



# City of Richmond

## Council Budget Amendment Work Session 2 Minutes

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

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Monday, April 26, 2021

1:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall  
Virtual Meeting

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### **Councilmembers Present**

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

### **Staff Present**

Haskell Brown, Interim City Attorney  
Joyce Davis, Interim Council Chief of Staff  
Bill Echelberger, Council Budget Analyst  
Samson Anderson, Council Budget Analyst  
Candice Reid, City Clerk  
Dominique J. Thaxton, Assistant City Clerk  
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

Council President Cynthia Newbille called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. and presided.

### **ELECTRONIC MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT**

Assistant City Clerk Dominique J. Thaxton, 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 work session would be held through electronic communication means, and stated that notice of the session was provided to the public through a public information advisory issued on February 11, 2021, and through Legistar on the city website in accordance with usual practice. She also stated there would be no opportunities for public comment and no public hearings during the session.

*Councilor Andreas Addison joined the meeting at 1:03 p.m.*

### **Discussion of Proposed Amendments**

Bill Echelberger, Council Budget Analyst, continued the analysis of Council's proposed amendments to the FY2021-2022 budget proposal. Mr. Echelberger also provided information on how the most recent revenue certification changes and reductions in projected revenue will impact Council's proposed budget amendments.

*A copy of the material provided has been filed.*

*Councilor Kristen Larson joined the meeting at 1:08 p.m.*

*Councilor Stephanie Lynch joined the meeting at 1:11 p.m.*

Mr. Echelberger discussed the expedited resolution to establish a special reserve for all funds received by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP).

*Councilwoman Reva Trammell expressed concern for stormwater hazards faced by residents and the need for investments in Council District priorities with federal stimulus funding.*

*President Cynthia Newbille shared that the intent of the expedited resolution to establish a special reserve for the ARP funds, is to ensure that there is collaboration between the administration and Council for fund allocation. President Newbille stated that a discussion item will take place at the next Organizational Development Standing Committee meeting, to outline best practices for a collaborative approach for the ARP fund allocation.*

Mr. Echelberger provided further detail on the forthcoming legislation relative to the impending ARP funds.

*Councilor Kristen Larson requested that the appropriate staff provide Councilmembers with a copy of the draft expedited resolution for a special reserve fund for the ARP assets.*

*Councilor Katherine Jordan inquired if there has been any progress made towards putting safeguards in place to govern the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.*

*President Newbille stated that the appropriate staff will follow-up with Councilor Jordan to provide information on the next steps for oversight of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.*

*Councilor Andreas Addison suggested that the discussion of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund be placed on the agenda for the next Land Use, Housing and Transportation Standing Committee meeting.*

*Vice President Ellen Robertson asked for clarification on the revenue decreases as presented.*

Mr. Echelberger provided clarification on the revenue decreases reflected in the Council proposed budget amendments.

Lincoln Saunders, Acting Chief Administrative Officer, asked for information on the Council amendment that proposes a \$500,000 increase to the public safety pay plan and study. Mr. Saunders inquired if there has been discussion with the Department of Procurement Services as to if the procurement of the consultants to conduct the study can be completed in time for a January 1, 2022 pay plan implementation.

Mr. Echelberger provided clarification on the proposed Council budget amendment to the public safety pay plan and study. Mr. Echelberger also shared that there has not yet been discussion with the Department of Procurement Services as to the feasibility of procuring a consultant to conduct the public safety pay plan study for implementation on January 1, 2022.

Betty Burrell, Department of Procurement Services Director, provided information on the probable timeline of a request for proposals (RFP) for procuring a consultant to conduct the study on the public safety pay plan. Ms. Burrell shared the unlikelihood of completing the procurement process and pay plan study in time for a January 1, 2022 play plan implementation.

*President Cynthia Newbille expressed concern for the length of time it would take to procure the services of a consultant to review the public safety pay plan.*

Mr. Saunders provided information on the various variables involved in the procuring of the study and cautioned against setting a January 1, 2022 implementation goal.

*Councilor Kristen Larson expressed concern for the length of time it would take to procure services for a consultant to conduct a study of the public safety pay plan, and suggested that Council leverage other contracts available to speed up the timeline. Councilor Larson expressed the desire to hold off on implementing a two-step pay increase for public safety until the recommendations from the pay plan are made available.*

*Vice President Ellen Robertson asked for further clarification on the proposed public safety pay plan.*

Bill Echelberger, Council Budget Analyst, provided clarification on the proposed public safety pay plan and study. Mr. Echelberger shared that while the RFP for the study consultant cannot be issued until after the start of the Fiscal Year 2021-2022, it can be drafted and provided to the Department of Procurement Services ahead of the fiscal year.

*Councilwoman Reva Trammell expressed support for the proposed public safety pay plan and study.*

*Vice President Robertson inquired if in addition to a lengthy procurement process, if there are any other barriers to the implementation of the proposed public safety pay plan and study amendments.*

Lincoln Saunders, Acting Chief Administrative Officer, shared the various factors that may impede the implementation of Council's proposed public safety pay plan study.

*President Newbille provided information on how the implementation of the proposed public safety pay plan will be phased in over the next two fiscal years.*

*Councilor Andreas Addison shared the need for a commitment to adequately compensating general employees and public safety officials in future budgets. Councilor Addison also expressed support for the currently proposed two-step pay increase for public safety.*

Lincoln Saunders, Acting Chief Administrative Officer, noted that the full classification and compensation pay adjustments have already been implemented for public safety officers. Mr. Saunders provided information on how the estimated cost of implementing the proposed public safety pay plan and study would impact general fund revenue in future budgets.

*It was the consensus of Council to proceed with the proposed two-step public safety pay plan increase and to provide funding in the amount of \$100,000 for the proposed public safety pay plan study.*

*Councilor Andreas Addison left the meeting at 2:28 p.m.*

*Vice President Robertson asked for clarification regarding the proposed Council amendment to supplement the salaries of the Office of the Public Defender.*

Mr. Echelberger provided further information on the proposed Council amendment that would supplement the salaries of the Office of the Public Defender.

*Councilor Stephanie Lynch asked if proceeding with the public safety two-step pay plan increase as proposed by the administration, will free enough revenue to fund Council's remaining amendments.*

Mr. Echelberger provided information on various scenarios that would allow funding for Council's remaining budget amendments.

*Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert requested clarification on why the Council budget amendment to reduce the city's optional charitable contributions by ten percent was withdrawn by the patron.*

*President Cynthia Newbille clarified that the amendment to reduce charitable donations by ten percent was withdrawn because the list of entities that stood to have funding reduced included organizations that provide essential city services. President Newbille stated that the organizations that provide essential city services should be reclassified from the optional charitable contributions section.*

*Councilor Michael Jones expressed the need for discussion of Council's funding priorities and a reimagining of the Council budget review process for future fiscal years.*

*President Newbille requested that the appropriate staff coordinate with Councilmembers to determine availability for additional budget work sessions.*

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:06 p.m.

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CITY CLERK