a parking utility instead of the proposed charter amendment.

Councilor Kristen Larson spoke of the unlikelihood of modifications to suggested charter amendments by non-regional delegates.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch suggested advancing charter amendments of which there is a consensus to this year's GA session.

Mr. Jordan informed Council that all charter amendments will require a super majority for approval.

Councilor Andreas Addison voiced his eagerness to introduce amendments to the city charter.

Chief Administrative Officer Lincoln Saunders shared the Mayor's reservation with opening the city charter at this time, especially given Richmond's unique government structure. Mr. Saunders stated that city administration is looking at alternatives to achieving certain policy goals captured in the review of proposed charter amendments.

Councilor Michael Jones expressed the desire for Council to move forward with recommended charter amendments during the upcoming year's GA session.

Vice President Ellen Robertson apprised Council of outside entities vying to alter the city's form of government and suggested following the recommendation of Council's lobbyist.

Mr. Jordan suggested continuing the discussion until next week to allow for an opportunity to poll the GA delegation regarding the city's legislative proposals for 2022.

Interim City Attorney Haskell Brown informed Council that the charter amendment legislation could not be drafted until they come to a consensus on all items for inclusion.

President Newbille asked Council staff to schedule a follow-up meeting to finalize the legislative proposals and decide on the introduction of proposed charter amendments.

Closed Session

At 6:01 p.m., Councilor Katherine Jordan moved that the City Council hold a closed meeting pursuant to subdivision (A)(29) of section 2.2-3711 of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act to discuss terms and scope of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds for an efficiency and fiscal review to be solicited where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the City.

Prior to the vote on the motion to convene in a closed meeting, President Cynthia Newbille asked Council to consider holding the closed session at the conclusion of the Formal Session of Council later that evening.

The motion was seconded and approved: Ayes 8, Addison, Jordan, Lambert, Larson, Lynch, Trammell, Jones, Robertson. Noes 1, Newbille.

Councilor Katherine Jordan motioned to exit closed session. The motion was seconded and approved: Ayes 7, Addison, Jordan, Lambert, Lynch, Jones, Robertson, Newbille. Noes None. Larson and Trammell were excused.

Councilors reconvened in open session at 6:23 p.m.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

November 8, 2021

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
Ellen F. Robertson, Vice President
Andreas D. Addison
Katherine L. Jordan
Ann-Frances Lambert
Kristen N. Larson
Stephanie A. Lynch
Reva M. Trammell (excused)
Michael J. Jones

DECLINING TO CERTIFY:

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

CITY CLERK