



City of Richmond

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

Budget Work Session Minutes

Wednesday, April 12, 2023

1:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Budget Work Session

Members Present

The Honorable Michael Jones- President
The Honorable Kristen Nye- Vice President
The Honorable Katherine Jordan (early departure)
The Honorable Cynthia Newbille
The Honorable Ellen Robertson
The Honorable Reva Trammell (early departure)

Absent

The Honorable Andreas Addison
The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch

Others in Attendance

Myrtle Brown, Council Budget Analyst
LaTanja Davenport, Council Budget Analyst
Joyce Davis, Council Policy Analyst
Laura Drewry, City Attorney
Latesha Holmes, Council Chief of Staff
Nahdiyah Muhammad, Assistant City Clerk
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Tabrica Rentz, Deputy City Attorney
Lincoln Saunders, Chief Administrative Officer
Debora Shaw, Management Analyst
Steven Taylor, Council Policy Analyst
Paul Van Lenten, Council Budget Analyst
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Call to order

President Michael Jones called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement

Upon the President's request, Assistant City Clerk Nahdiyah Muhammad provided information on the appropriate manner in which the Council Chamber is to be evacuated in the event of an emergency.

Introduction of Legislation

[CD.2023.142](#) April 20, 2023 Introduction Papers List

Attachments: [20230412_Work Session_Introduction Papers List](#)

City Council will hold a public hearing on the following ordinances on Monday, April 24, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.:

1. [ORD. 2023-123](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to accept funds in the amount of \$7,500,000.00 from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, through the Virginia Resources Authority, and to amend Ord. No. 2022-057, adopted May 9, 2022, which accepted a program of proposed Capital Improvement Projects for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 and the four fiscal years thereafter, adopted a Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023, and determined a means of financing the same, by (i) establishing a new project for the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities in the Culture and Recreation category called the "Stormwater Mayo Island Purchase" project and (ii) increasing estimated revenues from the funds received from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and the amount appropriated to the new Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities' Stormwater Mayo Island Purchase project in the Culture and Recreation category by \$7,500,000.00, all for the purpose of funding the acquisition of Mayo Island in the city of Richmond. (6th District)

Patrons: Mayor Stoney

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2023-123](#)
[Staff Report](#)

This Ordinance was introduced and referred to the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, April 17, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.

2. [ORD. 2023-124](#) To declare a public necessity for and to authorize the acquisition of the parcels of real property owned by Mayo's Island, L.C. located at 501 South 14th Street, 501 1R South 14th Street, 503 South 14th Street, 505 South 14th Street, and 508 South 14th Street, and a parcel of real property owned by Alan T. Shaia and Wayne T. Shaia located at 501 2R South 14th Street, for the purpose of maintaining the properties as a City green space and recreational area. (6th District)

Patrons: Mayor Stoney

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2023-124](#)
[Staff Report](#)

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, April 17, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.

Presentation(s)

Discussion and Preparation of Final Council Proposed FY 2024 Budget Amendments

President Michael Jones gave an overview of the work session objectives.

LaTasha Holmes, Council Chief of Staff, provided Council with a presentation regarding Council's proposed FY 2024 budget amendments.

Lincoln Saunders, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), stated city administration had individual conversations with members of Council about their proposed budget amendments. CAO Saunders further provided Council with updates to funding and revenue.

Councilor Reva Trammell inquired about a previous request for maintaining current utility rates.

CAO Saunders stated the increase for the rate of utilities goes towards capital maintenance projects for the improvements of gas lines and water treatment facilities. Mr. Saunders also stated that the increase in utility costs will go towards the rising cost of energy and chemicals necessary to keep utility facilities operational. Mr. Saunders further stated additional information regarding utilities will be provided at the next budget work session.

CAO Saunders provided documentation regarding city administration responses to Council funding requests. Mr. Saunders further stated city administration reached a consensus with Councilor Newbille regarding a five percent retiree bonus, that would not require a budget amendment.

President Jones inquired about \$250,000 allocated to the Martin Luther King (MLK) Life Coach Academy.

CAO Saunders stated after further conversation with Councilor Ellen Robertson, the \$250,000 will be placed into the Children's Fund. CAO Saunders also stated that moving the \$250,000 into the Children's Fund will make the funds available after the pilot period of the initial grant of \$50,000 ends.

President Jones inquired about the funds proposed for the Office of Sustainability (OOS).

Councilor Katherine Jordan stated her request for an additional employee to address grants within the OOS will not be needed as long as there is continued reporting to the OOS about grant opportunities and funding.

Councilor Cynthia Newbille declared a conflict of interest regarding the bonus for retirees.

Councilor Ellen Robertson inquired about \$150,000 in funding for improvements of parks in the city.

CAO Saunders stated an additional \$1.5 million would be directed to additional city park improvements, to address requests from Council that were not included in the original \$7 million for park improvements. Mr. Saunders also stated there will be funds available in the budget for Whitcomb Park improvements, and any remaining funds will be allocated for playground improvements.

Councilor Reva Trammell departed the meeting at 1:51 p.m.

CAO Saunders stated there is funding available in the OOS from the Climate Action Plan that can be used towards the Decarbonization Plan.

Vice President Kristen Nye inquired about a request made by Louis Lassiter, City Auditor, regarding other post-employment benefits (OPEB) contributions.

CAO Saunders stated city administration had conversations with the providers that conducted the OPEB studies. CAO Saunders also stated that per the most recent OPEB study, there would be no harm in maintaining the planned OPEB contribution. CAO Saunders further stated the contribution to OPEB in the FY 23 Budget was \$2.4 million towards health care costs. CAO Saunders had further discussion with Council regarding OPEB funding.

Vice President Nye requested additional information be provided regarding her concerns with OPEB funding once more data is available.

CAO Saunders stated more information regarding OPEB funding will be provided during the Tuesday, September 5, 2023, Organizational Development Standing Committee meeting.

Councilor Jordan inquired about the additional funding identified to balance the city budget.

CAO Saunders stated that the city receives annual interest on all funds deposited. Mr. Saunders also stated that due to the additional funds provided by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the interest gained will be more than projected from previous fiscal years. Mr. Saunders further stated the additional funds will be used to balance the budget.

President Jones inquired about the certification of funds.

CAO Saunders stated that once the Finance Department approves the funds, the Mayor will certify them.

Vice President Nye inquired about the additional \$2.9 million to be received. Ms. Nye also inquired about any other revenue increases.

CAO Saunders stated that the additional \$2.9 million is to be expected from interest gained on city accounts. Mr. Saunders also stated that there are no additional funds to be expected.

President Jones confirmed that from previous meetings with Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert, she was comfortable with the projected funding for the Calhoun Center.

LaTasha Holmes, Council Chief of Staff, continued the presentation regarding Council's proposed FY 24 budget amendments.

CAO Saunders provided Council with information regarding the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) budget for FY 24.

Councilor Newbille requested additional clarity for the different phases within CIP for the FY 24 budget.

CAO Saunders stated that more clarity and information would be provided outside the budget work session.

Councilor Jordan inquired about funding for the Natural Gas Sufficiency Rebate Program.

CAO Saunders stated that the Department of Public Utilities has a program that supports the installation of more energy efficient systems. Mr. Saunders also stated city administration will not be able to use the funds from utility revenues to fund the program. Mr. Saunders further stated that there are grants available as a separate path to fund the program. Mr. Saunders had further discussion with Council members regarding grants for more efficient and cost effective systems.

Councilor Katherine Jordan departed the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

CAO Saunders and Council members had continued discussion regarding the proposed FY 24 CIP budget amendments.

Ms. Holmes stated the FY 24 budget can be balanced based on the information provided by city administration. Ms. Holmes also stated that city administration is comfortable with moving forward with the current budget.

President Jones stated Council is prepared to move forward with the current FY 24 budget and proposed amendments. Mr. Jones also stated appreciation to Council and city administration for the attentive work conducted during the FY 24 budget season.

[CD.2023.140](#) Council Budget Work Session Documents

Attachments: [FY24 Council Presentation - Work Session #6](#)
[FY24 Council Amendments Final Balancing Sheet](#)

A copy of all the material provided has been filed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:42 p.m.

CITY CLERK