

City of Richmond

Formal Meeting Minutes

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

Monday, April 12, 2021

6:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall
Virtual Meeting

Councilmembers Present

The Honorable Cynthia Newbille, President
The Honorable Ellen Robertson, Vice President (early departure)
The Honorable Andreas Addison
The Honorable Michael Jones
The Honorable Katherine Jordan
The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert (early departure)
The Honorable Kristen Larson (late arrival)
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch (late arrival)
The Honorable Reva Trammell

Council President Cynthia Newbille called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m., and presided.

ELECTRONIC MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

City Clerk Candice Reid, in accordance with Ordinance No. 2020-093, adopted April 9, 2020, as most recently amended by Ordinance No. 2020-232, adopted December 14, 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 March 24, 2021, and through Legistar on the city website in accordance with usual practice. She also stated members of the public were encouraged to provide comments in writing prior to the meeting and all comments received prior to 10:00 a.m., on Monday, April 12, 2021, were provided to Council members. Ms. Reid indicated that members of the public who signed up to speak and provide comment would be called to speak at the appropriate time.

Invocation was offered by Pastor Larry Miles, Sr. of Fresh Anointing Cathedral Church of God in Christ, 3001 2nd Avenue, Richmond, VA.

Members of Council and the audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZEN SPEAKER GUIDELINES

Upon the President's request, Deputy City Clerk RJ Warren provided citizen speaker guidelines.

APPOINTMENTS AND REAPPOINTMENTS

There were no appointment/reappointment items for consideration.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

Councilors Michael Jones and Katherine Jordan, on behalf of Richmond City Council, recognized and honored the Virginia Commonwealth University Women's Basketball team for its successful season, which included winning the 2021 Atlantic 10 Conference post season tournament and participating in the 2021 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) national tournament.

Councilor Kristen Larson joined the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch joined the meeting at 6:07 p.m.

CITIZEN COMMENT

Citizens were provided an opportunity to offer comments in writing prior to the Formal City Council meeting. All written citizen comments received by the Office of the City Clerk were provided to members of the Council prior to the meeting, and are included as an appendix to the April 12, 2021 Formal City Council meeting minutes.

There were no citizen comment speakers.

AGENDA REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

There were no agenda amendments for consideration.

CONSENT AGENDA

The following ordinances and resolutions were considered:

ORD. 2021-074

To amend Ord. No. 2020-248, adopted Dec. 14, 2020, which authorized the special use of the property known as 3310 East Broad Street for the purpose of a dwelling unit within an existing accessory building, to authorize a two-family dwelling with an accessory building containing one dwelling unit, upon certain terms and conditions.

ORD. 2021-075

To authorize the special use of the property known as 2410 Ownby Lane for the purpose of a mixed-use building, upon certain terms and conditions.

ORD. 2021-076

To rezone the property known as 1001 German School Road from the R-3 Single-Family Residential District to the R-43 Multifamily Residential District (Conditional), upon certain proffered conditions.

ORD. 2021-077

To rezone the properties known as 600 Commerce Road, 602 Commerce Road, and 606 Commerce Road from the M-2 Heavy Industrial District to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District.

ORD. 2021-079

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to accept funds in the amount of \$150,000.00 from the Virginia Outdoors Foundation; to amend the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Special Fund Budget by creating a new special fund for the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities called the Bellemeade Park Outdoor Educational Classroom Facility Special Fund; and to appropriate the grant funds received to the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Special Fund Budget by increasing estimated revenues and the amount appropriated to the new Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities' Bellemeade Park Outdoor Educational Classroom Facility Special Fund by \$150,000.00 for the

purpose of funding the design, permitting, and construction of an outdoor classroom at Bellemeade Park located at 1800 Krouse Street in the city of Richmond.

ORD. 2021-080

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to accept funds in the amount of \$4,500.00 from the Virginia Commission for the Arts and to appropriate the increase to the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget by increasing estimated revenues and the amount appropriated to the Non-Departmental General Fund Budget by \$4,500.00 for the purpose of providing a grant of \$2,250.00 of such funds each to the Cadence Theatre Company and to CultureWorks, Inc.

ORD. 2021-081

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Deed of Lease between City Central, LLC as lessor and the City of Richmond as lessee for the purpose of providing office, warehouse, parking, and outdoor storage space for the Department of Public Works Facilities Services at 1410 Ingram Avenue.

ORD. 2021-082

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer and the Director of Procurement Services, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute the fourth Contract Modification to Contract No. 16000022041 between the City and Manchester Marketing, Inc. T/A Seibert's Towing for towing-related services and tow lot operation for the purpose of documenting the exercise of the first renewal option of Contract No. 16000022041 and specifying rate increases for certain rates listed in Contract No. 16000022041.

RES. 2021-R019

To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause the development of a digital connectivity map, including both vertical assets and infrastructure owned by the City and of existing fiber networks, for the purpose of developing a strategy to provide universal broadband access across the city of Richmond for all residents.

RES. 2021-R020

To approve the revised program outline and budget of the Richmond Public Schools Foundation to use a \$81,451 portion of \$585,000 approved for allocation by Res. No. 2013-R115-122, adopted May 13, 2013, for the purpose of allowing the reallocation of remaining grant funds in the amount of \$81,451.00 from the Innovation and Excellence in Education Special Fund to purchase professional development materials, including the Eureka Digital Suite, for teachers involved in implementing the math curriculum of the school division administered by the School Board of the City of Richmond in alignment with the Dreams4RPS Richmond Public Schools 2018-23 Strategic Plan.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert spoke in support of RES. 2021-R019, and stated that the digital divide in the city was a major issue that required action by city government. Councilor Lambert also stated that the lack of high-speed internet had negatively impacted the city's youth, and that Council should remedy that issue for families in the city.

There were no further comments or discussions and the **Consent Agenda was adopted:** Ayes 8, Addison, Jordan, Lambert, Larson, Lynch, Trammell, Robertson, Newbille. Noes None. Jones was excused.

REGULAR AGENDA

There were no regular agenda items.

BUDGET RELATED PAPERS

The following ordinances were considered:

ORD. 2021-040

To adopt the General Fund Budget for the fiscal year commencing Jul. 1, 2021, and ending Jun. 30, 2022, and to appropriate the estimated revenues for such fiscal year for the objects and purposes stated in such budget.

ORD. 2021-041

To adopt the Special Fund Budgets for the fiscal year commencing Jul. 1, 2021, and ending Jun. 30, 2022, and to appropriate the estimated receipts of the Special Revenue funds for the said fiscal year.

ORD. 2021-042

To accept a program of proposed Capital Improvement Projects for the fiscal year beginning Jul. 1, 2021, and for the four fiscal years thereafter; to adopt a Capital Budget for the fiscal year beginning Jul. 1, 2021; and to determine the means of financing the same.

ORD. 2021-043

To appropriate and to provide funds for financing the school budget for the fiscal year commencing Jul. 1, 2021, and ending Jun. 30, 2022.

ORD. 2021-044

To adopt the Debt Service Fund Budget for the fiscal year commencing Jul. 1, 2021, and ending Jun. 30, 2022, and to appropriate the estimated expenditures from the Debt Service Fund for the said fiscal year.

ORD. 2021-045

To adopt the Internal Service Fund Budgets for the fiscal year commencing Jul. 1, 2021, and ending Jun. 30, 2022, and to appropriate the estimated receipts of the Internal Service funds for the said fiscal year.

ORD. 2021-046

To adopt the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities' Richmond Cemeteries Budget for the fiscal year commencing Jul. 1, 2021, and ending Jun. 30, 2022, and to appropriate the estimated receipts of the Richmond Cemeteries for the said fiscal year for the operation and management of the facilities.

ORD. 2021-047

To adopt the Department of Public Works' Parking Enterprise Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2021-2022, and to appropriate the estimated receipts of the Department of Public Works' Parking Enterprise Fund for the said fiscal year for the operation and management of parking facilities.

ORD. 2021-048

To adopt the Electric Utility Budget for the fiscal year commencing Jul. 1, 2021, and ending Jun. 30, 2022; to appropriate the estimated receipts of the Electric Utility for the said fiscal year; and to make appropriations from the Electric Utility Renewal Fund or Operating Fund for renewing, rebuilding or extending the plant and distribution system of the Electric Utility and for the purchase of vehicles.

ORD. 2021-049

To adopt the Gas Utility Budget for the fiscal year commencing Jul. 1, 2021, and ending Jun. 30, 2022; to appropriate the estimated receipts of the Gas Utility for the said fiscal year; and to make appropriations from the Gas Utility Renewal Fund or Operating Fund for renewing, rebuilding or extending the plant and distribution system of the Gas Utility and for the purchase of vehicles.

ORD. 2021-050

To adopt the Department of Public Utilities' Stores Internal Service Fund Budgets for the fiscal year commencing Jul. 1, 2021, and ending Jun. 30, 2022, and to appropriate the estimated receipts of the Department of Public Utilities' Stores Internal Service Funds for the said fiscal year.

ORD. 2021-051

To adopt the Stormwater Utility Budget for the fiscal year commencing Jul. 1, 2021, and ending Jun. 30, 2022; to appropriate the estimated receipts of the Stormwater Utility for the said fiscal year; and to make appropriations from the Stormwater Utility Renewal Fund or Operating Fund for renewing, rebuilding or extending the stormwater utility and for the purchase of vehicles.

ORD. 2021-052

To adopt the Wastewater Utility Budget for the fiscal year commencing Jul. 1, 2021, and ending Jun. 30, 2022; to appropriate the estimated receipts of the Wastewater Utility for the said fiscal year; and to make appropriations from the Wastewater Utility Renewal Fund or Operating Fund for renewing, rebuilding or extending the plant and distribution system of the Wastewater Utility and for the purchase of vehicles.

ORD. 2021-053

To adopt the Water Utility Budget for the fiscal year commencing Jul. 1, 2021, and ending Jun. 30, 2022; to appropriate the estimated receipts of the Water Utility for the said fiscal year; and to make appropriations from the Water Utility Renewal Fund or Operating Fund for renewing, rebuilding or extending the plant and distribution system of the Water Utility and for the purchase of vehicles.

ORD. 2021-054

To amend the schedule of classifications and assigned ranges incorporated into section I of the Pay Plan for the purpose of revising the wording of certain classification titles and changing the pay ranges of certain classification titles; to amend section II of the Pay Plan by adding therein a new subsection (C) for the purpose of implementing the recommendations of a study completed in 2018 that found significant compression in the lower end of the pay ranges and pay bands for non-sworn employees and recommended pay increases to move those employees toward the midpoint of their pay ranges or pay bands; and to amend sections III(B)(11), providing for salary supplements for the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney, III(B)(12), providing for salary supplements for the Office of the Sheriff, III(B)(25)(e), suspending the education incentive for sworn fire and police employees, III(B)(36), to increase the hourly living wage for City employees from \$12.07 to \$13.00, and III(B)(40), to provide for the full implementation of the step-based pay plan for sworn fire and police employees, of the Pay Plan.

ORD. 2021-055

To amend the fees set forth in the City Code for sections 7-6 (concerning fees for interments, disinterments, reinterments and entombments), 7-15 (concerning fees for installation of foundation for monuments or grave markers), and 7-92 (concerning fees for burial spaces and lots) of the City Code, to establish revised charges for certain cemeteries services.

ORD. 2021-056

To amend City Code §§ 28-191, 28-192, 28-194, 28-195, 28-196, 28-198, 28-199, 28-200, 28-201, 28-202, 28-203, and 28-204, concerning gas service, for the purpose of changing the measurement of natural gas from quantities per thousand cubic feet to quantities per hundred cubic feet, and to amend and reordain City Code §§ 28-191(2) and 28-191(3) (concerning fees for residential gas service), 28-192(2) (concerning fees for residential gas peaking service), 28-193(2) (concerning fees for general gas service), 28-193(3) (concerning fees for small commercial gas sales), 28-194(2) (concerning fees for large volume gas service), 28-195(f) and 28-196(f) (concerning fees for transportation service), 28-198(2) and 28-198(3) (concerning fees for municipal gas service), 28-199(c), 28-199(d), and 28-199(g)(2), (concerning flexibly priced interruptible gas service), 28-200(2), 28-200(3) and 28-200(4) (concerning unmetered gaslight service), 28-201(c) (concerning gas air conditioning service), 28-202(c) (concerning fees for large volume gas sales service), 28-203(c) (concerning fees for large volume, high load factor, gas sales service), and 28-204(b) and 28-204(c)

(concerning fees for natural gas vehicle gas service) of the City Code, effective as of the date of rendering bills for Cycle I in July 2021, to establish revised charges for such services.

ORD. 2021-057

To amend the fees set forth in the City Code for sections 28-923 (concerning fees for residential stormwater service) and 28-924 (concerning fees for developed residential properties stormwater service) of the City Code, effective as of the date of rendering bills for Cycle I in July, 2021, to establish revised charges for the stormwater utility's services.

ORD. 2021-058

To amend the fees set forth in sections 28-650 (concerning fees for residential wastewater service), 28-651 (concerning fees for commercial wastewater service), 28-652 (concerning fees for disposal of industrial sewage and wastewater), 28-653 (concerning fees for disposal of state and federal sewage and wastewater), and 28-654 (concerning fees for disposal of municipal sewage and wastewater) of the City Code, effective as of the date of rendering bills for Cycle I in July, 2021, to establish revised charges for the wastewater utility's services.

ORD. 2021-059

To amend and reordain City Code §§ 28-326 (concerning fees for residential water service), 28-327 (concerning fees for commercial water service), 28-328 (concerning fees for industrial water service), 28-329 (concerning fees for municipal water service), 28-330 (concerning fees for state and federal water service), 28-458 (concerning fees for water for fire protection) and 28-549 (concerning fees for water use during conservation periods) of the City Code, effective as of the date of rendering bills for Cycle I in July, 2021, to establish revised charges for such services.

ORD. 2021-060

To authorize the issuance of general obligation public improvement bonds of the City of Richmond in the maximum principal amount of \$27,500,000 to finance the cost of school projects and general capital improvement projects of the City for the following purposes and uses: construction, reconstruction, improvements and equipment for public schools; construction, reconstruction, improvement and equipment for various infrastructure needs, including traffic control facilities, streets, sidewalks and other public ways, bridges, storm sewers, drains and culverts, and refuse disposal facilities; participation in redevelopment, conservation and community development programs, including the construction, reconstruction, improvement and equipment for targeted public facilities included in these programs; construction, reconstruction, improvements and equipment for public institutional, operational, cultural, educational and entertainment buildings and facilities, including but not limited to the theaters, parks, playgrounds, cemeteries, libraries and museums; acquisition of real property therefor as appropriate; and the making of appropriations to the City's Economic Development Authority ("EDA") to be used by the EDA to finance capital expenditures or to make loans or grants to finance capital expenditures for the purposes of promoting economic development; to authorize the Director of Finance, with the approval of the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City, to sell such bonds for such capital improvement projects, to provide for the form, details and payment of such bonds; to authorize the issuance of notes of the City in anticipation of the issuance of such bonds; and to authorize the issuance of taxable bonds, for the same purposes and uses, in the same maximum principal amount and payable over the same period as such general obligation public improvement bonds.

ORD. 2021-061

To authorize the issuance of general obligation public improvement bonds of the City of Richmond in the maximum principal amount of \$7,987,280 to finance the cost of capital improvement projects of the stormwater utility of the City for the following purposes and uses: replacement of and upgrades to the stormwater facilities, including but not limited to, construction, reconstruction, improvements, rehabilitation and upgrades of stormwater sewers and associated facilities; new and replacement infrastructure of the storm sewer system, drainage structures, catch basins, ditches, storm sewer pipes, culverts, green infrastructure; acquisition of real property therefor as appropriate; and equipment for various infrastructure needs; and authorizes the Director of Finance, with the approval of the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City, to sell such bonds for such capital

improvement projects, to provide for the form, details and payment of such bonds and to authorize the issuance of notes of the City in anticipation of the issuance of such bonds, and to authorize the issuance of taxable bonds, for the same purposes and uses, in the same maximum principal amount and payable over the same period as such general obligation public improvement bonds.

ORD. 2021-062

To authorize the issuance of public utility revenue bonds of the City of Richmond in the maximum principal amount of \$60,185,560 to finance the cost of capital improvement projects of the gas, water and wastewater utilities and public utilities buildings and facilities for the following purposes and uses: enlargement, extension, repair, replacement, improvement and equipping of the gas plant and transmission lines; enlargement, extension, repair, replacement, improvement and equipping of the waterworks plant and transmission lines; enlargement, extension, repair, replacement, improvement and equipping of the wastewater plant and intercepting lines; construction, reconstruction, repair, replacement, and improvement of sanitary and storm water sewers, pumping stations, drains and culverts; construction, reconstruction, repair, replacement, improvement and equipping of public utility buildings and facilities therefor, including but not limited to the stores division; and acquisition of real property and real property rights (including without limitation easements and rights-of-way) therefor as appropriate; to authorize the Director of Finance, with the approval of the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City, to sell such bonds for such capital improvement projects; to provide for the form, details and payment of such bonds; to approve the form of supplemental indenture of trust; to authorize the issuance of notes of the City in anticipation of the issuance of such bonds; and to authorize the issuance of taxable bonds, for the same purposes and uses, in the same maximum principal amount and payable over the same period as such public utility revenue bonds.

ORD. 2021-063

To authorize the issuance of general obligation equipment notes of the City of Richmond in the maximum principal amount of \$7,100,000 to finance the cost of equipment for the following purposes and uses: acquisition of computer, radio, office, solid waste collection, office furniture and miscellaneous equipment and vehicles for the various departments, bureaus and agencies of the City, and equipment for City schools; and to authorize the Director of Finance, with the approval of the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City, to sell equipment notes to finance the acquisition of such equipment, and to authorize the issuance of taxable notes, for the same purposes and uses, in the same maximum principal amount and payable over the same period as such general obligation equipment notes.

Citizens were provided an opportunity to offer comments in writing regarding Budget Related items prior to the Formal City Council meeting. All written comments received by the Office of the City Clerk were provided to members of the Council prior to the meeting and are included as an appendix to the April 12, 2021 Formal City Council meeting minutes.

Public Hearing

Danielle Warren, Richmond Police Officer, stated that she believed the current public safety officer pay plan was a broken system and that the Richmond Police Department (RPD) career development plan did not work. Ms. Warren also stated that if the pay plan was not improved, then officer retention would be difficult, which would lead to higher crime rates. Ms. Warren spoke in support of the implementation of a new 20-year pay plan proposed by the Richmond Coalition of Police (RCOP) and the Richmond Professional Firefighter Association IAFF Local #955.

Matthew McHugh, Richmond Police Officer, RCOP member, stated his frustration with the city's current public safety officer pay plan. Mr. McHugh also stated that current officers were leaving for work in surrounding counties due to the issues with the current pay plan. Mr. McHugh requested that Council fix the current pay plan.

Keith Andes, Richmond Professional Firefighter Association IAFF Local #955 president, requested that Council approve a budget amendment to implement a new 20-year public

safety officer pay plan. Mr. Andes stated that the proposed pay plan would address several problems with the current plan. Mr. Andes also stated that the city should not be incurring budget surpluses, because the city should be properly compensating public safety officers, rather than implementing pay freezes.

Bill Pantele, RCOP representative, stated that he believed Council should view fixing the current public safety officer pay plan as an emergency that requires immediate action. Mr. Pantele informed Council that the RPD was encountering an experience drain, as officers were leaving for higher wage jobs in surrounding counties.

Shawn Nunnally, Richmond Police Officer, Third Precinct, stated that if any Council Member visited a RPD precinct within the city unannounced, they would discover the precinct was understaffed. Mr. Nunnally also stated that he feared for his and the public's safety, due to the lack of skill and experience of RPD's recent recruits.

Brendan Leavy, Richmond Police Detective, RCOP president, requested that Council implement the proposed 20-year pay plan. Mr. Leavy stated that veteran police officers were leaving in large numbers and officer retention was in a crisis. Mr. Leavy also stated that RPD officers were due fair compensation.

Carl Scott, Richmond Police Officer, stated that the current public safety pay plan was broken. Mr. Scott also stated that he was underpaid between \$12,000 and \$20,000 based on his experience and expertise. Mr. Scott informed Council that his career development had been denied to him, which negatively affected him and his family. Mr. Scott spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan.

Matt Sacksteder, Richmond Police Officer, spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan, and stated officer morale within the RPD was at the lowest he had witnessed.

Robert Staley, Richmond Firefighter, IAFF Local #955 member, Station One, spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan, and stated that the proposed plan would be monumental in supporting public safety officers.

John Washington, Richmond Firefighter, Local Black Firefighter Union member, Station One, spoke in support of ORD. 2021-054, and stated his appreciation for the ability to address Council.

Aisha Boisseau, Ten Thousand Villages executive director, Carytown Merchants Association Board member, requested Council's assistance with funding Carytown's beatification efforts. Ms. Boisseau stated that Council's assistance was necessary to help maintain Carytown as a large tourist destination.

Andre Guevera, Richmond Police Officer, RPD Swat Team member, informed Council of his concerns with the lack of funding for RPD officer training. Mr. Guevera stated that the RPD did not have sufficient manpower to properly train officers and ensure public safety.

Marley Williams, Richmond Police Detective, Property Crimes Unit, RCOP member, spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan, and stated that she had not received the career development that she was promised when she joined the RPD. Ms. Williams also stated that Council's support of the proposed pay plan would be a step in the right direction in supporting public safety officers.

Michael Anderson, Richmond Fire Lieutenant, IAFF Local #955 member, spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan, and stated that public safety officers should be compensated as much as officers were in surrounding counties.

Josephine Booker, Richmonders Involved to Strengthening Our Communities (RISC) Board member, Faith Community Baptist Church member, stated that the city was in an affordable housing crisis. Ms. Booker also stated that it was difficult for families and children to receive emergency shelter in hotels, while also participating in virtual school learning. Ms. Booker requested that Council adopt a budget amendment to provide the Affordable Housing Trust Fund with \$10,000,000 rather than the proposed \$2,900,000.

Steven Saltzberg, RISC co-president, First Unitarian Universalist Church member, stated that the city had an extraordinary opportunity to meet the needs of the city's most vulnerable by addressing affordable housing as a priority. Mr. Saltzberg requested that Council fully fund the Affordable Housing Trust Fund by allocating \$10,000,000.

Martin Wegbreit, RISC member, Richmond Eviction Task Force member, Affordable Housing Trust Fund Oversight Board member, stated that he believed the city was in an eviction crisis, due to the cost of housing and rent burden. Mr. Wegbreit requested that Council allocate \$10,000,000 to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to fully address the housing crisis in the city.

Dr. Aubrey Jones, RISC member, Fourth Baptist Church member, Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board member, referenced RES. 2020-R053, adopted September 28, 2020, and requested that Council adhere to the resolution's request, and allocate \$10,000,000 to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Dr. Jones stated that residents needed assistance now in the upcoming budget.

Nancy Kunkel, St. Elizabeth Catholic Church member, RISC Board member, stated RISC was pleased that the Affordable Housing Trust Fund was receiving dedicated funding in the Fiscal Year 2022 budget, but informed Council that \$10,000,000 was needed, not just the proposed \$2,900,000.

Glen Ivery, Richmond Firefighter, Brothers and Sisters Combined member, Fire Station One, spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan and stated that Richmond had a higher population per square mile compared to other localities, and that Richmond public safety officers should not be paid less than officers in surrounding counties.

Michael Tedesco, Richmond Firefighter, Fire Station 13, spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan and informed Council that he must work 12 overtime shifts to equal the salary of a Henrico County Fire recruit. Mr. Tedesco also shared his concerns with the new overtime requirements set to take effect in the coming year.

Michael Oprandi, Richmond Fire Captain, IAFF Local #955 treasurer, Fire Station 10, spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan, and stated that he did not want the city to continuously fund a broken pay plan.

Josiah DelToro, Richmond Police Officer, stated that 2020 was a traumatic year in the city for public safety officers due to civil unrest and the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. DelToro also stated that the city was losing quality officers due to the current pay plan, and he spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan.

Bob Capocelli, Richmond Police Officer, stated that citizens were seeing an increase of response time from RPD officers due to the lack of officer retention and staffing. Mr. Capocelli also stated that he did not believe officers felt supported by city government.

Chris Waldron, Richmond Police Officer, RCOP member, stated RPD was seeing a large number of officers leave for other jurisdictions due to current salaries offered. Mr. Waldron spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan. Mr. Waldron also stated that it would cost the city more money to train new officer recruits instead of updating the public safety officer pay plan.

David Goodwin, Richmond Police Officer, stated that he believed the current public safety officer pay plan was broken, and that the city would continue to lose money on training new officers to

replace former officers that leave for higher salaries in surrounding counties, unless the proposed pay plan was implemented.

Donald Coleman, Eastern Fellowship Pastor, RISC Executive Committee member, stated that the RISC organization was growing, and requested that Council Members attend upcoming meetings of RISC to better understand the issues of people suffering in the city. Mr. Coleman requested that Council allocate \$10,000,000 into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Patrick Brady, Richmond Police Sergeant, stated that he believed the RPD was facing a crisis and spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan. Mr. Brady also stated that the RPD career development opportunities were offered only once over the past 12 years.

David Hoath stated that other locations throughout the country experienced difficulties with ensuring public safety when public safety departments were defunded. Mr. Hoath also stated that current public safety officers in the city did not feel as valued as officers in surrounding counties.

Robert Hagaman, Richmond Firefighter, IAFF Local #955 member, Fire Station 8, stated he believed the current public safety officer pay plan was broken and spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan. Mr. Hagaman also stated that public safety officers did not want to stop working for the city, but the current pay plan made it difficult to remain with the city.

Bryan Bradley, Richmond Firefighter, IAFF Local #955 member, Fire Station 22, spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan.

Jeremiah French, Richmond Firefighter, Fire Station 22, stated the current public safety officer pay plan was broken and informed Council that the lack of staffing of RPD officers had resulted in a delayed RPD response time at events that required action from the Richmond Fire Department. Mr. French also stated that the lack of RPD officers and delayed response times made Richmond Firefighters feel unsafe. Mr. French spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan.

Kenneth Satterwhite, Richmond Firefighter, IAFF Local #955 member, Fire Station 10, spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan. Mr. Satterwhite stated that he based his family's future on the pay plan promised to him as a recruit, but frequent freezes of that pay plan has had a negative effect on his future.

Anthony Montango, Richmond Firefighter, IAFF Local #955 member, spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan.

Ryan Burke, Richmond Firefighter, IAFF Local #955 member, Fire Station 22, stated he was a lateral officer that arrived from an outside jurisdiction. Mr. Burke also stated that officers did not feel valued due to insufficient pay, and he spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan.

Keivon Henderson, Richmond Firefighter, Fire Station 22, spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan. Mr. Henderson stated that many public safety officers had second jobs for additional financial support, and he also stated officers should not be required to take on second jobs to provide that support.

Christopher Stowell, Richmond Firefighter, Fire Station 8, spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan. Mr. Stowell stated the proposed pay plan would help retain the RPD officers that are necessary to help ensure Richmond Firefighters were safe at potentially dangerous incidents that required the Richmond Fire Department's attention.

Bailey Martin Richmond Firefighter, spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan and stated he felt honored to work for the city. Mr. Martin informed Council that he witnessed several public safety officers suffer due to the amount of work required of them. Mr. Martin requested that Council take an equitable approach in public safety officer pay.

Sarah Scarbrough, REAL LIFE founder and director, informed Council that REAL LIFE helped with transitional housing for homeless persons and recently released incarcerated individuals. Ms. Scarbrough stated that the recent efforts to increase affordable housing options in the city did not adequately address the housing needs of individuals who earn less than 30 percent of the area median income (AMI). Ms. Scarbrough requested that Council allocate \$10,000,000 to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Barry O'Keefe stated he was deeply concerned about the climate crisis, and he informed Council that he was also concerned with what he believed was a lack of action within the proposed budget addressing climate action and lessening the city's dependence on carbon.

Yohance Whitaker, Richmond Transparency and Accountability Project (RTAP) member, requested that Council adopt a budget amendment to fully fund the future Civilian Review Board that will provide oversight of the Richmond Police Department. Mr. Whitaker stated that the budget amendment was required to provide salaries to the roles identified as necessary by the Task Force on the Establishment of a Civilian Review Board, such as executive director, investigator, auditor, and policy advisors.

Chris Aycock, Richmond Fire Captain, Fire Station 10, spoke in support of the proposed 20-year pay plan, and he requested that Council invest in public safety officers and the future of the city.

David Ross, Richmond Fire Lieutenant, informed Council that the Richmond Fire Department was experiencing a large number of retirements from its members due to the current pay plan.

President Cynthia Newbille stated her appreciation for individuals who provided comments regarding Council's budget deliberations.

Councilor Kristen Larson stated her appreciation for individuals who provided comments regarding the budget related ordinances.

Councilwoman Reva Trammell also stated her appreciation for public safety officers who provided comments that evening regarding the public safety officer pay plan.

Councilor Kristen Larson moved that the budget related ordinances be continued to the Monday, May 3, 2021, Special Meeting, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

MOTIONS

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

RES. 2021-R022

To approve the issuance by the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority of its multifamily housing revenue bonds in an amount up to \$16,000,000.00 for the acquisition, construction, renovation, rehabilitation and equipping of an approximately 125-unit multifamily residential rental housing project to be known as Shockoe Hill I Apartments located at 200 Hospital Street and 212 Hospital Street in the city of Richmond.

Patron: Vice President Robertson

Vice President Ellen Robertson provided an introduction of the proposed resolution.

Councilor Kristen Larson inquired about the need for expedited consideration.

Michael Graff, McGuireWoods partner, Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) bond counsel, informed Council that due to the length of the development process from construction delays, previous approvals by Council and RRHA had expired, and in order for the development to continue, approval renewals were required.

There were no further comments or discussions and **RES. 2021-R022 was unanimously adopted.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of the Council Budget Work Session 1 held on Monday, March 22, 2021, at 1:00 p.m.; Informal and Formal Council Sessions held on Monday, March 22, 2021, at 4:00 p.m., and 6:00 p.m., respectively; Special Meeting held on Monday April 5, 2021, at 5:00 p.m.; and Council approved the minutes as presented.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

City Council will hold a public hearing on the following ordinances and resolutions on Monday, April 26, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.:

ORD. 2021-087

To amend Ord. No. 2020-049, adopted May 11, 2020, which adopted the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget and made appropriations pursuant thereto, by re-appropriating a \$467,000.00 portion of the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 fund balance excess identified as an assignment of "Unspent Building Code Fees" in the City's 2020 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, and to appropriate these funds to the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget by increasing estimated revenues and the amount appropriated to the Department of Planning and Development Review by \$467,000.00 for the purpose of supporting the local building department functions of the Department of Planning and Development Review's Division of Permits and Inspections in compliance with Va. Code § 36-105.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

This ordinance was introduced and committee referral waived pursuant to Rule VI(B)(3)(c).

ORD. 2021-088

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept a donation from Aramark Services, Inc., trading as Lifeworks Restaurant Group, of coffee and cookies valued at approximately \$90,000.00 for the purpose of providing refreshments to all Department of Fire and Emergency Services personnel to express appreciation for the work of first responders and support staff.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

This ordinance was introduced and committee referral waived pursuant to Rule VI(B)(2).

ORD. 2021-089

To amend Ord. No. 2020-164, adopted Aug. 10, 2020, as previously amended by Ord. No. 2020-191, adopted Sept. 28, 2020, which authorized the Chief Administrative Officer to submit an amended Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as an application for the receipt of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) funds, Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) funds; accepted

funds from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the total amount of \$14,956,215.00; and appropriated \$14,956,215.00 for various projects, to appropriate \$1,362,346.00 in additional CDBG-CV funds received, reallocate \$337,654.00 in previously appropriated CDBG-CV funds, and authorize the submission of a further amended version of the amended Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting on Thursday, April 15, 2021, at 1:00 p.m.

ORD. 2021-090

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to accept \$472,500.00 from the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the City of Richmond consisting of funds deposited by the Commonwealth of Virginia for the Virginia Department of Transportation's acquisition of a portion of City-owned property located at 800 North 3rd Street with such funds to be credited to the Reserve Fund for Permanent Public Improvements and, in connection therewith, to execute an Agreement between the City and the Commonwealth of Virginia for the purpose of accepting compensation and settling all claims for such acquisition.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, April 19, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

ORD. 2021-091

To amend Ord. No. 2020-051, adopted May 11, 2020, which accepted a program of proposed Capital Improvements Projects for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 and the four fiscal years thereafter, adopted a Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021, and determined a means of financing the same, by (i) establishing a new project in the City Facilities category called the "Theatre Row Building (730 E. Broad Street) - DJS/ADC Renovations" project and (ii) increasing estimated revenues from the sale of the Public Safety Building and the amount appropriated to the new Department of Public Works' Theatre Row Building (730 E. Broad Street) - DJS/ADC Renovations project by \$352,000.00 for the purpose of renovating the Theatre Row Building located at 730 East Broad Street for use by the Department of Justice Services and the Adult Drug Court program.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, April 19, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

ORD. 2021-092

To declare that a public necessity exists and to authorize the acquisition of certain fee simple interests and easements for the public purpose of facilitating the construction of the East Richmond Road over Gillies Creek bridge replacement project.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, April 19, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

ORD. 2021-093

To declare that a public necessity exists and to authorize the acquisition of certain fee simple interests and easements for the public purpose of facilitating the construction of the East Richmond Road over Stony Run Creek bridge replacement project.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, April 19, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

ORD. 2021-094

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Deed of Easement between the City of Richmond and the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Motor Vehicles, for the purpose of accepting from the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Motor Vehicles, a gas utility easement on, over, under, and across a right-of-way located along 2300 West Broad Street to lay, erect, construct, install, operate, maintain, and repair one or more lines of underground pipes, conduits, and equipment, accessories, and appurtenances necessary for the transportation or distribution of natural gas over the said right-of-way.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Land Use, Housing and Transportation Standing Committee meeting on Tuesday, April 20, 2021, at 12:00 p.m.

RES. 2021-R023

To adopt budgetary policies under which the City will endeavor to provide operating funds annually for capital maintenance purposes, the City's annual required contribution for other post-employment benefits, and a self-insurance claims reserve.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

This resolution was introduced and referred to the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting on Thursday, April 15, 2021, at 1:00 p.m.

RES. 2021-R024

To accept and approve the biennial real estate strategies plan entitled "2020 Biennial Real Estate Strategies Plan."

Patron: Vice President Robertson

This resolution was introduced and referred to the Land Use, Housing and Transportation Standing Committee meeting on Tuesday, April 20, 2021, at 12:00 p.m.

City Council will hold a public hearing on the following ordinances on Monday, May 10, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.:

ORD. 2021-095

To amend and reordain ch. 2, art. I of the City Code by adding therein a new section 2-6, concerning the prohibition of the sale or distribution of symbols of hate by the City, for the purpose of ensuring that the City does not promote the distribution or display of symbols of hate or oppression.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Governmental Operations Standing Committee meeting on Wednesday, April 28, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.

ORD. 2021-096

To authorize the special use of the property known as 1301 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard for the purpose of a drive-in theater, upon certain terms and conditions.

Patron: Mayor Stoney (By Request)

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, May 3, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

ORD. 2021-097

To authorize the special use of the property known as 1500 North Lombardy Street for the purpose of four wall signs, upon certain terms and conditions.

Patron: Mayor Stoney (By Request)

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, May 3, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

ORD. 2021-098

To authorize the special use of the property known as 2601 Edgewood Avenue for the purpose of two single-family detached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions.

Patron: Mayor Stoney (By Request)

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, May 3, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

ORD. 2021-099

To authorize the special use of the property known as 3008 Garland Avenue for the purpose of a single-family detached dwelling and a two-family detached dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions.

Patron: Mayor Stoney (By Request)

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, May 3, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

ORD. 2021-100

To authorize the special use of the property known as 3135 West Franklin Street for the purpose of a single-family detached dwelling and a two-family detached dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions.

Patron: Mayor Stoney (By Request)

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, May 3, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

ORD. 2021-101

To rezone the property known as 103 East 2nd Street from the B-7 Mixed-Use Business District to the B-4 Central Business District, and the properties known as 104 East 2nd Street, 101 Stockton Street, and 121 Stockton Street from the M-2 Heavy Industrial District to the B-4 Central Business District.

Patron: Mayor Stoney (By Request)

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, May 3, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

ORD. 2021-102

To rezone the properties known as 300 Oliver Hill Way and 400 Oliver Hill Way from the M-1 Light Industrial District to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District, and the property known as 510 Oliver Hill Way from the M-2 Heavy Industrial District to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District.

Patron: Mayor Stoney (By Request)

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, May 3, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

ORD. 2021-103

To rezone the property known as 711 Dawn Street from the M-1 Light Industrial District to the B-7 Mixed-Use Business District.

Patron: Mayor Stoney (By Request)

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, May 3, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

ORD. 2021-104

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to enter into a Facility Use Agreement between City of Richmond and School Board of the City of Richmond for the use of Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities' community centers to be known as "Community Hubs" for the purpose of connecting Richmond Public Schools' families with information and resources to support student educational success.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

This ordinance was introduced and referred to the Education and Human Services Standing Committee meeting on Thursday, May 6, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.

REPORTS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Members of Council provided reports and announcements regarding respective district meetings and activities.

Vice President Ellen Robertson left the meeting at 8:49 p.m.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert left the meeting at 8:49 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

CITY CLERK

From: Josh Kayer
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Opposition to Bally's casino
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 10:01:50 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

We write to you today to state that Martin-Star Cabinetry & design LLC objected to the plan to put a Casino from Bally's anywhere in the city of Richmond. Especially at the proposed Stratford hills location.

--

Cheers,

Josh Kayer



* Please Note: Due to fluctuations in material cost, product availability, etc., all estimates are valid for 60 days. After 60 days estimates and lead times may be subject to change.

From: Kientz, Rebecca
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Letter of Opposition to Bally's Casino Proposal
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:57:34 AM
Attachments: [Letter of Opposition, Rebecca Kientz.pdf](#)

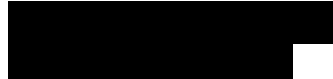
CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

To Whom It May Concern:

Please see my attached letter of opposition to the Bally's casino proposal in Stratford Hills. Thank you so much.

Best,
Rebecca Kientz

Rebecca Kientz



April 12, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a resident of the 4th District and I am deeply concerned about Bally's proposal to build a casino complex behind the Shops at Stratford Hills.

My great-grandparents lived in Westover Hills from the 1950s to the 1980s, my grandmother lived in Westover Hills for nearly sixty years of her life, my father and uncle grew up in Westover Hills, I spent a large portion of my childhood here, and I am now living here as an adult. My family and I have lived through the changes ushered in over the decades. Despite these changes, this has always been a quiet, residential area, and I am confounded as to why it would be acceptable to disrupt the community with the addition of a casino complex bringing in an estimated 3.7 million visitors per year.

The area in question is in the proximity of at least seven schools¹ and the historic Gravel Hill Baptist Church. Beyond disrupting the quiet, residential charm of our community, I have deeper concerns regarding the environmental impact of the proposed casino and the general predatory nature of casinos.

As a gardener, I notice the small effects that my actions have on the environment and on my yard's ecosystem. A 1.6 million square foot casino with 12,900 slot machines along with 3,000 parking spaces, a hotel, entertainment venue, and parking garage is a perfect example of anthropocentric and commercial interests outweighing concern for our planet and for our wildlife whose space we are ultimately occupying. Not only would this be a massive disruption to an ecosystem in an area that includes documented wetlands, it would displace wildlife and irrevocably change the landscape in the region.

I have noted that one of the sole talking points in favor of Bally's casino proposal is that they will make a one-time payment to the city of \$100 million and report that it will be an economic boon to our area by generating "\$5.3 billion in economic value in ten years." However, in a study conducted from 2003-2012, researchers analyzed the relationship between casinos and economic growth of counties in 48 U.S. states. They found that "[c]asino expansion was estimated to have increased the short-term per-capita income growth rate by 0.4 percentage point and the long-term per-capita income growth rate by 0.5 percentage point in 2003-2012. But after controlling for spatial or neighboring-county correlation effects, the effect of casinos on the long-term income growth disappeared. On the job side, casino expansion was estimated to have increased the 10-year salary job growth rate by 0.71 percentage point during the 2003-2012 period, and its effect

¹ Elijah House Academy, L. Murray Brown Middle School, Southampton Elementary, Crestwood Elementary, Huguenot High School, Westover Hills Elementary, and Good Shepherd Episcopal School.

remained but only at 0.67 percentage point after controlling for inter-county spatial effects.”² In essence, the long-term economic impact of casinos is negligible at best.

The burden of casinos’ social impact, however, is quite well-documented and unambiguous, including an increased risk in addictive gambling, increased crime, and higher bankruptcy rates in surrounding vicinities.^{3,4} Additionally, according to a study from University at Buffalo Research Institute on Addictions (RIA), these effects are twice as likely to affect those in our community who can least afford it.⁵ Is a one-time payment of \$100 million really all it takes to allow an ecosystem, an entire community, and people’s lives to be irreparably damaged?

Bally’s bills itself as a “destination resort,” meaning that they provide all of the amenities there so that their guests do not have to leave the premises. Their whole business model centers around the idea that you spend money within the casino, tantalizing you with in-house dining, entertainment, and shopping to encourage you to spend all of your winnings there. Bally’s is a business and it does not make sense for them to encourage you to spend money elsewhere, meaning that this “economic value” will be contained within the walls of the spacious resort they are building. This is not money that our local businesses and communities will ever see. The casino would leech off of members of our community without providing substantial benefits in order to outweigh the negatives.

Bally’s tries to convince us that they are going to bring value to our local businesses; however, I am not in any way convinced that their “virtual mall” or “Richmond Rewards Program” will be enough of an incentive to entice people to explore our beautiful city and patronize our small businesses. Why would people not from Richmond choose to receive rewards for businesses in a city they don’t live in and may not ever come back to? If Bally’s is so committed to encouraging their guests to explore Richmond and spend money in our communities, why don’t they offer a free shuttle, given that our city lacks viable public transportation options?

I know that Mayor Stoney has categorized the concerns with regard to the casino as “NIMBYism,” but I will be perfectly frank, a casino does not belong in Richmond period. I don’t want it in my backyard, your backyard, or in anyone else’s backyard: there is simply no place for it in our community.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Kientz

² Lim, S.H. and Zhang, L. (2017), Does Casino Development Have a Positive Effect on Economic Growth?. *Growth and Change*, 48: 409-434. [REDACTED]

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Frum, David. “A Good Way to Wreck a Local Economy: Build Casinos.” *The Atlantic*, 7 Aug. 2014, www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2014/08/a-good-way-to-wreck-a-local-economy-build-casinos/375691/?fbclid=IwAR3sERebd7OkcZKLoceNalb7pKRgVBaXDj6ztTVVP9lhk_X6pHNJL9RnV8s.

⁵ Barnes, Grace & Welte, John & Tidwell, Marie-Cecile & Hoffman, Joseph. (2013). Effects of Neighborhood Disadvantage on Problem Gambling and Alcohol Abuse. *Journal of behavioral addictions*. 2. 82-89. 10.1556/JBA.2.2013.004.

From: Carol
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: I am opposed to Bally's Casino
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:57:10 AM

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For all the 1. environmental factors damaging the wetlands and impacting flood lands (as we have already seen flooding the Powhite Parkway, for the 2. socio-economic consequences for the city's citizens related to addiction, homelessness, domestic disharmony issues, 3. for a 20 story building has no place in a residential neighborhood of which I border, 4. Forest Hill Avenue is ill equipped to handle anticipated traffic volumes as I dare say, is the Powhite— have you seen the toll back-up to the James River Bridge at rush hour, even during a pandemic?, & 5. it is better suited adjacent to I-95 commercial/ retail designated space.

>

> Carol Thomas

> 

>

>

From: Lauren Bell
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Statement on Bally's Casino
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:52:16 AM

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I am writing to show my opposition to the proposed Bally's Casino site in Stratford Hills.

I opposed this because:

- increased flooding risk
- the area is a residential
- the site is in close proximity to schools
- the site close proximity to the river and wetlands
- the site is a habitat for many living things
- casinos bring lots of crime along with them
- Richmond is an outdoor town, not a gambling destination

-Lauren Bell
Granite Hills Home Owner

From: kara kambis
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Casino Proposal - Ballys Location totally unsuitable
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:50:50 AM

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Dear Committee Members,

I understand you are taking comments up until today at 10 AM (I just saw the notice - and it is 9:43 AM) ... so if you guys don't get a lot of comments perhaps this is why. I read the RTD yesterday and did not see anything about this.

I am against the casino in the Stratford Hills location. The location is completely unsuited for a casino; it is in an almost entirely residential area, it has wetlands as well as wildlife areas that support the Jewel of the City - the James River Park area not even 2 miles from the site. Traffic is of course a concern as well that impacts in general of casinos on the immediate neighborhoods, with an increase in gambling addictions of folks in a close radius. The neighborhood is an older neighborhood and perhaps especially vulnerable to gambling.

Another thing that is of concern is the \$100M payment promised by Bally's if you choose this location over other locations that seem more suitable if Richmond is to have a casino. I am concerned that the cash payment might influence folks to choose a less suitable location (residential, wetlands, all the above comments) over a site that is more appropriate.

The casino in this location would cause irreparable damage to both the surrounding neighborhood and to the James River Park and environs. I implore the members of the committee to vote NO on the Bally's site.

Sincerely,

Kara Kambis

From: Beth Musick
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Casino Issue in Richmond - Please submit to Council for today's discussion.....
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:49:41 AM

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Clerk; Please share with City Council.....

Dear Council;

I am writing you this email as a concerned citizen in the City of Richmond. I have lived here since 1977 and have been a long time City resident, paying taxes, supporting local establishments, championing City venues and volunteering at numerous historical, civic and religious organizations.

Recently in the news,

Forest Hill Avenue, In The News: The Richmond Times Dispatch reported this week that the former owner and operator of the assisted living facility on Forest Hill Avenue has been indicted on 15 counts. Among the allegations is that **residents' Social Security money was diverted to pay for casino spending by the owner.** For the full story, click here:



I urge you to think about your vote on the upcoming proposal for a casino in Richmond, VA. A casino will not be good for Richmond.

1. It will prey on those most vulnerable. Those that do not have disposable income to lose.
2. They jobs will be low paying jobs with no future.
3. It will attract crime, drugs and other unsatisfactory industries... pawn shops, payday lending places, vape and smoking shops.... etc.

Full disclosure, I live in the 4th District near the proposed Bally site. This site is not suitable for a casino.

1. The site has no road access. The main corridors of Forest Hill Ave, Chippenham Parkway and Powhite Parkway are already at capacity. The traffic would be a nightmare for residents, school children and pedestrians who use the Forest Hill Ave

to walk to grocery stores and other necessary shops. Have you done any traffic studies?

- 2, The site is open green space which leads into streams, which lead to the James River and then to the Chesapeake Bay. Have you done environmental assessments?
3. Light and noise pollution to homes and surrounding churches, hospitals and other residential areas.
4. The land is known to have graves of freed persons and be near a church that has been there over 100 years.etc
5. The location is in the middle of residential areas. .

Rather than repeat the many other arguments for reasons not to bring a casino to the Chippenham/Parkway site, I share a story.

I grew up near Philadelphia and Bethlehem PA. After the casinos came, everything changed. The quality of life went downhill. My parents ended up moving to allow their children to grow up in a clean and non-crime environment.

I urge you, don't destroy Richmond. Don't destroy the Forest Hill Corridor. Go for a walk down Forest Hill near the Stratford Hills Shopping Center. Walk up to the Publix and Target. See the people's lives you will impact!..... There are mothers and children, elderly folks going for a walk Please, don't subject them to 3.7 million visitors and countless construction vehicles.

If you feel you need Bally's money, then talk with them. Find a suitable piece of land near the Interstates that will allow 3.7 million visitors and NOT take away green space, or add further congestion to busy roads and change peoples lives forever.

Thank you.

Beth Musick



From: Bob Scott
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Nop casino
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:48:43 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Councilmembers;

For many years, tobacco was a financial driver for revenue. Thankfully we are moving away from that image. Richmond now is emerging as a city with varied cultural attractions, nationally recognized restaurants, a vibrant art community and outdoor activities that take advantage of our beautiful river and park system. This is the image that we need to nurture and support, not as a city of gaming.

Casinos hurt local businesses, prey on addictions, increase traffic and crime and in the case of the Stratford Hills site, the massive footprint of this project will have a long lasting negative environmental impact on our district- and Richmond. It is critical that you must take a stand and oppose a casino in RVA.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Bob and Macaria Scott (4th District)

[Bob Scott](#)



From: Emily Wilson
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Bally's proposal opposition statement for meeting tonight
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:43:36 AM

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I am opposed to Bally's proposal. I have a lot of concerns about this proposal that have not been adequately addressed by Bally. These include that the proposal is not in line with the Richmond 300 and the likely presence of graves in the area, see article below.

Finally, I am concerned about the Bally Corporation itself, they are not the sort of partners we need. In 2008 the SEC filed charges of over two dozen accounting improprieties in an investigation that to my understanding is still ongoing. How they treated Pearl's Bake Shoppe told me everything I need to know about how they would be as neighbors. "Bally's community-first policy is a fundamental and defining element of who we are as a company." is a lie. Please reject their proposal.

[REDACTED]

Regards,

Emily Wilson

[REDACTED]

--

Emily Wilson

From: Sheila Keating
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Cc: [Addison, Andreas D. - City Council](#); [Jordan, Katherine - City Council](#); [Lambert, Ann-Frances - City Council](#); [Larson, Kristen N. - City Council](#); [Lynch, Stephanie A. - City Council Office](#); [Robertson, Ellen F. - City Council](#); [Newbille, Cynthia I. - City Council](#); [Trammell, Reva M. - City Council](#); [Jones, Michael J. - City Council](#); [Sledge, Leonard L. - DED](#)
Subject: Bally's Casino Proposal
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:43:17 AM

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Candice P. Reid.

Please enter into the minutes of the April 12, 2021 Richmond City Council Meeting my objection to allowing Bally's to build a casino in the 4th district, Stratford Hills area. Many people have raised cogent arguments against Bally's and I want to add one more argument. Bally's is conducting random "surveys" via phone and online. One tactic Mike Monty used in one of these surveys was to mention that Bally's gave Richmond two sites to choose from and the city chose Stratford Hills, this statement directly subverts the statements made by Mr. Sledge.

If Bally's representatives feel comfortable sowing dissent among voters in this manner, what other underhanded and possibly dishonest acts will they commit?

Thank you

Sheila Keating

registered Richmond voter

From: Laurence Landon
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Richmond Casino Stratford Hills Location
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:42:54 AM

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Dear Ms. Reid,

Thank you for soliciting responses, particularly regarding the Stratford Hills proposal, and putting forth results to interested parties.

This is quite an experiment the City leadership hopes to undertake.

For the reasons you have heard so often before, wetlands endangerment, the unknown drainage effects to the Powhite Watershed (remember when Powhite Pkwy flooded last year? wow.), increased traffic, not solely automotive, in a residential neighborhood not prepared for such explosive growth, vast number of studies demonstrating the ill effects of casinos on communities, light pollution, and moral dilemmas, I, too, am opposed to this social, economic, and ecological experiment.

Opposition to this project is not mere NIMBYism and "red lining".

The assertion that a casino is the equivalent of a water treatment project, rail line, or new highway, bridge or dam just doesn't hold water.

For us, this issue is both color- and income level blind: What stirs this neighborhood to action is the blatant misuse of land, and the sudden overnight change in our neighborhood's character and purpose.

Plopping a casino destination resort down in the middle of this quiet, residential, multi-ethnicity neighborhood, and expecting it to become the panacea for all Richmond's ills, is pretty terrifying to those of us who have chosen to make our homes here.

Bally's claims to have scratched the access road to Forest Hill Avenue. However, a little spur of pavement still sticks out toward us.

My trust level that a connection to Forest Hill Ave. will not later be built by hook or by crook is about a 2 on a scale of 10: There is too much money speaking louder than the voices of the citizens.

We have one of the most beautiful semi-wild parks in Richmond - if not the Country - at Pony Pasture Rapids. It will become part of the draw of the destination resort. Hathaway and Longview cannot handle the traffic that would head down to the river, and ultimately trampling the park. Widening the streets would require significant application of eminent domain and loss of personal property and neighborhood character.

A destination resort casino will swallow us.

We're an inviting and pleasant neighborhood along Forest Hill, open and accepting.

We want safe streets, good schools, and convenient merchants. This is not "gentrification". It's Community.

Our Neighborhood does need development, but this casino is simply too big an undertaking for these neighborhoods.

We need some good hotels (badly), restaurants, shopping, and entertainment venues. But they need to be in the character of the setting.

Please help us, work with us, the Citizens of Richmond's Forest Hill Corridor, to become a showcase and a draw for people moving here from elsewhere, and a satisfying environment for those who choose to live here.

To quote Lao Tzu, "Of a Good Leader, the People will say, 'We did this ourselves'."

Sincerely,

--

Larry Landon,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: Robin Martin
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Opposition to Richmond casino project
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:42:17 AM

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Dear City Council Members,

Like many residents, I adamantly oppose the city's plan to bring a casino—any casino—to Richmond. While I live near the Stratford Hills site, it's not a question of NIMBYism—an accusation leveled at citizens when we opposed a 24-hour-a-day casino presence which would change the atmosphere of our city and neighborhoods.

This is also a question of moral high ground. All the empty promises that casino promoters make on being a positive force for the Richmond economy are morally bankrupt. Statistics and studies bear out the negative influences of casinos, not the SEIGMA study funded by the *Massachusetts Gaming Commission*.

Casinos often prey on disadvantaged people and their dreams for better life, and can affect the economic wellbeing of marginal and disenfranchised communities. It's not just a question of people which have or could develop gambling addictions, it's a question of individuals who simply can't afford to gamble—whether it be their rent money during a difficult time in hopes of getting lucky, or a hard-earned paycheck that should be used for family necessities.

Please don't allow our city to sell its soul to casino promoters. They do not want what's best for our community and citizens, no matter how many hundreds of millions of dollars they may try to buy off our beautiful city's leaders with.

Sincerely,

Robin Martin

P.S. Council members, please do some of your own research. Don't allow Convergence Strategy Group, which obviously wants you to pursue this project, to be your only guide. "Moral compass" is the phrase.

From: David Nuckols
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Bally's Richmond Casino Resort
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:36:19 AM

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City Council Members,

As a resident in the Stratford Hills area, I am writing as a staunch opponent of the Bally's Richmond Casino Resort proposal. Out of the three proposals, this is the only one that will be placed in a residential area. There are absolutely no advantages to placing the casino in this location. However, there are many disadvantages:

1. It would be crammed into a relatively small space surrounded mainly by single family homes and a few low-density apartments. It would be like a "fish out of water" and would destroy the residential environment for the area falling within a 5 mile radius.
2. Access to the casino would be mainly via Forest Hill Avenue. The Forest Hill Avenue improvement project has been under construction for about 4 years and has created a great deal of inconvenience to the residents and commuters that travel this route. Without the casino, Forest Hill Avenue is already projected to carry about 50,000 vehicles per day. A casino in this area would add tens of thousands more vehicles per day which would result in gridlock. Forest Hill Avenue cannot be widened any more.
3. There are 4 public schools that are located within a five-mile radius of the proposed casino site. It is obvious that a casino is not compatible with K – 12 schools.
4. There is a shortage of parks, recreation areas and green space within the City. Clearing acres of trees and building a massive casino complex in a residential community would destroy quality of life for thousands of residents. According to the City, this would especially adversely impact persons of color.
5. Chippenham Parkway is a six-lane state primary highway and its travel lanes are at capacity much of the day. Because of wetland issues and limited right-of-way, it cannot be widened in the vicinity near the proposed casino. Adding casino traffic to a road that is already near capacity would be a disaster and create safety issues.

The other two proposed casino sites are located near the I-95 corridor and have easy access to that interstate. Both of those casino sites are already zoned in appropriate categories. The Live! Casino and Hotel Richmond would be adjacent to other entertainment venues at Scott's Addition and One Casino + Resort would be in an industrial area where Philip Morris once was located. If one of those two sites is selected, the new casino would not only be a good fit to the other establishments in the area, but would also be a benefit to the existing businesses by attracting new customers. Compare this to putting Bally's Richmond Casino Resort in a wooded area surrounded by residential subdivisions. That selection would eventually destroy those communities.

I am asking that the Bally's Richmond Casino Resort site be denied for selection.

David D. Nuckols


[REDACTED]

From: Rob Pettus
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: No Bally Casino on Forest Hill Ave
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:34:46 AM

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I stand against the Bally Casino

Robert Pettus

--

Either you deal with what is the reality, or you can be sure that the reality is going to deal with you.

- Alex Haley

From: Beth Kayer
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: NO CASINO IN Stratford Hills...NO TO BALLY'S
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:34:23 AM

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Dear Richmond City Council,

I am writing you today to express my formal opposition to the Bally's casino proposal. I could write paragraphs against the proposal but today I will just bullet point the main reasons why this would be a negative impact on our city for years to come.

- Proximity to a dozen schools
- Wetlands health, drainage and overall ecosystem in the area.
- Crime, addition, and they prey on the poor.
- Light pollution
- Presence of graves/cemetery near and potentially on property.
- There are at least three other casinos being built in Virginia, why do we think people will want to travel to Richmond when there will be choices closer to home??
- Home property values
- We own a small business and ultimately a casino in the city will drive us to move our business elsewhere.
- When on the Bally's call a couple weeks ago, it was very clear they did not have any insight on the area they had chosen for the casino and I do not believe they ultimately care about our citizens and the city. They are money driven only.

Thank you for taking the time to read my email and I hope you will vote no to proceed with Bally's or any casino in Richmond City.

Best,

Beth Kayer



From: Stephanie Garr Adams
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: I oppose Bally's casino
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:26:25 AM

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I'm opposed to the proposed casino in the Stafford hills area.

Stephanie Garr Adams

From: Paula Smith
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: NO CASINO ON FOREST HILL
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:19:57 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

I am writing to request that the following statements below be formally included in your meeting minutes for tonight's council meeting:

Please be aware that I stand in alliance with so many of my friends, neighbors, and associates in the Westover Hills/Forest Hills/ Stratford Hills neighborhoods in staunch opposition to the building of a casino in Stratford Hills. Beyond the obvious impediments, such as increased traffic on Forest Hill Avenue, ruining a neighborhood, destroying potential ancient gravesites, I am speaking up to you now from an environmental standpoint. I am sure you realize that acres upon acres of wetlands will be destroyed with this proposal and with it all the wildlife that exists there. The destruction of an entire ecosystem is so very unnecessary, especially since the OneCasino site plans include creating MORE greenspace and the surrounding neighborhood is in support of this venue! **Please** do not accept Bally's bribe and ruin our ecosystem all for the sake of making money!

Paula Smith

From: Clare Novak
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Opposition to Bally's Proposal for Stratford Hills Casino - Request for Comments to be Placed in Meeting Minutes for 4/12/21
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:19:50 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear City Clerk of City of Richmond,

My name is Clare Novak and I live at [REDACTED]. I am in opposition to the Bally's proposed Casino in Stratford Hills. This development does not conform with the City's newly adopted Master Plan and it will have devastating impacts on the community in regards to traffic, visual impacts, light pollution, negative environmental impacts on the James River ecosystem, and negative social impacts on the community who are enticed to spend their money on gambling.

City leaders need to demand better development for Richmond. Ask for it and it will come. This is garbage in = garbage out. Don't trash our community and our City with a casino (anywhere).

Please add this statement to the public record for the City County meeting tonight.

Thank you.

Clare Novak


From: Bill Blair
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Bally's
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:19:01 AM

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To Whom it May Concern,

Good morning. Please know that as a citizen of this fair city for a lifetime that I am opposed to the building of a casino in the Richmond area. How well did the betting parlor on West Broad St. do? We have enough ways with the Lotto for our fellow Richmonders to toss away their money. Please vote 'No' on Casino.

Thank you,
Wm Blair



From: Caroline Harding
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Casino Stratford Hills
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:08:17 AM

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Candice D. Reid, City Clerk,

Honestly, I am not in favor of a casino in the other neighborhoods as well, but I can really only speak on behalf of my own area.

I am definitely against the proposed casino at this location, for many reasons.

First, building anything on wetlands is not an intelligent idea. The amount of water runoff from the buildings and parking area could definitely have a negative impact on flooding. I heard that the only study on that issue was for a 10-year flood, which is really not a thorough or quality study. In 16 years, Powhite Parkway has flooded at least twice that I know of, at Powhite Creek and Forest Hill Ave. How much worse would the flooding be as a result of the project?

Due to the loss of habitat, the impact it would have on wildlife and migratory birds is extremely concerning. That loss would also force wildlife such as deer, coyotes, foxes, etc into the neighborhoods, which isn't really the best option for either the humans or animals. Trees and other flora, produce much needed oxygen, while detoxifying the air. They also absorb rain, cutting down on water that reaches the ground, and from there has to have somewhere to go. This greatly compounds the excess water/flooding issue. I saw Tom Patton, Meteorologist, give a lecture on non permeable surfaces and runoff. One example was that his neighbor built a small, perhaps 10'x10', shed near his property. He was amazed at the amount of runoff that started flowing into his backyard from such a small structure. This would be an irreversible environmental loss, turning the wetlands into a barren heat island.

That leads me to the next issue, traffic. Forest Hill Ave has had a definite increase in traffic over the last couple of years, and we do not need to add to it. Having to deal with the construction zone on a daily basis is bad enough, a project that I believe was originally supposed to have been completed by August 2020, now it's been extended until over a year after that. Once that's completed, then we'll have to deal with construction equipment constantly on Forest Hill Ave. That leads to not only more congestion, but more safety issues/hazards with those large trucks. The heavy weight will also help to deteriorate the road surface, and perhaps even the substructure. Then there's the casino traffic afterward. The road cannot handle all of that effectively.

How would traffic be impacted on Chippenham and Powhite Parkways as well, particularly during rush hour times? That concern is heightened by the close proximity to Chippenham Hospital, would it hinder people with medical emergencies from being able to get help in the timely manner that they require?

Also, other aspects of our infrastructure would be strained. Such an increase on water demands, and then the excess sewage as well. I have concerns about the strain on those systems, both on the water supply/treatment and the aging water/sewer lines.

Another issue is the aspect of crime and addiction. Gambling is very tempting to many people, especially poor and people of color. Would it end up taking money out of the pockets of those who cannot afford to lose any, all in the hopes that they will have an easy win? Then, if they lose, there's the mentality that they will win the next hand, and so on. We do not need the temptation of a money drain in the area, which would lead to crime when people have to find other means to compensate for their losses.

Last, but most certainly not least, the historical content of that area. It was once the center of a free black community, Granite, which was forced out slowly by the original development on Forest Hill Ave. Then Chippenham Parkway bisected the neighborhood, much like I-95 did with Navy Hill. We do not need the prospect of another Navy Hill-like project for the city to endure. What is left of the community, along Gravel Hill Road, and Gravel Hill Baptist Church, do not need that in their backyards. I had also heard there may be graves on the property, others have heard the same thing as well.

I would be much more in favor of turning it into a park, or natural refuge area, naming it "Granite Memorial Park (Refuge)", with historical, interpretive signs, commemorating the neighborhood that was once here, but was forced out through gentrification. There are still, what seems to be, a couple houses left from that era, perhaps one day they could be relocated to that park, hopefully with photos and histories of the people who once lived in them, with maps of where the homesites were. The site(s) would have to be carefully located. There is still what seems to be the remnant of an old road that bisects the property at an angle. From old aerial images, the road crossed where Chippenham and Powwhite are now, to an old homestead. Things like that should be remembered. Remembrance breathes life into those who are no longer with us.

Thank you for your consideration:
Caroline Harding Bonnell

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

From: Aaron Carroll
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: A statement of opposition to the proposed Bally's Casino in Richmond.
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:04:18 AM

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To Whom it May Concern,

Please let the record show that as a resident of [REDACTED] I am voicing my OPPOSITION to the proposed Bally's Casino ANYWHERE in Richmond but ESPECIALLY at the Forrest Hill location. Please do not sully our community with this poor excuse for job creation and "economic development". I respectfully implore you in the strongest terms possible to reject this proposal altogether.

Aaron Carroll
[REDACTED]

From: Emily Nelson
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Bally casino plans
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:59:37 AM

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Good morning

I am writing in opposition to the Ballys Casino plans for the Strafford hills area.
Ballys is not the answer for school funds and job opportunities.

What about the local businesses, our natural resources, the wet lands, the wild animals, the James River and our schools? What Ballys is giving as solutions is not the answer we deserve.

In the near future the money Ballys is promising will disappear and what's left but an eye sore on our city, in more ways than one.

Please say no, stand against the Ballys casino plans and any other casinos plans for our beautiful city.

Our government is excellent at what it prioritizes. Put your local residents, local businesses first not executives of national corporations that don't care about our city.

Thank you for your time,
Emily Nelson

From: Pam Moffat
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Possible Casino in Stratford Hills area
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:52:49 AM

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Dear Ms. Reid,

Last year we retired, and selected Richmond, and this particular neighborhood as a beautiful, quiet and bucolic spot to purchase our retirement home. We are horrified at the suggestion that a casino may open less than a mile away, potentially reducing the value of our home and most certainly adding to the noise, activity, traffic and crime in our neighborhood. We are at a loss to understand why this location should be considered for such a development and object most strongly.

I would appreciate if our objection and disappointment is added to others, and passed along to the City Council ahead of this evening's meeting.

With best regards,

Pamela J.Moffat



From: Jeanne Walls
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Bally's NOx9
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:46:46 AM

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My vote needs to be counted NO...NO...NO...NO...NO...NO..NO...NO...NO

That's 1 NO for each council member!

Stratford Hills is WRONG for a multitude of reasons.

Environment

African American Grave Sites

Ecology

And my HOT BUTTON...Stratford Hills is THE most beautiful area in the city. Rolling hills..wildlife...SERENITY...river...CALM...QUIET neighborhood that does NOT NEED the garbage that comes with a casino. NO ONE wants to look at flashing blinking blaring lights nor hear the noise...nor deal with traffic & people this GARBAGE brings!

This \$\$ is just a quick fix for the city's money problems.

It's a long time for the rest of us!

HELL NO to CASINO in 4th District

- Jeanne Walls



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Maria Tabb
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:37:52 AM

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Ladies and gentlemen:

I am writing to you to express my strongest opposition to the casino development proposed for Stratford Hills.

There is a long list of reasons of why this would have a negative impact to the long established neighborhoods in the area – out of control traffic on already congested roads, destruction of wetlands and wildlife, reduction of greenspace, deterioration of the neighborhood culture, placing a massive, unsightly ‘entertainment’ development looming over long established neighborhoods, to name a few. The commercial development that is presently along Forest Hill is there to support the needs of these residents. But the number one reason is that the taxpaying homeowners and residents who would be impacted don’t want it!

I have lived my entire life along the south banks of the James River – as a child and as an adult choosing to remain a City of Richmond homeowner and taxpayer. As a graduate of Leadership Metro Richmond, I strongly believe in appropriate and equitable progress for our great city, but a casino at Stratford Hills is not that! It is important that RVA retain those of us that choose to live here; not take actions that will clearly drive them to the counties.

Please take the only appropriate action and vote NO to this proposal.

Maria Tabb

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: Sara Brown
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Proposed Casino
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:31:15 AM

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To the City Council Members—

I am totally outraged that you would even consider putting a casino in a residential area, especially one where protected species, habitats, and communities would be irrevocably destroyed. And for what? A hotel and casino that will likely not even be used and would stand as a monumental eyesore totally incongruent in an otherwise mostly quiet suburban setting.

I am further outraged that this topic is being rammed through the city political processes in a year when Covid-19 is requiring no in-person meetings. This is a very serious topic that will directly and indirectly impact the lives of many Richmonders potentially for years to come. It needs to be brought to the forefront and debated, not shuffled through insidiously.

On a call last week, even Leonard Sledge noted that Richmond already has gambling and has drinking establishments. I agree, and I see no need to add more.

Sara Brown
[REDACTED]

--

Sara Spencer Brown
[REDACTED]

From: Brian Dena
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Opposed to Ballys Casino
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:28:42 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I would like to express my utmost opposition to the proposed Bally's Casino. I have lived in the Oxford neighborhood for the past four years and I know this area well. We enjoy visiting the small business, appropriate retailers, and easy access to down town. Some notable concerns I have are the following.

- 1) The goals of this project is 15 million visitors a year to this facility. There is no room to expand forest hill any further. Any in/out from chippenham will no doubt result in avoidance of patrons visiting the small businesses and there will be no benefit to the surrounding area. Chesterfield County will have to approve a Janke entrance, and they are already voicing opposition to this project.
- 2) How is this going to affect the many local families in the neighborhoods? What benefit does a casino have for them and what positive activities could a casino provide? Smoking? Gambling? Excess and indulgence?
- 3) Any reported benefits to the local area will not happen as this will be a self contained facility. Like all other casinos, the goal is to envelope the customers. Every effort of the facility will be to keep customers from leaving. No local surrounding businesses will benefit.
4. Let us not forget about the environmental impact. The worsening of the chippenham flooding problem (wetlands replaced with parking lots and manicured grass) and light pollution from intrusive and obnoxious lighting. The lovely tree-line along the highway blemished by the out of place casino facility.

All of these points go against the Richmond 300 plan.

I hope you consider these points and join me and Oxford neighborhood in opposition of the Ballys casino.

Sincerely,
Brian M. Dena

From: No Casino in RVA
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Cc: [Phillipsen, Sven J. - City Council](#); [Jordan, Katherine - City Council](#); [Stokes, Kiya A. - City Council](#); [Lambert, Ann-Frances - City Council](#); [Robins, Amy E. - City Council Office](#); [Lynch, Stephanie A. - City Council Office](#); [Bond, Aaron A. - City Council](#); [Larson, Kristen N. - City Council](#); [Floyd, Tavares M. - City Council](#); [Robertson, Ellen F. - City Council](#); [Patterson, Samuel - City Council Office](#); [Newbille, Cynthia I. - City Council](#); [Bishop, Richard K. - City Council Office](#); [Trammell, Reva M. - City Council](#); [Morris, Summer A. - City Council](#); [Jones, Michael J. - City Council](#); [Addison, Andreas D. - City Council](#); [Saunders, Lincoln - Mayor's Office](#); [Ebert, Sharon L. - DED](#); [Steidel, Robert C. - DCAO of Operations](#); [Carter, Melvin D. - Fire](#); [Mitchell, Valaryee N. - CWB](#); [Pechin, Maritza - PDR](#); [Sledge, Leonard L. - DED](#)
Subject: public comment for April 12th City Council meeting
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:26:48 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)
[image.png](#)
[image.png](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear City Council Members-

Please accept this public comment to officially register my opposition to the Bally's casino proposal on the Forest Hill Avenue corridor, in the 4th district. Are you aware of the potential negative impacts of the Bally's proposal to the local neighborhoods and citizens? The negative impact ranges from impacting black families and their families' gravesites (see the RTD article from April 11th by Chris Suarez, below), to environmental issues (see previous development plans that were thrown out by DEQ), to the fact that that there will be significant noise and light pollution (see mock-up of the appearance of the proposed Bally's tower hovering over local neighborhoods below), to the fact that the casino would be within a mile or less of local schools, to the simple fact that more than 95% of surveyed residents are unsupportive of having casino placed here. It is time to throw out this location and company's proposal. There is nothing positive about the proposal and nothing can be done to mitigate citizens' concerns. Thank you,
Chris Woods, resident of 4th district

Bally's "Ideal Location" is in the middle of a neighborhood on land zoned for single family residence. The tower will be illuminated at night.

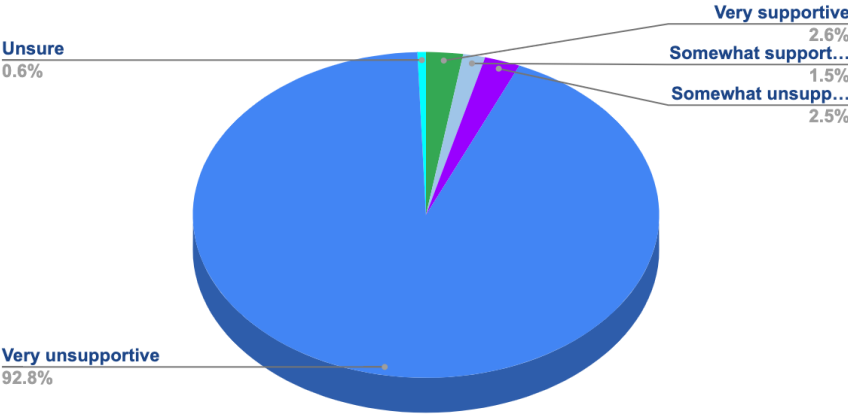


Presence of graves near proposed casino site stirs objections from descendants and neighbors

Chris Suarez 14 hrs ago 2



Q2. Of what you know about the casino proposal for Stratford Hills, how supportive/unsupportive are you?



References:
Chris Suarez (April 11, 2021). Presence of graves near proposed casino site stirs objections from descendents and neighbors.

From: Mark Mumford
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: For Public Comment: NO on Bally Casino in Stratford Hills, etc.
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:20:56 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Candice D. Reid, City Clerk and Council Members,

I am writing in lieu of being present for a public comment. I have lived in the 4th District since August of 2011. I am in strong opposition to the proposed Bally's Casino in the Stratford Hills location.

1.) That area is a wetlands and supports the nearby James River and helps manage flooding and storm runoff. We have bad storm drainage issues already in surrounding neighborhoods, and just last year Powhite had to be closed for hours due to flooding. The wetlands is home to many species of wildlife including bald eagles. That green space helps protect surrounding neighborhoods from the pollution of the nearby highways. It seems to go against stated goals of the City plans to be responsible caretakers of the environment into the future.

2.) The traffic and infrastructure related to this location will be extremely problematic. The newly changed entry road from Boulder via Chippenham/Powhite onto Jahnke is terrible as it could cause backups at this exit that is importantly used for Chippenham Hospital.

Jahnke Road itself is a mess coming from Forest Hill Ave, with a crumbling road surface and widening project that seems to be stalled.

Bally admitted that during construction the building machines and materials will also have to access the project by Forest Hill Ave, in an area already overloaded with traffic and a long-going road project.

3.) This project will include a 20 Story Hotel, with "river views". That means you will be able to see the Hotel from the river as well. The light pollution will be a nuisance and harmful to surrounding neighborhoods and wildlife.

4.) this area is a group of family neighborhoods, not a tourist destination

I am not just doing a NIMBY thing here, I also do not support the Bowtie Location either, as that area has grown organically into a thriving small business and community neighborhood. Once the pandemic is over, families will be flocking back to the Movieland Cinemas, and it has been a wonderful asset to folks living in the City. Having a Casino there will not be a family friendly destination. The traffic on 95 near there is often at a standstill as well, and the city streets would become too congested.

I also want to mention that this whole process has felt rushed and somewhat dishonest. I have been on many of the meetings from the City and proposed Casinos. The City's Konveio website for commenting was poorly designed and difficult to use. Last week we were told that "it was

hard to tell if comments were from the city residents or not..." We were not asked to put our names and addresses on these comments. But this statement threw into doubt the sincere intentions of the City's Economic Development group to really listen to the citizens. In the MS Teams meetings the city residents were cut off from asking follow up questions, and often interrupted or rebuffed when trying to contextualize their questions. These meeting had as many as 350 people on them but were ended when many folks still had questions. There is no reason that they could not have lasted another hour where necessary. It seems like the pandemic is a good time to try rush this through, when the public cannot appear in meetings physically.

Thank you for your attention,

Mark Mumford

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: Elisabeth
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Casino
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:18:17 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I am confident that you are logically aware of the many reasons that the casino being considered for the Forest Hill area is wrong and that you have also seen and been advised with extensive information submitted by the community and many experts so I will not bore you with writing out the extensive list of reasons why the casino project is a DISASTER for the proposed area.

PLEASE do the correct thing for the citizens, land, wildlife and the future!

Thank you,

Elisabeth Brennan

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

From: Dexter Brown
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: A casino near Stratford Hills
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:17:12 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

I have lived in the Oxford/Stratford Hills neighborhood since 1985, most recently for 17 years at the address in the signature of this email. I am writing to voice my opposition to the idea of the proposed Bally's casino in our community. I also oppose a casino in ANY part of Richmond. In the interest of brevity, I have laundry-listed the reasons for my opposition below in no particular order:

- 1) Destruction of 61 acres of wetlands and last-surviving wildlife habitat in the city.
- 2) Light pollution
- 3) Further disturbance/destruction of gravesites and archaeological remnants of the historic Gravel Hill African American community.
- 4) Negative economic impact on neighborhood businesses and restaurants which have already suffered because of the pandemic. There will be 13 food venues in the casino, and if anyone believes gamblers will leave to visit Galley, Rockfalls Tavern, Don't Look Back, Boka Tako, etc., they are delusional.
- 5) For the reason stated in point 4, Bally's promise of "vouchers" for local restaurants and businesses is a meaningless gesture.
- 6) Greatly increased traffic on Forest Hill Avenue that will create hazards for Huguenot High School students and other pedestrians.
- 7) Inebriated gamblers rolling out of the casino 24 hours a day driving on Forest Hill, Chippenham and Powwhite.
- 8) Increased levels of bankruptcy, foreclosure and gambling addiction that are well-documented whenever a casino comes to a community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dexter Brown

J. Dexter Brown III



From: amy p
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Casino in Richmond
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:13:59 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear City Counsel,

We oppose the Casino in Stratford Hills as well as any location in Richmond that is near other homes or schools.

Thank you,

Amy and Marv Sowers



Sent from my iPhone

From: scott williams
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: No Casino
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:08:31 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

As a City of Richmond resident I am opposed to any casino being located here. I am particularly opposed to the proposal for one in my Stratford Hills neighborhood. I believe casinos promise much and deliver little benefit to our city.

Scott Williams

Sent from my iPad

From: Jane
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Casino
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:02:28 AM

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I am writing to say that I am wholeheartedly opposed to the casino. I believe it will destroy the current businesses on Forest Hill. People traditionally do not leave the casino once there, so will not bring commerce to that corridor. It will only deter those locals that shop on Forest Hill. Please consider this.

Best,
Jane Cash

Sent from my iPhone

From: Beth Jones
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Against Casino
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:01:04 AM

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Please know that a casino has no place in a subdivision with families, schools, churches and small shopping areas. I am surprised that you would allow such a large structure and its waste products to be located on wetlands and tributaries for the James River. I strongly oppose your selection of the Stratford Hills area.

Beth Jones

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Mary Ann Kinser
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Cc: [Phillipsen, Sven J. - City Council](#); [Jordan, Katherine - City Council](#); [Stokes, Kiya A. - City Council](#); [Lambert, Ann-Frances - City Council](#); [Robins, Amy E. - City Council Office](#); [Lynch, Stephanie A. - City Council Office](#); [Bond, Aaron A. - City Council](#); [Larson, Kristen N. - City Council](#); [Floyd, Tavares M. - City Council](#); [Robertson, Ellen F. - City Council](#); [Patterson, Samuel - City Council Office](#); [Newbille, Cynthia I. - City Council](#); [Bishop, Richard K. - City Council Office](#); [Trammell, Reva M. - City Council](#); [Morris, Summer A. - City Council](#); [Jones, Michael J. - City Council](#); [Addison, Andreas D. - City Council](#); [Saunders, Lincoln - Mayor's Office](#); [Ebert, Sharon L. - DED](#); [Steidel, Robert C. - DCAO of Operations](#); [Carter, Melvin D. - Fire](#); [Mitchell, Valaryee N. - CWB](#); [Pechin, Maritza - PDR](#); [Sledge, Leonard L. - DED](#)
Subject: public comment for April 12th meeting
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 7:16:42 AM

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Dear City Council Members-

I would like the record to show officially that I oppose the Bally's casino proposal. I am an 80 year old resident of the 4th district. While I oppose a casino anywhere in the city, I am particularly appalled at the Bally's site as well as their terrible plans. The citizens living in this community do not want a huge casino here-- not near our schools, near our neighborhoods, near our local businesses. Bally's proposes a huge 20-story tower which would hang over our quiet residential community, making this lovely nature-filled area feel cheap and ugly. The city should immediately throw out the Bally's proposal. There is nothing that can be done to mitigate the bad idea of their proposal.

Thank you,

Mary Ann

4th district home-owner

From: Linda Walter
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: casino location
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 4:35:37 AM

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Dear Ms. Reid and City Council,

My husband and I are working residents of Richmond City and are hoping that our comments reach today's meeting.

We object to the location off the Powhite and Forest Hill Ave. especially but perhaps the Mayor should realize that citizens don't like any of the locations because we don't want a casino anywhere- at all. Casinos just prey on that portion of our society who already have problems paying rent and buying food for their families. It is not worth the cost to our local people just to make a few more taxes. Educate our children and keep them from crime and then they can get GOOD jobs- not ones in casinos- the underbelly of crime.

We don't try to make our morals the morals for all and we have done an online study of the cities who have gotten casinos and the results have not been good. Our city does not have that kind of vibe and we don't need it. We should concentrate on the positives we have and not bring in negatives. Besides, we have concerns about who in our city government has been promised money, help in elections, etc. to get this since it came from nowhere. What has McAuliffe to do with this for example? What has been promised Stoney???? Just leaves a bad taste in everyone's mouth when we already mistrust big government. We rely on our local elected city council members to keep it honest. You are MOST IMPORTANT! Political party, skin color, amount of money one makes, etc are not important. Please study casinos in other states and cities and you will agree with my husband and me.

Especially in these times, we need to spend money where we already see the need- schools, crime among our young, our local small restaurants and other businesses slammed by covid, etc. If you study other cities who have gotten casinos, these big companies just pull out if the casino doesn't make huge money right away and leave a hulk of an empty building and having contributed nothing to the life of the city- just sucked it out!!!! Look at a big place like Atlantic City even. How can a small city like Richmond support this and those coming into town to use it or work in it may not be the people who are best for the fabric of our city. Las Vegas is a haven of human trafficking , for example. Study online the relationship of casinos to this problem and it will scare you to death. We should protect our young girls, not expose them to this. We would be ashamed of our city.

We are unable to be at the meeting, so, Ms. Reid, please see that our letter is read to someone who has the power of the success and reputation of our city in their hands. We trust our City Council members to do what is the correct and best things for those of us who pay taxes.

Many thanks for your time,

Linda Walter

From: Pat Levy-Lavelle
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Casino Public Hearing Comment for 4/12/21 City Council Meeting
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 12:32:49 AM

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I am opposed to a casino being located in Richmond. We should not gamble on the City's future with this kind of predatory development.

Thanks,
Pat Levy-Lavelle
City of Richmond resident, 1st District

From: Priscilla L. Cash
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: NO to Stratford Hill Casino
Date: Sunday, April 11, 2021 10:36:16 PM

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Dear Clerk,

Please share the following fact-opinion piece with council members as exceptional fact-based evidence for NO casinos in Richmond.

Thank you.

by Stephanie Rizzi, the duly elected School Board member of Richmond's 5th District. This article is representative of Ms. Rizzi's position and does not represent a formal position of the Richmond School Board.

A November 2021 ballot referendum to bring casinos to Richmond promises jobs and funding for public education. These are empty promises. As a newly elected school board member, I oppose the measure. Casinos prey on the poor, will not bring more funding for our schools and will only serve politicians and corporations.

Corporate CEOs and interests representing casinos claim falsely that gambling will provide our public schools with the resources they need to thrive. This, as the wealthy send their children to private schools, leaving middle class schools underfunded, and schools for students of color severely underfunded. It is an illusion to suggest casinos will bring forth the redistribution of wealth needed to bring educational parity and equity for our children.

Like a scheme hatched by Donald Trump—whose Atlantic City casinos went bankrupt and were demolished—casinos divert public money for private profit.

Promises that casinos would add billions of dollars for Maryland schools were never realized because the funding formulas were not changed, and no new money ever came. However, casinos benefited from tax breaks, and Baltimore schools suffered from budget cuts.

Similarly, the Virginia lottery was sold as a funding vehicle for public education, which sounded good until we learned state legislators simply subtracted the amount of state revenue going to public education. There was no net gain to public education. It was a political tactic, a bait and switch and a shell game that serves politicians and CEOs, but not poor people and people of color. I, as an educator, did not fully understand this myself until one of my college freshman's research unveiled what was news to us all.

Like the lottery, casinos prey on poor, Black and Latinx people and their dreams for better life, and deeply affect the economic wellbeing of marginal and disenfranchised communities. All one has to do is drive by Rosies at midnight and see a line of Black and brown people desperate to make their dreams come true.

Gambling is unfair and unequal because it takes money from the poor. The industry purposely targets Black, brown and poor white communities. In past years, Black people have spent close to \$1,000 per capita on lottery tickets, as opposed to \$200 for White people. Casinos make their money by exploiting low-income people through the slot machine, by enticing them “to make a huge number of small bets per visit, to visit the casino several times per month, or even per week, and to sustain this pattern over a period of years.”

Meanwhile, in the middle of a pandemic, who has disposable income? The level of depression and desperation means it is more likely that people who do not have the means will spend money they do not have to gamble.

Further, casinos are not an economic panacea, and will not deliver the jobs that people believe will come. Rather, these will be jobs with low wages. As a source of economic development, casinos have been an abject failure in lifting up low-income and economically depressed communities. One need look no further than Atlantic City, where 40 percent of its residents live in poverty. COVID-19 and hard economic times only exacerbated these harsh conditions. Furthermore, the casino industry has had record layoffs all year. It is not, nor has it ever been, a dependable job [REDACTED]

As casinos and lotteries become the go-to sources to overcome state budget shortfalls while falsely promising jobs and economic prosperity, wealth is being transferred upward from poor people and Black folks to the rich.

Using casinos in this way is an absolute refusal to put corporate taxation on the table. For much of U.S. history, Las Vegas followed by Atlantic City were the only legal gambling jurisdictions. However, casinos have reemerged after conservative Republicans and neoliberal corporate Democrats won the battles against just taxation policies.

There are Democrats who want to be seen as delivering public services to their upper-middle class and professional-class constituents, but don’t want to anger their donors and call for a higher corporate tax rate. Casinos destroy communities and they act as a political bulwark against the type of progressive taxation that could actually provide public services for all.

In a political climate where politicians don’t want to raise taxes, revenue still is needed to fund the services people need. Casinos and other forms of gambling are appealing because they are viewed as “free money,” and in any case they’re not taxes. Casinos destroy communities, and act as a political bulwark against the type of progressive taxation that could actually provide public services for all.

That some people are promoting casinos in the middle of dual public health and economic crises reveals the level of cowardice in people not calling for corporations to pay their fair share of taxes.

As a new school board member who has seen friends and loved ones suffer from the devastation of gambling addiction, I want to protect those young people and their families who would live near the casino. Many people have no idea how devastating gambling addiction really is. I stand to tell you that problem gambling is every bit as damaging to families as the worst drug addiction. The proposed casino site at Walmsley Blvd. and I-95 is near the heart of poor Black and brown communities and not very far from a mission that treats people for

addiction.

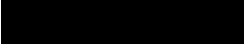
According to the National Center for Responsible Gaming, between 1.1 and 1.6 percent of American adults—3 to 4 million people—have a gambling disorder, that is more than the number of women living in the U.S. with a history of breast cancer. Moreover, another 2 to 3 percent—5 to 8 million—have a gambling addiction, though that number could be even higher. Gambling addiction like many addictions is a condition that is often vastly under reported. In addition, those who are prone to addiction have fewer resources. Access to quality treatment for addiction is expensive, and many insurance companies do not cover it.

The question is not whether gambling should be illegal for individuals. Lord knows, we don't need to criminalize anything else. The question is: should we allow a corporation with the singular desire to make profit harm our community while pretending they're helping? The question is: should we accept such a short sighted and exploitative plan instead of demanding long-term sustainable economic development? Gambling is a public health concern that destroys lives, and it is important to expose and challenge the false argument that casinos will solve all our problems—because they will not.

Casinos are here to serve people with political power at the expense of those who have no clout. Casinos would rob Richmond communities in most need of support. There are better ways to help our schools without harming the very people we claim to help.

As evidenced in other cities, casinos usually buy influence in the community to manufacture support. They'll sponsor community events, put pastors on payroll, and seek bipartisan support from elected officials. They all also promote this as economic development. Making it seem like being against the casino is being against the city and progress itself. They'll tell us we need this; that if we don't support this, we are against public schools; that if we oppose this, we don't support progress. They will promise thousands of high paying jobs for minority communities and fail to deliver. They will talk about how casino gambling is moving online. As evidenced time and time again, the contract that the casino will make with the City of Richmond will have clauses in it to allow them to get out of their promises for nearly any reason. Don't believe the hype.

Composed on my iPhone

Priscilla Cash Wiggin, BSN, RN
Senior Development Officer
VCU School of Medicine
Medical College of Virginia Campus


From: P. Jain
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Wish to register strong opposition to the proposed Casino!
Date: Sunday, April 11, 2021 10:21:31 PM
Importance: High

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Please note that we live in the vicinity of the Chippenham hospital. There is already a lot of crime, traffic in this area and this will be the final nail in the coffin for this area. This abomination must not be allowed to happen.

Thank You!

P. Jain

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

From: Jessica Pilson
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Opposed to Casino
Date: Sunday, April 11, 2021 10:09:22 PM

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To the City Council,

We are highly opposed to the casino being built anywhere near this area. We live in Crestwood Farms and will also be impacted by the casino traffic. In addition, it will detract from that shopping center. I will not shop there is there is casino clientele coming in and out of that area. Finally, all the areas around the proposed site are residential and do not want a casino next door. It is important to consider what is best for our community, not what makes the most money.

Thank you,

Jessica Pilson

Sent from my iPhone

From: Priscilla L. Cash
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Attention: Candace Reid, Richmond City Council Meeting, Public Comment- Casino proposals
Date: Sunday, April 11, 2021 10:02:49 PM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Ms. Reid,

Please enter my comments into the public record and share them with City Council members.

As a health care provider and community member, I am writing to vehemently oppose the construction of a casino in the Stratford Hills area. A casino in this area would be detrimental to the overall health and safety of this highly residential area, damaging to wetlands and the James River Park System, and constitute violence against the Black community, which has historical burial grounds and a rich archaeological history of one of the first freed slave communities in the area. The legacy of white developers stealing land and canceling the stories of the Black community needs to stop - permitting Bally's to build on a site that has known Black graves would perpetuate the violence against the Black community.

Additionally, the research studies I have reviewed cite that any short term economic gains that a casino may bring are quickly and thoroughly undermined by increased demand for social and health services.

Please do not bring a casino to ANY residential area. NO casinos are healthy for a community.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Cash Wiggan, BSN, RN
Senior Development Officer
VCU School of Medicine
Medical College of Virginia Campus
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: Patricia Kinser
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: For public comment at city council meeting April 12th
Date: Sunday, April 11, 2021 9:36:36 PM

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I request that the following be heard by city council members at the April 12th meeting:

Dear City Council members,

I write to express my strong opposition to the Bally's proposal for a casino at the Forest Hill Avenue site (Chippenham Pkwy/Powwhite Pkwy). The reasons for my opposition are:

- (1) At the Bally's meeting today (April 11th), their rep said the city told them to select that particular site. This demonstrates blatant disrespect by city leaders for the citizen input process.
- (2) The Bally's proposal and their representatives have demonstrated complete disregard for the fact that the site is within a residential community. Their presentation on April 1st demonstrated a lack of knowledge about the local area. Partnering with Bally's would suggest that the City of Richmond does not care about its citizens.
- (3) The Bally's proposed site is terrible: It is located within 50 feet of neighboring communities and schools, hence it will cause degradation to local property values and to the wellness of our community. We have contacted the RPS School Board and asked them to resolve against having casino gambling be tied to schools.
- (4) The Bally's group is full of false promises-- they say that they will build a road that doesn't require use of Forest Hill Avenue, yet they also admitted they have not approached Chesterfield County about said road, nor have the citizens of Chesterfield county had an opportunity to comment on this proposal.
- (5) The neighbors of the proposed site have clear evidence of gravesites; the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act and DEQ have previously identified environmental issues for developing the site.
- (6) Other companies/sites (e.g., the One proposal) are much more appropriate for a development such as this, because the One group is committed to enhancing the local community, the One casino would be located in an area directly off a major highway that is already industrialized, and the One casino is led by Richmond-based owners who actually know the community.

My family and I live in the Stratford Hills area because it is quiet, it is full of nature, and it has a walkable community-vibe. A large-scale casino is inconsistent with this. Please hear me and my neighbors who are clearly saying NO to the Bally's proposal.

Thank you,
Patricia Kinser
(homeowner, 4th district)

From: Mary
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Attention: City Clerk, Candice Reid (Casino proposal)
Date: Sunday, April 11, 2021 9:08:20 PM

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As a resident and property owner very near the proposed Bally Casino sight, I am writing to express my concern. I purchased my home less than one year ago and knew nothing of this plan. I was attracted to this area because of Powhite Park and the woodlands nearby. My neighborhood is quiet and peaceful, and I want it to stay that way. Casinos bring crime, traffic and drivers who have been drinking for hours. We don't want this type of business close to where we live. If the city wants this type of business, the downtown area is most appropriate, not a quiet residential neighborhood. Mary Arnold

From: BONNIE LEHEM
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Casino Location...a vote in strong opposition
Date: Sunday, April 11, 2021 6:49:05 PM

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To My Elected Representatives,

The points have already been made...from horrendous traffic issues to crime in a residential location. We vote in our council members to have the community's best interest at heart. If you want to bring business to our area, please court businesses with integrity, not businesses supporting crime, addiction, and low paying jobs right in the heart of our family neighborhoods. Would you want this in YOUR backyard?

Please remember the people you represent, not just the dollars.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Lehem

23225

From: Sallie Freeman
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Proposed casino
Date: Sunday, April 11, 2021 5:41:11 PM

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Richmond City Council Members,

I live near the proposed location of the Bally casino complex. My neighbors and I are citizens of Richmond, and we do not want a casino in our neighborhood. You are driving us out to the suburbs. Is that what you want to do?

Richmond seemed to make such progress last year in taking down the Civil War monuments. Without those ghosts of the past, Richmond had a chance to become a proud and attractive city. Why ruin it by bringing in a casino, encouraging gambling, decreasing property values, and running your citizens out of town?

Shelley Forrest

From: Cara Ann Jennings
To: [City Clerk's Office](#); [EconDev](#); [Larson, Kristen N. - City Council](#); [Robertson, Ellen F. - City Council](#); [Addison, Andreas D. - City Council](#); [Saunders, Lincoln - Mayor's Office](#); [Ebert, Sharon L. - DED](#); [Steidel, Robert C. - DCAO of Operations](#); [Carter, Melvin D. - Fire](#); [Mitchell, Valaryee N. - CWB](#); [Pechin, Maritza - PDR](#); [Sledge, Leonard L. - DED](#); [Mayor Levar Stoney](#); [Philipsen, Sven J. - City Council](#); [Jordan, Katherine - City Council](#); [Stokes, Kiya A. - City Council](#); [Lambert, Ann-Frances - City Council](#); [Robins, Amy E. - City Council Office](#); [Lynch, Stephanie A. - City Council Office](#); [Bond, Aaron A. - City Council](#); [Floyd, Tavares M. - City Council](#); [Patterson, Samuel - City Council Office](#); [Newbille, Cynthia I. - City Council](#); [Bishop, Richard K. - City Council Office](#); [Trammell, Reva M. - City Council](#); [Morris, Summer A. - City Council](#); [Jones, Michael J. - City Council](#)
Subject: A constituent's concern
Date: Sunday, April 11, 2021 4:57:22 PM

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Dear Richmond City Council,

I am a homeowner in Westover Hills and have 2 school aged children. I have lived in Richmond for almost 12 years now and hope to stay for many more.

I am certain that you are very aware of the concern that Richmond City residents have against the casino that Bally's has proposed.

I am writing to you to express my support for Kenya Gibson's draft resolution that #schoolsbuildschools and to vote AGAINST a casino. This project may benefit Richmond City- but in the short term only.

Ms. Gibson highlights many important points, including that one will feel pressured to vote in favor of the casino as the *only* way to support Richmond's children and that the money will be the *only* way to build new schools. This is not true. Instead, the city needs to limit overspending by external contractors and be more judicious in the projects that they undertake, eg the football training camp.

I have significant concerns of a casino built anywhere in Richmond, but especially the Bally's proposal that puts the high-rise casino within 1-3 miles of 5 schools in both Richmond City and Chesterfield County. It is also within multiple neighborhoods that have many families with young children and these citizens do not want their children to be exposed to the negative impacts of a huge casino nearby.

One can look at other areas, for example Baltimore, that have built casinos for the revenue in hopes that it would improve the school system and other publicly funded programs. While there is a large amount of money put forth at first by the casinos, these areas over the years have seen an increase in addiction, petty crime, and an increase in spending for social support services for addictions.

Please join me in standing up for your constituents, our families, and for Richmond overall.

Thank you,

Cara Jennings




From: Martha Quinn
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Opposition to Casino development and Rezoning between Belvidere and Arthur Ashe
Date: Monday, March 29, 2021 9:57:50 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear City Council members,

As a city resident, tax paying resident, and dweller on Plum Street in the Fan, I strongly oppose the rezoning between Belvidere Street and Arthur Ashe Boulevard. The beauty of our downtown residents would be dwarfed by buildings that are allowed over 20 stories. Our historic neighborhoods should be protected from over development in this area. We need a chance to recover from this pandemic and support our existing, local buildings/residential offerings and businesses. In 2017 the City adopted the Pulse Corridor Plan to embrace height limitations - honor that earlier decision. Our citizen voices must be respected, please vote against this effort.

In addition I strongly, strongly oppose the proposed casino efforts to build in the former BowTie theatre space. Again, our citizen voices must be heard. I used to live in Baltimore (a resident for 17 years) and I saw the demise of the inner city neighborhoods as a result of the downtown casino that was built. I do not want people easily coming off 95 and using our city for their entertainment and then departing without investing in our local businesses and sites. We want tourists who value Richmond's historic offerings, its beauty and it's local charm. I've also witnessed the increase in crime that occurs with gambling is available so close to residential neighborhoods. Please do not allow for my home to be invaded and my property value to diminish.

I moved here three years ago from Baltimore to live in a safer and less rigorous environment. Do not force me to relocate again and take my more than 6 figure income with me, away from the local businesses I currently invest in today.

Sincerely,
Martha Quinn

From: Adam Stewart
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Pay plan fix
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:42:46 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

My name is Adam Stewart, I am a member of the Local 995 for the City of Richmond Fire Dept. I am assigned at station 1 C and have been a firefighter for 13 years. I strongly support the pay plan because my family and livelihood depend on it. Thank you

Sent from my iPhone

From: Ellanor Milkowski Dahlgren
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Public Comment for City Council Meeting
Date: Sunday, April 11, 2021 6:33:40 PM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hello, I'm Ellanor Milkowski Dahlgren, living in the 6th District. I am a young Richmonder who is truly concerned about the climate crisis. I was excited to hear about the city's commitment to the RVA Green plan! But I don't see the swift action being taken that is needed to correct course and prepare the city for the effects projected in The IPCC, or the 4th National Climate Assessment.

I have 2 asks:

I would like the Mayor and City Council to Declare a State of Climate Emergency immediately. I would like this declaration to be used as any other declaration of emergency, to educate people and mobilize our city to act swiftly in accelerating our climate action plan.

My second request is that the climate action plan be reflected in the city's budget. Money has the power to create change, as we all know. So have that be reflected in the budget. Other nearby cities have begun to dedicate themselves to this mobilization. The Arlington County Board in Virginia unanimously voted to commit to achieving "100% clean, renewable electricity community-wide by 2035; and 100% clean, renewable electricity for government operations by 2025. If creating "climate-ready" communities is an actual goal, if we are going to decarbonize as a city, these goals need to be reflected in this budget, and every budget for the foreseeable future. For example, the conversion of street lights to LED with hooded fixtures to reduce light pollution, Energy Saving Performance Contracts, Electrification of the City's Fleet, The phase-out of Richmond Gas Works, etc.