



City of Richmond

Informal Meeting Minutes

900 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219
www.richmondgov.com/cityclerk

Monday, February 24, 2020

4:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Councilmembers Present

The Honorable Cynthia Newbille, President
The Honorable Chris Hilbert, Vice President
The Honorable Andreas Addison (late arrival)
The Honorable Kim Gray
The Honorable Michael Jones
The Honorable Kristen Larson
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch
The Honorable Ellen Robertson (late arrival)
The Honorable Reva Trammell

Staff Present

Lawrence Anderson, Council Chief of Staff
Lisa Braxton, Council Management Analyst
Haskell Brown, Interim City Attorney
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 4:10 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. 2019-275 – to be continued to Monday, April 27, 2020
2. Ord. 2019-276 – to be continued to Monday, April 27, 2020
3. Ord. 2020-011 – retained on the Consent Agenda
4. Ord. 2020-027 – retained on the Consent Agenda
5. Ord. 2020-028 – retained on the Consent Agenda
6. Ord. 2020-029 – retained on the Consent Agenda
7. Ord. 2020-031 – retained on the Consent Agenda
8. Ord. 2020-032 – retained on the Consent Agenda
9. Ord. 2020-033 – retained on the Consent Agenda

10. Ord. 2020-034 – retained on the Consent Agenda
11. Ord. 2020-035 – retained on the Consent Agenda
12. Ord. 2020-036 – retained on the Consent Agenda
13. Ord. 2020-037 – retained on the Consent Agenda
14. Ord. 2020-038 – retained on the Consent Agenda
15. Ord. 2020-040 – retained on the Consent Agenda
16. Res. 2019-R050 – to be amended and considered
17. Res. 2019-R068 – to be continued to Monday, April 27, 2020

Councilor Ellen Robertson arrived at 4:13 p.m. and was seated.

18. Res. 2020-R010 – retained on the Consent Agenda
19. Res. 2020-R011 – retained on the Consent Agenda

Regular Agenda:

20. Ord. 2020-030 – retained on the Regular Agenda
21. Ord. 2020-039 – retained on the Regular Agenda

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

Casino Update

Ron Jordan, council lobbyist, Advantus Strategies, updated Council regarding two casino gaming bills (House Bill 4 and Senate Bill 36) progressing in the 2020 General Assembly Session and advised Council of its need to make a decision regarding a position on the timing for a required referendum on the general election ballot asking citizens to permit a casino gaming establishment in the city and if permitted, the location of the establishment. A copy of the information provided has been filed.

Councilor Andreas Addison arrived at 4:15 p.m. and was seated.

Mr. Jordan noted that HB 4 would require the casino referendum on the November 3, 2020 general election ballot whereas SB 36 allowed for an unnamed referendum timing. He also mentioned specific prerequisites of the referendum.

Councilor Ellen Robertson suggested that Council agree to support SB 36 due to the limited timeframe for completion of the specific prerequisites.

Leonard Sledge, Economic Development director, was available to answer questions and advised Council of city administration's commitment to moving forward with a Request for Proposal (RFP) process that would allow for the casino referendum to occur on November 3, 2020.

Betty Burrell, Procurement Services director, was also available to answer questions and stated that a RFP process for procuring a casino operator is different from that which contracts for the construction of a casino facility.

Interim City Attorney Haskell Brown informed Council that legislation petitioning the Circuit Court for allowance of the casino referendum would need to be adopted by July 2020 in order to meet the August 14, 2020 deadline.

Mr. Sledge requested that city administration be allowed an opportunity to provide an update regarding the RFP timeline and process regarding the proposed casino referendum at the March Organizational Development Standing Committee meeting.

Councilwoman Reva Trammell requested assistance with a district meeting pertaining to a potential casino resort proposal developed by the Pamunkey Indian Tribe.

After further discussion regarding the two General Assembly bills, it was the consensus of Council to position its decision with SB 36 allowing for a flexible casino referendum process.

Homelessness Strategic Plan

Sharon Ebert, deputy chief administrative officer – Economic and Community Development, presented Council with a homelessness strategic plan presentation, which included specific statistics regarding individuals experiencing homelessness within the city, current city administration achievements and challenges, and approaches for reduction. Reginald Gordon, deputy chief administrative officer – Human Services, continued the presentation and provided Council with a proposed timeline and recommendations to connect unsheltered individuals in “Camp Cathy” (a community of tents located on property near the Annie Giles Community Resource Center) with resources for permanent housing. A copy of the presentation and information provided has been filed.

Dianne Wilmore, Richmond National Association for the Advancement of Colored People housing co-chair, was also available to answer questions regarding conditions at “Camp Cathy,” and she recommended that a tentative date be set to dismantle the encampment while providing supportive services.

President Cynthia Newbille requested an update concerning the encampment and proposed recommendations at the March Organizational Development Standing Committee meeting.

Councilor Kim Gray requested information related to the eviction diversion program, and she expressed concern with conditions at the hypothermia shelter. Ms. Gray voiced disapproval of the dismantling of the encampment until a permanent solution for individuals has been established.

Councilor Kristen Larson requested that Council be provided an update regarding city administration's efforts surrounding homelessness on a regular basis and asked to be supplied with a list of organizations willing to provide shelter for impoverished citizens.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:53 p.m.

CITY CLERK