



City of Richmond

Informal Meeting Minutes

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

Monday, October 12, 2020

4:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall
Virtual Meeting

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
The Honorable Reva Trammell

Staff Present

Lawrence Anderson, Council Chief of Staff
Lisa Braxton, Council Management Analyst
Haskell Brown, Interim City Attorney
Meghan Brown, Deputy 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 4:00 p.m. and presided.

ELECTRONIC MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Council Management Analyst Lisa Braxton, in accordance with Ordinance No. 2020-093, adopted April 9, 2020, as amended by Ordinance No. 2020-183, adopted August 20, 2020, announced the meeting would be held through electronic communication means, and stated that notice of the meeting was provided to the public through a public information advisory issued on September 29, 2020, and through Legistar on the city website in accordance with usual practice. She also stated there would be no opportunities for public comment and no public hearings during the meeting.

Docket Review

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

Consent Agenda:

1. Ord. 2020-177 – to be continued to Monday, November 9, 2020
2. Ord. 2020-203 – retained on the Consent Agenda
3. Ord. 2020-204 – retained on the Consent Agenda
4. Ord. 2020-205 – retained on the Consent Agenda

5. Ord. 2020-206 – retained on the Consent Agenda
6. Ord. 2020-207 – to be amended and continued to Monday, November 9, 2020
7. Ord. 2020-208 – retained on the Consent Agenda
8. Ord. 2020-209 – retained on the Consent Agenda
9. Ord. 2020-210 – retained on the Consent Agenda
10. Ord. 2020-211 – retained on the Consent Agenda
11. Ord. 2020-212 – retained on the Consent Agenda
12. Ord. 2020-213 – retained on the Consent Agenda
13. Res. 2020-R057 – retained on the Consent Agenda
14. Res. 2020-R058 – retained on the Consent Agenda

Councilor Andreas Addison joined the meeting at 4:04 p.m.

Regular Agenda:

15. Ord. 2018-236 – to be continued to Monday, November 9, 2020
16. Ord. 2020-170 – to be continued to Monday, December 14, 2020
17. Res. 2020-R048 – to be stricken

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

Fund Balance Update

John Wack, Finance director, provided Council with an update of the unaudited and estimated general fund balance for fiscal year 2020 as of October 12, 2020, which reflected an increase in the estimated surplus of revenues above expenditures, and proposed the additional surplus of \$5 million be assigned to the OPEB (other post-employment benefits) Trust fund prior to allocating previously suggested additions and assignments as itemized. A copy of the information presented has been filed.

Deputy Council Chief of Staff Meghan Brown indicated that a consensus was still needed for the mayor's proposed special assignment or health disparity initiatives as well as the newly suggested assignment to the OPEB Trust fund.

Acting Chief Administrative Officer Lenora Reid was available to answer questions regarding the increase in the estimated surplus, and she clarified city administration's reluctance of offering an unaudited general fund balance since figures constantly change prior to the financial statement audit.

City Auditor Lou Lassiter was available to answer questions, and he suggested funding future OPEB and pension liabilities as well as implementing policy changes to reduce respective liabilities.

Dr. Danny Avula, Richmond City Health District director, provided additional information regarding the mayor's recommendation related to the assigned special purpose for health disparity initiatives, which includes funding for the following:

- Resource Center Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Pilot
- Richmond Doula Fund
- Gun Violence Prevention Framework

Dr. Avula introduced city residents, Patrice Shelton and Lafonda Page, whom both addressed Council and articulated support for the proposed health disparity initiatives.

Councilor Kim Gray expressed concern regarding the one-time funding recommendation, stating the proposals should be addressed during multi-year departmental revenue and expenditure forecast requests.

Dr. John Lindstrom, Richmond Behavioral Health Authority (RBHA) chief executive officer, addressed Council regarding the challenges and opportunities of medicaid reimbursement for mental health disorders, and he emphasized the necessity of guaranteed funding for the pilot.

Councilor Kristen Larson commended the health disparity initiatives; however, she agreed with Councilor Gray's concerns, stating that there needs to be a strategic approach when funding pilot programs.

Vice President Chris Hilbert also expressed his disapproval for utilizing one-time funding for the proposed recommendation.

Maggie Anderson, Office of the Mayor policy analyst, provided additional context regarding the potential health disparity recommendation, and she cited the establishment of the pilot programs as an opportunity to assist with updating long-term strategies.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch voiced concern that the proposed mental health pilot does not include funding for non-reimbursable services through Medicaid, and she questioned allocating additional funding to RBHA instead of providing grant opportunities for outside providers.

President Cynthia Newbille recognized the initiatives as an opportunity to serve the community during challenging times.

Councilor Michael Jones restated his past concerns regarding the city's non-departmental spending and the inability to track outcomes; however, he expressed his willingness to support a Council majority decision regarding the proposal.

Councilor Lynch highlighted the need to allocate funding for alleviating current homeless upturns.

Acting Chief Administrative Officer Reid expressed reassurance that future funding would be earmarked, if Council approved the health disparity initiatives.

After further discussion, it was the consensus of Council to not support the mayor's recommendation related to the assigned special purpose for health disparity initiatives.

Deputy Council Chief of Staff Brown apprised Council of the need to hold additional special meetings, if there was a consensus to support the additional \$5 million allocation to the OPEB Trust fund.

Councilor Ellen Robertson commended the city's workforce and suggested Council consider allotting funding for a two-percent salary increase for employees.

Vice President Chris Hilbert departed the meeting at 5:33 p.m.

Due to meeting time constraints, President Newbille asked Council to hold a special meeting later during the week to further discuss proposed surplus allocation.

Closed Session

At 5:49 p.m., Councilor Kristen Larson moved that the City Council go into a closed meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(7) of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act to discuss the disposition of publicly held real property located at 500 North 10th Street. Known as the "Public Safety Building," where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the city.

The motion was seconded and approved: Ayes 8, Jones, Robertson, Larson, Lynch, Gray, Trammell, Addison, Newbille. Noes None. Hilbert excused.

Vice President Chris Hilbert rejoined the meeting at 6:17 p.m.

Councilor Andreas Addison motioned to exit closed session. The motion was seconded and approved: Ayes 8, Jones, Robertson, Larson, Lynch, Gray, Trammell, Addison, Newbille. Noes None. Hilbert was not recorded as voting on the motion.

Councilors reconvened in open session at 6:20 p.m.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

October 12, 2020

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
Christopher A. Hilbert, Vice President
Andreas D. Addison
Kimberly B. Gray
Kristen N. Larson
Stephanie A. Lynch
Ellen F. Robertson
Reva M. Trammell
Michael J. Jones

DECLINING TO CERTIFY:

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

CITY CLERK