

## **RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA, October 27, 2020**

The Richmond City Council Evening Open Session was called to order at 5:31 p.m. by Mayor Thomas K. Butt via teleconference.

*Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Contra Costa County and Governor Gavin Newsom issued multiple orders requiring sheltering in place, social distancing, and reduction of person-to-person contact. Accordingly, Governor Gavin Newsom issued executive orders that allowed cities to hold public meetings via teleconferencing (Executive Order N-29-20).*

*DUE TO THE SHELTER IN PLACE ORDERS, attendance at the City of Richmond City Council meeting was limited to Councilmembers, essential City of Richmond staff, and members of the news media. Public comment was confined to items appearing on the agenda and was limited to the methods provided below. Consistent with Executive Order N-29-20, this meeting utilized teleconferencing only. The following provides information on how the public participated in the meeting.*

*The public was able to view the meeting from home on KCRT Comcast Channel 28 or AT&T Uverse Channel 99 and livestream online at <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3178/KCRT-Live>.*

*Written public comments were received via email to [cityclerkdept@ci.richmond.ca.us](mailto:cityclerkdept@ci.richmond.ca.us). Comments received by 1:00 p.m. on October 27, 2020, were summarized at the meeting, put into the record, and considered before Council action. Comments received via email after 1:00 p.m. and up until the public comment period on the relevant agenda item closed, were put into the record. Public comments were also received via teleconference during the meeting. **Attached herewith all written public comments received.***

### **ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Councilmembers Ben Choi, Demnlus Johnson III, Eduardo Martinez, Jael Myrick, Vice Mayor Nathaniel Bates, and Mayor Thomas K. Butt. **Absent:** Councilmember Melvin Willis arrived after roll call.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT BEFORE CLOSED SESSION**

The city clerk announced the public comment procedures and that the purpose of the Open Session was for the City Council to hear public comments on the following items to be discussed in Closed Session:

### **CITY COUNCIL**

LIABILITY CLAIMS - (Government Code Section 54956.9):

Marla Vick v. City of Richmond

Roel Lopez, Randell Slightam, and  
Rebecca Slightam v. City Richmond

CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS  
(Government Code Section 54957.6):

Agency Representatives: Jack Hughes

Employee organizations:

1. SEIU Local 1021 Full-Time Unit
2. SEIU Local 1021 Part-Time Unit
3. IFPTE Local 21 Mid-Level Management Unit
4. IFPTE Local 21 Executive Management Unit
5. Richmond Police Officers Association RPOA
6. Richmond Police Management Association RPMA
7. IAFF Local 188
8. Richmond Fire Management Association RFMA

Ben Faulkner gave comments via teleconference in opposition to service cuts to the Richmond Fire Department.

The Open Session adjourned to Closed Session at 5:36 p.m.  
Closed Session adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

The Regular Meeting of the Richmond City Council was called to order at 6:39 p.m. by Mayor Butt via teleconference.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Councilmembers Choi, Johnson, Martinez, Myrick, Willis, Vice Mayor Bates, and Mayor Butt. **Absent:** None.

**STATEMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None.

**AGENDA REVIEW**

The city clerk announced the public comment procedure published in the agenda.

**REPORT FROM THE CITY ATTORNEY ON FINAL DECISIONS MADE DURING CLOSED SESSION**

Interim City Attorney Rachel Sommovilla stated there were no final actions to report.

**REPORT FROM THE CITY MANAGER**

Interim City Manager Steven Falk reported that the American Red Cross was hosting a blood drive in the Richmond Memorial Auditorium and he authorized a waiver of the auditorium rental fees. Mr. Falk read a news release issued by staff and the Mayor's Office on October 21, 2020, clarifying false information regarding Richmond fire station closures. Additional information was available by calling the Mayor's Office at (510) 620-6503.

**OPEN FORUM FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following individuals gave comments via teleconference:

Kevin (last name unknown) expressed concerns regarding the handling of the emergency evacuation and traffic management caused by the gas tanker fire on Interstate 80 in Richmond on

October 25, 2020. Kevin requested an investigation and a better plan for future emergency evacuations.

Jason Flaum expressed concerns regarding the City of Richmond's budget crisis. Mr. Flaum stated that Richmond firefighters participated in an Alternate Dispute Resolution program that saved the City of Richmond in expenses. Mr. Flaum also stated that Richmond firefighters offered to defer monies owed to them by the City of Richmond to help the budget crisis. Mr. Flaum stated there had been no response from the City of Richmond regarding the offer.

Thomas Phelps, Joshua Tate, Louis Padilla, Germain Gomez, Ben Therriault, Nicholas Bartsch, Deborah Bayer, Curtis Tinloy, Vinay Pimplé, Barbara Whittam, Justin Caesar, and Donnie Hogan gave comments in opposition to service cuts to the Richmond Fire Department. Mr. Phelps stated that no Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding was appropriated to the Richmond Fire Department.

Guadalupe Enllana requested the City of Richmond's help with free city-wide wireless internet access to assist students with virtual learning during the coronavirus pandemic.

### **BUDGET SESSION**

**G-1.** The matter to receive the Fiscal Year 2020-21 first quarter budget report and the overtime report for the period of July 1, 2020, through September 30, 2020, was introduced by Finance Director Belinda Brown. Mrs. Brown, Budget Administrator Markisha Guillory, and Revenue Manager Antonio Banuelos presented a Powerpoint that highlighted the following: budget goals; current deficit of \$5.5 million; General Fund and non-General Fund first quarter revenue and expenditure summaries; overtime report; and next steps. Discussion ensued. The Council requested an analysis of Fire Department overtime versus increased staffing and the dynamics of overtime and injury. The Council recommended exploring solar options to reduce the City of Richmond's energy expenses. The following individuals gave comments via teleconference: Deborah Bayer, Kevin (last name unknown), Jim Hanson, Sean Stalbaum, and Nathan Whittom. Further discussion ensued. The Council requested staff to follow up with Pastor Nathan Whittom of the Bibleway Missionary Baptist Church regarding the fire hydrant on 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Rumrill Boulevard. On motion of Councilmember Martinez, seconded by Councilmember Johnson, accepted said budget and overtime reports by the unanimous vote of the City Council.

### **STUDY AND ACTION SESSION**

**H-1.** The matter to approve the appointment of Eddy Chacon to the "Re-Imagining Public Safety Task Force" to replace Jasmine Frye was introduced by Mayor Butt. Discussion ensued. On motion of Councilmember Johnson, seconded by Councilmember Myrick, approved said appointment by the unanimous vote of the City Council.

**H-2.** Mayor Butt announced recent resignations from City of Richmond boards, commissions, and committees; and announced vacancies as of October 21, 2020, and asked that interested individuals send applications to the City Clerk's Office. Mayor Butt also announced that the City of Richmond was

reinstated as a member of the Oakland Airport-Community Noise Management Forum (Noise Forum). Mayor Butt stated that he was seeking one resident to serve as a Noise Forum boardmember with him and asked interested residents to contact the Mayor's Office at (510) 620-6503.

**H-3.** The matter to receive an update regarding the first quarter Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Economic Development Accomplishments was introduced by Deputy City Manager Economic Development Shasa Curl. Ms. Curl presented a Powerpoint that highlighted the following: Richmond businesses statistics; goals and challenges; current developments; revenue enhancement and cost-recovery measures; city-wide economic development accomplishments; shelter-in-place update; community updates; and emerging Richmond businesses. Discussion ensued. The Council recommended that the presentation for this item be aired to the broader community on KCRT-TV, including clarification on the proposed Hilltop Mall development.

**H-4.** The matter to receive an update on the City of Richmond's draft inventory of all leased and owned properties and designations for Surplus Land and Exempt Surplus Land was introduced by Deputy City Manager Economic Development Shasa Curl. Management Analyst Thomas Omolo presented a Powerpoint that highlighted the following: Assembly Bill 1486 (Surplus Lands Act); ArcGIS software and 434 City of Richmond parcels; exempt surplus criteria; marketing surplus properties; surplus lands inventory; additional properties to reposition; and next steps. Discussion ensued. The Council requested staff to notify non-profit stakeholders regarding the surplus properties before December 1, 2020, and obtain feedback. The Council requested staff to review the list of exempt properties for marketability, including open space parcels in the El Sobrante Hills. The Council recommended making a continual plan such as an ongoing Request for Proposals to market parcels and a marketing plan for Richmond entrepreneurs and businesses seeking to expand. The Council recommended staff to create a surplus property marketing webpage outlining an offer process and issue periodic press releases on the availability of surplus properties. The Council requested a separate number of Successor Agency surplus parcels.

**H-5.** The matter to receive an update on the Richmond Department of Children and Youth's Community Needs Assessment process was introduced by, Acting Deputy City Manager Internal Services and Director of Department of Children and Youth, LaShonda White. Mrs. White presented a Powerpoint that highlighted the Richmond Kids First Initiative; funding; and the oversight board. Management Analyst David Padilla presented the community needs assessment process and collaborations. Youth Services Coordinator Guadalupe Morales presented the community engagement activities. Supervising Office Assistant Patrick Seals presented a data analysis based on surveys and priority populations. Ms. White concluded the presentation with the next steps. Discussion ensued. The Council requested clarification at a future meeting on what Measures E and K stipulated in the City of Richmond charter regarding funding allocations for public entities.

**REPORTS OF OFFICERS: REFERRALS TO STAFF, AND  
GENERAL REPORTS (INCLUDING AB 1234 REPORTS)**

Councilmember Willis announced that early voting for the November 3, 2020, Presidential Election was available at the Richmond Memorial Auditorium and Hilltop Mall parking lot on October 30, 31, and November 2, 2020.

The Council requested the city clerk to respond to a claim regarding stolen election ballots from the drop box located outside at Richmond City Hall.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m., in honor of major league baseball Hall of Famer Joe Morgan, to meet again on Tuesday, November 10, 2020, at 6:30 p.m.

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Clerk of the City of Richmond

(SEAL)

Approved:

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Mayor

**From:** [MG](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk Dept](#)  
**Subject:** Open Session prior to Closed Session 10/27  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 3:50:06 PM

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Hello-

I am writing to voice support for keeping fire stations in Richmond open, and to oppose cutting funding for any fire services. The services provided by firefighters would be severely delayed, reduced and challenged if any Richmond fire station was closed or any trucks were pulled from service.

Living at the urban-wild interface next to Wildcat Canyon and Alvarado Park makes this East Richmond Heights neighborhood particularly vulnerable to fire. The entire East Richmond Heights neighborhood would experience delayed response time were a station to close. We want our tax dollars to keep us safe.

Thank you-  
Marcy Greenhut  
Park Ave.  
Richmond

Be the environment. Be the planet. Be part of the solution.

**From:** [Cordell Hindler](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk Dept](#)  
**Subject:** OPEN FORUM FOR PUBLIC COMMENT  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 5:58:48 PM

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hello Sabrina, i have a couple of comments for the Record

1. as far as my projects go, i am working with one of the members of the youth council and i will be sharing some updates soon
2. i must remind the Council that they Must talk with City staff before they pull any items off the consent calendar

Sincerely  
Cordell

**From:** [Cordell Hindler](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk Dept](#)  
**Subject:** BUDGET SESSION G-1  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 6:04:31 PM

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hello Sabrina, i have looked at the Report and i am impressed that the Finance Department with the help of the city manager's office

the council will approve the Report

Sincerely  
Cordell

**From:** [Deborah Bayer](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk Dept](#)  
**Subject:** Item # G-1  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 10:33:22 AM

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## To the Council:

The budget report confirms what we already knew, and leaves us with a choice. We either raise revenue or cut city services. There is wide-spread opposition to cutting services, whether we are talking about police, library, maintenance or fire. Indeed at almost every council meeting for the last few years residents complain that we need more services, whether it be the elevators at the Nevin Apartments, support for the homeless, or better chairs in the Council Chamber.

There are two measures on the November ballot that would bring more revenue into the general fund. These are Proposition 15 on the state-wide ballot and Measure U, on the city ballot. The City Council endorsed Prop 15, but put has done nothing to encourage Richmond citizens to vote for it.

The Council has not endorsed Measure U, which would bring an estimated \$6 million into the City annually. Measure U amends the structure of business licensing fees in Richmond. The current system is backwards -- every business, no matter the size, pays a flat fee of \$324, plus \$46 per employee. Chevron pays the same fee for a business license as a pop-up food truck, and a landlord renting 4 apartments pays the same as a landlord with a 1000 unit apartment house. Measure U would change this system to a variable percentage on gross receipts, so that larger businesses pay a higher rate than small businesses. This model is currently used in San Francisco, Berkeley, and throughout the Bay Area.

Not surprisingly the Council of Industries, and Chamber of Commerce have squawked about paying a higher fee. They use the same warnings they used when Richmond raised the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. "We can't afford it," "businesses will leave the city," and my favorite, "we weren't consulted or given time to weigh in." The idea of changing the business licensing fee has been on the table in Richmond for over a year. The City Council asked staff to look into it in 2019, and Mayor Butt and his friends in the Council of Industry and Chamber of Commerce had over a year to come up with an ordinance more to their liking. They didn't bother to do so, and now claim they weren't consulted.

Four candidates for the City Council endorse Measure U. These are Melvin Willis, Claudia Jimenez, Gayle McLaughlin and Najari Smith. Although the fire fighters union endorsed Measure U, it donated large sums of money to candidates who oppose the measure, including Anderson, Thompson and Pimple. The firefighters don't want to be furloughed, but they also want to placate big business interests in the city, so have taken these contradictory

positions.

I hope Measure U passes. Along with Prop 15, It will go a long way toward solving our current structural budget problems. If it does not pass, in part because of the well-financed opposition of large business interests in Richmond, I challenge these businesses and the City Council to come up with a different approach to increasing our general fund.

Thank you,  
Debbie Bayer  
Richmond

**From:** [Cordell Hindler](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk Dept](#)  
**Subject:** H-2 BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 6:07:19 PM

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hello Sabrina, i have some comments in Regarding the Boards and Commissions, i did receive some communications from De Anza and Richmond high and they are interested in hearing about the Youth Council

Sincerely  
Cordell

**From:** [Cordell Hindler](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk Dept](#)  
**Subject:** H-3 UPDATE ON FIRST QUARTER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FY 20-21 ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 6:13:54 PM

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hello Sabrina, i was looking at the Presentation and i all i can i say is in the words of Jimmie Walker

Dynamite

Sincerely  
Cordell

**From:** [Cordell Hindler](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk Dept](#)  
**Subject:** H-5 Receive an Update on the Department of Children & Youth  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 6:19:50 PM

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hello Sabrina, i have looked at the Presentation and i am impressed on how the city manager's office got it all done

Sincerely  
Cordell