



City of Richmond

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

Minutes

Governmental Operations Standing Committee

Wednesday, September 22, 2021

2:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor

Committee Members and Staff in Attendance

The Honorable Kristen Larson – Chair
The Honorable Katherine Jordan – Vice Chair (early departure)
The Honorable Michael Jones – Member (late arrival)
Haskell Brown, Interim City Attorney
Joyce Davis, Interim Council Chief of Staff
William Echelberger, Council Budget Analyst
Jamie Isley, Assistant City Clerk
Pamela Nichols, Senior Assistant City Clerk
Candice Reid, City Clerk
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Kristen Larson called the meeting to order at 2:12 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Announcement and Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Chair's request, Assistant City Clerk Jamie Isley 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.

Public Comment

There were no public comment speakers.

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of Wednesday, July 28, 2021, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

Member Michael Jones arrived at 2:17 p.m.

Presentation(s)

Employee and Retiree Medical Benefits

Acting Chief Administrative Officer Lincoln Saunders and Kerry Smith, USI Insurance Services, Senior Vice President presented updated information regarding employee and retiree medical benefits. Mr.

Saunders stated that there will likely be several administrative changes to city benefits to include plan designs and premiums. Ms. Meyers informed the committee of changes to required deductibles and stated that the changes are consistent with the surrounding municipalities. Ms. Meyers further informed the committee of changes to insurance plan options and stated that USI Insurance Services will work with city leadership to communicate benefits changes with city staff.

Chair Kristen Larson requested clarification of city administration's timeline and inquired about plans to present the information to the full Council.

Acting Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Lincoln Saunders requested an opportunity to present the information in front of the full body at the October Organizational Development Standing Committee meeting, or the September 27, 2021 Informal Council meeting.

Chair Larson requested a one page summary covering the top impacts of changes to the employee and retiree medical benefits packages, as well as a general overview.

Ms. Smith provided an overview of changes to city retirees' other post employment benefits (OPEB) plans to include deductibles, copays and out of pocket maximums.

Member Michael Jones discussed the presentation process and suggested that it would be more productive to be provided with presentation materials well in advance of the meeting date, and have presenters participate in-person.

Chair Larson inquired whether any feedback from employee groups was received regarding changes to employee and retiree medical benefits. Chair Larson also asked about state cooperative agreements regarding healthcare.

Acting CAO Saunders stated that city administration will work towards educating all employees by November 1, 2021. Acting CAO Saunders stated that conversations regarding state cooperative agreements may have taken place, and that the city is working towards aligning current city benefits.

Chair Larson requested staff to facilitate the addition of the employee and retiree medical benefits presentation to the September 27, 2021 Informal Council Meeting Agenda.

Member Jones discussed city employee attendance at City Council and standing committee meetings.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinance was considered:

ORD. 2021-200

To amend City Code § 2-1038, concerning the duties of the Participatory Budgeting Steering Commission, for the purpose of delaying the due date of the Participatory Budgeting Steering Commission's first presentation to the Council until the December 6, 2021, Organizational Development Standing Committee meeting.

Patron: Mr. Addison

Chair Kristen Larson introduced ORD. 2021-200, stating that the proposed ordinance is procedural in nature to coincide with the appointment of members to the Participatory Budgeting Steering Commission.

There were no further comments or discussions and **Member Michael Jones moved to forward ORD. 2021-200 to the September 27, 2021, Council meeting with recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

The following ordinance was considered:

ORD. 2021-243

To amend City Code § 4-243, concerning dogs running at large and the penalties therefor, for the purpose of defining and clarifying the conditions related to dogs running at large.

Patron: Mayor Stoney and Ms. Larson

Christie Peters, Animal Care and Control director, introduced ORD. 2021-243. Ms. Peters stated that a judge recently ruled in favor of a defendant regarding whether an electronic shock collar is considered a leash. Ms. Peters advised that the code change allows for the elimination of the use of electronic collars as leashes, as well defining what is considered a leash.

Chair Kristen Larson stated that the electronic leash incident occurred within her Council District.

Ms. Peters elaborated on the specifics of the changes regarding electronic collars and stated that ORD. 2021-243 only applies when a dog is outside of the boundaries of a resident's property. She further stated that Animal Care and Control will enforce ORD. 2021-243, and if not available then Richmond Police Department would enforce the proposed ordinance.

There were no further comments or discussions and **Vice Chair Katherine Jordan moved to forward ORD. 2021-243 to the September 27, 2021, Council meeting with recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

The following ordinances were considered:

ORD. 2021-244

To amend City Code § 4-275, concerning impoundment and violation notices and fees for board and care of impounded dogs and cats, for the purpose of modifying the requirements for the impoundment of dogs and cats.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

ORD. 2021-245

To amend City Code § 4-277, concerning the disposition of unlicensed dogs and cats found at large, for the purpose of removing the requirement that the City euthanize an animal upon request and payment of the fee by the owner.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

ORD. 2021-246

To amend City Code § 4-306, concerning unsupervised cats, for the purpose of increasing the minimum age for sterilization of unsupervised cats from four months to six months and to provide that infractions of such section shall be punishable as a Class 4 misdemeanor rather than by a civil penalty.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

ORD. 2021-247

To amend City Code § 4-307, concerning breeding permits, for the purpose of increasing the allowable age of an unspayed or unneutered cat or dog that a person may own, harbor, or keep without a breeding permit from four months to six months.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

ORD. 2021-248

To amend City Code § 4-308, concerning penalties for breeding violations, for the purpose of changing the penalty for violation of the breeding permit requirements of City Code § 4-307 from a civil penalty to a Class 4 misdemeanor.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

ORD. 2021-249

To amend City Code § 4-309, concerning the sale, adoption and other transfers of dogs and cats, for the purpose of changing the penalty for failure to display the breeding permit number related to the advertisement for the sale, adoption, or transfer of dogs and cats from a civil penalty to a Class 4 misdemeanor.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

Christie Peters, Animal Care and Control director, introduced ORDs. 2021-244, 2021-245, 2021-246, 2021-247, 2021-248, 2021-249. Ms. Peters informed the committee of the code changes that will occur upon the adoption of the proposed pieces of legislation.

Member Jones inquired about the changes in penalties for breeding permit requirements and for failure to display the breeding permit number related to the advertisement for the sale, adoption, or transfer of dogs and cats from a civil penalty to a Class 4 misdemeanor.

Ms. Peters stated that Animal Care and Control cannot enforce civil penalties, but can enforce Class 4 misdemeanors.

There were no further comments or discussions and **Vice Chair Michael Jones moved to forward ORD. 2021-244, ORD. 2021-245, ORD. 2021-246, ORD. 2021-247, ORD. 2021-248 and ORD. 2021-249 to the September 27, 2021, Council meeting with recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

The following resolution was considered:

RES. 2021-R072

To support the application for an evaluation of the John Marshall Courts Building located at 400 North 9th Street by the Virginia Department of General Services for noncompliance with the Virginia Courthouse Facilities Guidelines. (6th District)

Patrons: Ms. Gray

Lynn Lancaster, Department of Public Works Parking and Shared Mobility deputy director, introduced RES. 2021-R072, and provided information on the current state of the John Marshall Courts Building.

Member Michael Jones inquired about the cost of maintenance and the last time major renovations were made.

Ms. Lancaster stated that once the application is received by the Virginia Department of General Services and evaluated, the city will be informed of estimated costs. Ms. Lancaster stated that the last update to the John Marshall Courts Building was in 2008.

Acting Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Lincoln Saunders stated that the city is actively working on improvements and security enhancements to the John Marshall Courts Building.

Chair Kristen Larson asked how the city will fund the evaluation and methods by which Council will be updated.

Ms. Lancaster stated that the fee will be absorbed by the Department of Public Work's budget.

Acting CAO Saunders informed the committee that city administration intends to work with the Virginia Department of General Services (DGS) and ensure compliance with the Code of Virginia. Mr. Saunders further stated that the John Marshall Courts Building is a priority and that the timeline for inclusion in the Richmond City Budget will materialize following feedback from the DGS.

There were no further comments or discussions and **Vice Chair Katherine Jordan moved to**

forward RES. 2021-R072 to the September 27, 2021, Council meeting with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Vice Chair Katherine Jordan departed the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

Discussion Item(s)

Charter Review Committee Process Update

Chair Kristen Larson announced that the committee will hold an informal work session with city administration on Friday, October 1, 2021, at 9:30 a.m. Chair Larson requested that members include any additional items to the Charter Review Committee spreadsheet.

Board Vacancies

Senior Assistant City Clerk Pamela Nichols reviewed board applications for consideration by the committee.

Chair Kristen Larson listed the names of applicants recommended by Vice Chair Jordan, herself and Councilor Addison.

Ms. Nichols informed the committee that Keokah Saunders withdrew her application.

Member Michael Jones and Chair Kristen Larson deliberated about non-voting applicants to ensure diversity in residents' location.

Chair Larson stated that recruitment efforts will continue for an applicant who is a person with a disability.

Member Michael Jones moved to forward the following applications for appointment to the Participatory Budgeting Steering Commission to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Jones, Larson. Noes, None. Jordan was absent:

Board Name	Criteria for Appointment	Applicant Name
Participatory Budgeting Steering Commission 11 members (7 voting, 4 non-voting)	Reside in a Council district located north of the James River (2 voting members)	Aaron Linas 6 th District Resident
		Oludare Ogunde 7 th District Resident
	Reside in a Council district located south of the James River (3 voting members)	Erin Kelley 4 th District Resident
		Shannon Gonzalez 8 th District Resident
		Mary Gresham 9 th District Resident
	City Residents (4 non-voting alternate members)	Scott Castro 1 st District Resident
		Jerome Legions 2 nd District Resident
		Erica Skylar 5 th District Resident
		Jeffery Walker 4 th District Resident
	Resident of public housing (1 voting member)	Sharron Shuler 3 rd District Resident

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Staff Report

William Echelberger, Council budget analyst, provided the committee with the September staff report.

Chair Larson asked staff to ensure that the employee and retiree medical benefits presentation is disseminated to all Council Members prior to the Monday, September 27, 2021, Informal Council meeting.

A copy of the report provided has been filed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:26 p.m.