



City of Richmond

Special Meeting Minutes

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

Monday, March 16, 2020

3:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Councilmembers Present

The Honorable Cynthia Newbille, President
The Honorable Chris Hilbert, Vice President (by phone and early departure)
The Honorable Andreas Addison
The Honorable Kim Gray
The Honorable Michael Jones
The Honorable Kristen Larson
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch (early departure)
The Honorable Ellen Robertson
The Honorable Reva Trammell

Council President Cynthia Newbille called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m., and presided.

CHAMBER EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN AND CITIZEN SPEAKER GUIDELINES

Upon the President's request, Deputy City Clerk RJ Warren 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.

ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION

President Cynthia Newbille announced that, pursuant to Rule III(D)(4)(b) of Council's Rules of Procedure, Vice President Chris Hilbert requested to participate in the meeting electronically due to self-isolation as a result of a family member's potential exposure to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Pursuant to Rule III(D)(4)(d) of Council's Rules of Procedure, President Cynthia Newbille solicited a motion from members present to allow Vice President Hilbert to participate in the meeting by electronic communication means.

Councilor Kim Gray moved to allow Vice President Chris Hilbert to participate in the meeting by electronic communication means, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Vice President Hilbert joined the meeting by phone.

MOTION TO EXPEDITE CONSIDERATION

Councilor Kristen Larson moved to expedite consideration of the following resolution, which was seconded and unanimously approved:

RES. 2020-R025

To consent to the Director of Emergency Management's declaration that a local emergency exists in the city of Richmond due to the potential spread of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus known as "COVID-19."

Patron: Mayor Stoney

Mayor Levar Stoney provided comments regarding the proposed resolution and steps to be taken by city administration to address COVID-19.

Councilwoman Reva Trammell shared her appreciation that the Department of Public Utilities would discontinue water service disconnections during the declared emergency.

Fire Chief Melvin Carter provided Council with a presentation that addressed COVID-19 and steps to be taken to address the emergency situation in the city.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Councilor Kristen Larson inquired about the legal effects of the proposed resolution.

Interim City Attorney Haskell Brown informed Council that the resolution consenting to the emergency declaration was permitted by state law. Mr. Brown provided Council additional information regarding emergency powers the declaration would provide.

President Cynthia Newbille informed Council that Council Chief of Staff Lawrence Anderson would attend emergency meetings held by city administration that addressed COVID-19 on behalf of Council. President Newbille stated Mr. Anderson would provide members with updates regarding emergency plans and action taken by city administration.

Councilor Kim Gray requested that Council be provided a list of emergency procurements made by city administration that did not require Council's approval.

Betty Burrell, Department of Procurement Services director, informed Council that the city is required to publicly post contracts, including during an emergency. Ms. Burrell stated the city is not required to have competition regarding procurements during an emergency, but is advised to find the best value as practicable.

Jay Brown, Department of Budget and Strategic Planning director, informed Council that all financial actions taken by the city to address the emergency situation would be available for review on the city's website.

There were no further comments or discussions and **RES. 2020-R025 was unanimously adopted.**

Councilor Gray inquired about provisions and shelter available to homeless individuals residing in "Camp Cathy". Councilor Gray also expressed her concerns with email access for members and Council staff working remotely, specifically issues with constituents being able to contact members.

President Newbille informed members these issues would be addressed after the introduction of new legislation.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION

The following ordinances were introduced for public hearing on Monday, March 23, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.:

ORD. 2020-091

To amend Ord. No. 2019-041, adopted May 13, 2019, which adopted the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 General Fund Budget and made appropriations pursuant thereto, by increasing anticipated revenues

from real estate taxes and the amount appropriated to the Non-Departmental agency, Affordable Housing Trust Fund line item, by \$2,100,000.00 for the purpose of transferring this \$2,100,000.00 to the Department of Housing and Community Development's Affordable Housing - Non CDBG Areas special fund and to amend Ord. No. 2019-042, adopted May 13, 2019, which adopted the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 special fund budgets and made appropriations pursuant thereto, by increasing estimated receipts from these transferred funds and the amount appropriated to the Department of Housing and Community Development's Affordable Housing - Non CDBG Areas special fund by \$2,100,000.00 for the purpose of providing additional funding for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

Committee referral waived {Rule VI(B)(3)(c)}

ORD. 2020-092

To extend the deadline for filing an application or certification by real estate taxpayers claiming an exemption or freeze under City Code §§ 26-364 or 26-365 for the taxable year 2020 only from Mar. 31, 2020, to Apr. 30, 2020.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

Committee referral waived {Rule VI(B)(2)}

Charles Todd, Department of Information Technology (DIT) director, stated DIT had provided technical support to prepare work issued cell phones and laptops for accessibility. Mr. Todd informed Council if any members or Council staff do not have email or network access, then his staff should be contacted to provide technical support.

Councilor Kim Gray expressed her concerns with issues regarding bounced and blocked emails from GMAIL email addresses that attempted to email city email accounts.

Mr. Todd informed members of issues with GMAIL placing the city on a "gray list" that associates city email accounts as potential spam and blocks emails. Mr. Todd asked members to contact him as soon as possible with any issues to address while DIT staff was available.

Vice President Chris Hilbert exited the meeting.

Kelly King Horne, Homeward executive director, provided Council with an update regarding shelter and services being provided to individuals residing in "Camp Cathy". Ms. Horne informed Council that Homeward was currently partnering with Daily Planet Health Services to provide protocols and training to Homeward staff regarding COVID-19. Ms. Horne also stated self-isolation was available to individuals displaying any COVID-19 symptoms while residing in "Camp Cathy".

Councilor Gray inquired about the city's cold weather overflow shelter at the Annie Giles Community Resource Center being open to provide shelter during an emergency when the temperature is above freezing.

Sharon Ebert, deputy chief administrative officer for economic and community development, stated Council would need to take action in order for city administration to open the Annie Giles Community Resource Center outside the allowable hours and temperature.

Councilor Gray inquired if the emergency declaration allowed the Annie Giles Community Resource Center to be opened without the need of action by Council.

Interim City Attorney Haskell Brown informed Council that the emergency declaration gave city administration the authority to take such action so long as it was only during the emergency timeframe.

Reginald Gordon, deputy chief administrative officer for human services, expressed his concern that the primary goal was to transfer individuals from "Camp Cathy" into available shelter that met COVID-19 prevention guidelines issued by the Center for Disease Control. Mr. Gordon stated he did not believe the Annie Giles Community Resource Center met those guidelines.

Councilor Gray inquired if the Annie Giles Community Resource Center could be opened to allow individuals to wash hands and for bathroom use.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch exited the meeting at 4:21 p.m.

Councilor Ellen Robertson requested a report from city administration regarding steps taken to provide shelter to individuals residing in "Camp Cathy" during the emergency timeframe.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

CITY CLERK