



City of Richmond

Special Meeting Minutes

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

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

9:00 AM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall
Virtual Meeting

Councilmembers Present

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

Absent

The Honorable Reva Trammell

Council President Cynthia Newbille called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m., and presided.

ELECTRONIC MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

City Clerk Candice Reid, 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. City Clerk Reid stated notice of the meeting was provided to the public through a public information advisory issued on October 13, 2020, and through Legistar on the city website in accordance with usual practice. City Clerk Reid also stated there would be no opportunities for public comment at the meeting.

Councilor Kristen Larson joined the meeting at 9:04 a.m.

Councilor Ellen Robertson joined the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

Vice President Chris Hilbert joined the meeting at 9:06 a.m.

DISCUSSION ITEM

Fund Balance Update – Assignment of Special Purpose Reserves

Deputy Council Chief of Staff Meghan Brown provided Council with an update regarding the assignment of Fiscal Year 2020 Special Purpose Reserves. Ms. Brown stated Council previously agreed with the recommended assignment of \$780,000 in Special Purpose Reserves towards the Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust Fund and \$110,000 in Special Purpose Reserves towards an equity study. Ms. Brown also stated that Council had yet to reach an agreement on the assignment of \$500,000 in Special Purpose Reserves towards health disparity initiatives recommended by the mayor. Ms. Brown updated Council that City Auditor Lou Lassiter also recommended that Council assign an additional \$5,000,000 towards the OPEB Trust Fund to address the OPEB Trust Fund's unfunded liability and inquired if Council agreed with Mr. Lassiter's recommendation.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch inquired about diverting \$500,000 from the \$5,000,000 recommended to be assigned to the OPEB Trust Fund, and allocating the diverted funds towards the city's COVID-19 Relief Special Fund to provide housing for the city's homeless population and to establish monetary grants that addressed housing needs in the city.

Councilor Kim Gray recommended Council address the city's obligation to contribute towards the OPEB Trust Fund and stated the \$500,000 should not be diverted.

Deputy Council Chief of Staff Brown informed members that Council had the option to assign the \$500,000 recommended for health disparity initiatives, towards the housing initiatives addressed by Councilor Lynch.

Vice President Chris Hilbert stated his concerns with the recent increase of the OPEB Trust Fund unfunded liability.

Councilor Andreas Addison stated he believed that the city should meet its obligations to contribute to the OPEB Trust Fund. Councilor Addison also stated he was concerned with the approach of using one-time surplus funding to address health disparities in the city, rather than addressing health disparities through adoption of the city budget.

Councilor Ellen Robertson stated she was present for recent presentations regarding city administration's plans to address homelessness and housing needs in the city. Councilor Robertson also stated she did not receive any feedback from city administration that an additional \$500,000 was necessary to assist with the city's plans.

Councilor Kristen Larson stated she supported the assignment of the full \$5,000,000 towards the OPEB Trust Fund. Councilor Larson also stated she opposed a one-time assignment of \$500,000 in surplus funds towards health initiatives. Councilor Larson recommended that Council assign the \$500,000 in Special Purpose Reserves recommended by the mayor for health disparity initiatives towards the city's COVID-19 Relief Special Fund.

Sharon Ebert, deputy chief Administrative officer of economic and community development, provided additional information regarding the city's plans to address homelessness and housing needs in the city. Ms. Ebert stated current plans to address homelessness and housing needs in the city were sufficiently funded.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch stated she appreciated the city's plans, but again requested Council divert \$500,000 to address the immediate needs of individuals in the city seeking stable housing.

President Cynthia Newbille confirmed that it was the consensus of Council to assign the full recommended \$5,000,000 towards the OPEB Trust Fund. President Newbille also confirmed that it was the consensus of Council to not assign the recommended \$500,000 of Special Purpose Reserves towards health disparity initiatives, but to instead allocate the \$500,000 to the COVID-19 Relief Special Fund.

Lincoln Saunders, Office of the Mayor chief of staff, inquired how Council would prefer to collaborate on utilizing the COVID-19 Relief Special Fund.

President Newbille recommended that discussions regarding the distribution of resources in the COVID-19 Relief Special Fund be coordinated through Council's Governmental Operations Standing Committee.

Councilor Andreas Addison agreed that the Governmental Operations Standing Committee would schedule the discussion for its next committee meeting on Thursday, October 22, 2020, at

12:00 p.m. Councilor Addison stated he was available to address the upcoming discussion with members who might not be available to attend the upcoming committee meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

At 10:20 a.m. Member Kristen Larson moved that the City Council go into a closed meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(3) of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act to discuss the disposition of the 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, Addison, Hilbert, Newbille. Noes None.

Councilor Kim Gray left the meeting.

Councilor Michael Jones motioned to exit closed session. The motion was seconded and approved: Ayes 7, Jones, Robertson, Larson, Lynch, Addison, Hilbert, Newbille. Noes None. Members reconvened in open session at 11:14 a.m.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

October 14, 2020

WHEREAS, the committee 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(D) of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the committee that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law:

NOW, THEREFORE,
BE IT RESOLVED:

That the City 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 City Council.

WITNESS the following vote of committee members, as recorded by Candice D. Reid, City Clerk:

CERTIFYING:

Cynthia I. Newbille, President
Chris Hilbert, Vice President
Andreas D. Addison
Kristen N. Larson
Stephanie A. Lynch
Ellen F. Robertson
Michael J. Jones

DECLINING TO CERTIFY:

President Cynthia Newbille informed members that additional Special meetings of Council would be required to provide for the introduction and consideration of legislation related to the assignment of Special Purpose Reserves.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 11:16 a.m.

CITY CLERK