



City of Richmond

Council Budget Amendment Work Session 4 Minutes

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

Monday, May 3, 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
The Honorable Andreas Addison
The Honorable Michael Jones (early departure)
The Honorable Katherine Jordan
The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert
The Honorable Kristen Larson
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch
The Honorable Reva Trammell (late arrival)

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 6:42 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 April 30, 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.

Councilwoman Reva Trammell joined the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Discussion of Proposed Amendments

Bill Echelberger, Council Budget Analyst, provided an analysis of Council's proposed amendments to the FY2021-2022 operating budget. Mr. Echelberger reviewed budget items for which Council is proposing to decrease funding and how the decreases would impact various city departments. Mr. Echelberger also provided an overview of Council's proposed budget text amendments and special reserve budget amendments.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Councilor Katherine Jordan provided information on the intent of the proposed amendment that would decrease funding for the internal service fund for the fleet management division under the Department of Public Works by \$1 million. Councilor Jordan stated the importance of finding methods to promote energy efficient transportation in the city.

Lincoln Saunders, Acting Chief Administrative Officer, shared how the proposed internal service fleet management fund reduction would impact the city's critical services.

Melvin Carter, Fire Chief, provided background information on the costs and lifecycle of the city's fire apparatus fleet. Chief Carter shared the high costs of repairing aging fire engines, and that a reduction in funding for the fleet management internal service fund would drastically impact the Department of Fire and Emergency Services.

Vice President Ellen Robertson asked for clarification on if the fleet management internal service fund would be used to pay debt for existing vehicles or if the funds would be allocated to purchase new vehicles.

Jay Brown, Department of Budget and Strategic Planning Director, shared that the fleet management internal service fund is utilized for fuel, maintenance and monthly standing costs for existing vehicles.

Bill Echelberger, Council Budget Analyst, provided information on the difference between the fleet management operating budget amendment and the fleet management capital improvement budget amendment.

Vice President Robertson asked for additional clarification on the fleet management internal service fund and if any fleet management services can be funded by the forthcoming American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP).

Mr. Echelberger provided further information on the fleet management internal service fund.

Bobby Vincent, Department of Public Works Director, shared how the \$1 million decrease to the fleet management internal service fund would negatively impact the city's vehicle servicing.

Mr. Saunders requested that the administration be allowed to prepare a report on the full impact of the fleet management internal service fund decrease to be presented to Council at a future budget work session.

Councilor Jordan reiterated that the intent of the decrease in the fleet management internal service fund is to assist in reducing the city's carbon footprint and achieve the RVAgreen 2050 goal.

Councilor Andreas Addison expressed support for initiatives to find environmentally friendly city fleet and the need for alternative fuel options for city vehicles.

Councilor Michael Jones encouraged Council and the administration to begin drafting legislation and solutions that offer next steps in reducing the city's carbon footprint.

President Cynthia Newbille requested that the administration bring forth a report on the impact of the fleet management internal service fund decrease to the next Council budget amendment work session. President Newbille also requested that the discussion of legislative paths toward achieving the RVAgreen 2050 goal and reducing the carbon footprint of the city's fleet be addressed at the next Governmental Operations Standing Committee meeting.

Mr. Echelberger provided information on proposed text amendments, including the text amendment that aimed to place the civilian review board under the authority of the Office of the Inspector General for its first year of operation.

Haskell Brown, Interim City Attorney, advised that since the civilian review board does not yet exist, it cannot be placed under the authority of the Office of the Inspector General and will instead need to be placed as a non-departmental entity.

Bill Echelberger, Council Budget Analyst, provided information on the resolution that Council would need to introduce to govern the use of the ARP funds.

Councilor Michael Jones asked for clarification on how the allocation of ARP funds will be determined. Councilor Jones emphasized the need for a portion of the ARP funds to be directed to community programs and investments.

President Cynthia Newbille shared that the allocation of the ARP funds will be determined through a collaborative process between the administration and Council.

Councilor Katherine Jordan inquired about the text amendment her office submitted to make the Office of Sustainability an independent department.

Mr. Brown advised that the creation of the Office of Sustainability would need to be facilitated through an ordinance rather than by a text amendment.

Councilwoman Reva Trammell discussed the need for addressing gun violence in the city.

Vice President Ellen Robertson expressed the need for investment in community based programs and services in the city.

President Newbille advised that the appropriate staff will assist Councilmembers to address text amendments submitted for consideration that would require legislative action.

Mr. Echelberger provided an overview of text amendments that require implementation through legislative action.

It was the consensus of Council to have a final review of the text amendments at the next budget amendment work session.

Lincoln Saunders, Acting Chief Administrative Officer, shared further information on the impact of a reduction of the internal service fleet management fund.

Councilor Katherine Jordan inquired if a report will be available in the fall of 2021 that would provide information on fleet vehicles that would be prioritized for carbon neutral solutions.

Mr. Saunders shared that data related to fleet vehicles will be made available to Council and that if the amendment to reduce the fleet management internal service fund is accepted, funding may need to be restored later through a budget amendment.

Councilor Andreas Addison inquired if the fleet management internal service fund decrease is necessary to balance the budget.

Mr. Echelberger advised that the fleet management internal service fund decrease is not necessary to balance the budget.

Councilor Stephanie Lynch expressed support for using the budget surplus to fund community programs and initiatives that reduce gun violence.

Councilor Michael Jones requested an update on the administration's initiatives to end gun violence in the city.

President Newbille requested an update on the administration's Task Force for Reimagining Public Safety.

Maggie Anderson, Mayor's Office Acting Chief of Staff, provided information on the latest recommendations of the Task Force for Reimagining Public Safety and the paths toward advancing the recommendations.

Gerald Smith, Police Chief, shared information on plans for community programs and partnership efforts to reduce gun violence.

President Cynthia Newbille requested that the appropriate staff coordinate with Councilmembers and the administration to discuss a path forward to advance the recommendations of the Task Force for Reimagining Public Safety.

Councilor Michael Jones left the meeting at 8:21 p.m.

Bill Echelberger, Council Budget Analyst, provided an overview of the special reserve budget amendments.

Jay Brown, Department of Budget and Strategic Planning Director, shared additional information on the special reserve budget and advised that the amendments to the special reserve do not impact the operating budget.

Michelle Peters, Housing and Community Development Deputy Director, shared detailed information on the special reserve line items addressed in the proposed amendments.

Sherrill Hampton, Housing and Community Development Director, advised that the presented data on the special reserve line items were incorrect and provided the correct funding amounts.

President Newbille requested that the appropriate staff present information on the correct fund amounts for the special reserve line items at a future budget amendment work session.

Councilwoman Reva Trammell asked for information on the process for applying for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding and asked for a status of a denied CDBG application.

President Newbille requested that the Department of Housing and Community Development follow-up with Councilwoman Trammell regarding the denied CBDG request.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

CITY CLERK