

## **RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA, May 25, 2021**

The Richmond City Council Evening Open Session was called to order at 4:30 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> and <http://www.youtube.com/user/KCRRTV>.*

*The methods to submit public comment were via mail, email to [cityclerkdept@ci.richmond.ca.us](mailto:cityclerkdept@ci.richmond.ca.us), teleconference, and telephone during the meeting. Written comments received by 1:00 p.m. on May 25, 2021, were put into the record and considered before Council action. Written comments received after 1:00 p.m. and up until the public comment period on the relevant agenda item closed, were also put into the record. **Attached herewith all written public comments received.***

### **ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Councilmembers Nathaniel Bates, Claudia Jimenez, Gayle McLaughlin, Melvin Willis, Vice Mayor Demnlus Johnson III, and Mayor Thomas K. Butt. **Absent:** Councilmember Eduardo Martinez arrived after the roll was called.

### **CITY COUNCIL**

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL - EXISTING LITIGATION (paragraph (1) of Subdivision [d] of Government Code Section 54956.9):

Solvay, USA Inc. v. City of Richmond

Richmond Shoreline Alliance, SPRAWLDEF, Citizens for East Shore Parks, Sunflower Alliance, and GreenAction for Health and Environmental Justice v. City of Richmond

SPRAWLDEF et al. v. City of Richmond  
North Coast Rivers Alliance et al. / Point Molate Alliance et al. v. City of Richmond

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL -  
ANTICIPATED LITIGATION (Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to paragraph (2) or (3) of Subdivision (d) [as applicable] of Government Code Section 54956.9):

Three cases. In light of the California Court of Appeals' decision in Fowler v. City of Lafayette, the City Attorney's Office attached to the agenda two letters regarding the amended judgment and various agreements related to Point Molate. The letters provided the existing facts and circumstances for going into closed session on the items pursuant to California Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2).

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT BEFORE CLOSED SESSION**

The following individuals gave comments via teleconference regarding the litigation cases: Tarnel Abbott, Deborah Bayer, Doria Mueller-Beilschmidt, David Kafton, Jeanne Kortz, Karen Susag, Tony Sustak, Sally Tobin, Elizabeth Dougherty, Bill Simpich, Sherry Padgett, and Paul Carman.

Mayor Butt announced that Deputy City Manager Internal Services Anil Camelo was representing the City of Richmond for the labor negotiations instead of Jack Hughes.

The Open Session adjourned to Closed Session at 5:12 p.m.  
Closed Session adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

The Regular Meeting of the Richmond City Council was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Mayor Butt via teleconference.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Councilmembers Bates, Jimenez, Martinez, McLaughlin, Willis, Vice Mayor Johnson III, and Mayor Butt.  
**Absent:** None.

**STATEMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None.

**AGENDA REVIEW**

On motion of Councilmember McLaughlin, seconded by Councilmember Martinez, added an emergency item to the agenda to address an interim solution for the problems of the recreational vehicle communities located at Rydin Road and Castro Street by

the unanimous vote of the City Council. The emergency item was placed on the agenda for discussion immediately following the Open Forum for Public Comment.

### **PRESENTATIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, AND COMMENDATIONS**

**D-1.** The matter to receive a presentation regarding the scholarship awards for the Snow Ball King and Queen winners and runners-up of the 68th Annual Virtual Snow Ball Scholarship held on December 19, 2020, was introduced by Community Services Administrative Manager Ranjana Maharaj. Mayor Butt acknowledged Maryn and Garry Hurlbut for sponsoring the scholarship awards.

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

City Attorney Teresa Stricker stated there were no final actions to report.

### **REPORT FROM THE CITY MANAGER**

City Manager Laura Snideman reminded the community to sign up to receive the City Manager's Weekly Report. Ms. Snideman made the following announcements: The virtual Richmond Promise 2021 Scholars Celebration was scheduled on May 26, 2021, to honor over 400 scholarship recipients. Richmond received over \$2.7 million from the California Small Business COVID-19 Relief Grant Program for 271 Richmond businesses. More information regarding the grant program was available at the following website: <https://careliefgrant.com>. The Employment and Training Division had job opportunities available with salaries ranging from \$16 per hour to \$150,000 per year. The Arts and Culture Division was conducting a community survey to inform its commissioners for future planning. The Arts and Culture Division was also seeking photographers and graphic designers to update the art inventory in Richmond.

### **OPEN FORUM FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following individuals gave the following comments via teleconference:

Tarnell Abbott expressed concerns that the public was not notified of the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) meeting scheduled on June 3, 2021, regarding the Richmond AstraZeneca site. Ms. Abbott requested that this matter be made an emergency. Ms. Abbott recommended the City of Richmond publicize the DTSC meeting and the DTSC mail notifications to neighborhoods near the site.

Sherry Padgett reminded the community that the full eclipse of the red moon started at 4:11 a.m. on May 26, 2021. Ms. Padgett expressed concerns regarding the Richmond AstraZeneca site. Ms. Padgett pleaded for the Richmond Planning Division to investigate the impact of the water table data for the site and how it affected sea level predictions. Ms. Padgett requested the City of Richmond to require that sea level data submitted in planning and construction documents be based on the North American Vertical Datum of 1988.

Sally Tobin expressed concerns regarding item H-5 that was on the May 18, 2021, City Council agenda, concerning a legal services agreement for Point Molate. Ms. Tobin suggested that Point Molate should be a recreational, cultural, educational, and environmental area and not a massive development.

Mark Wassberg gave comments in support of police services and in opposition to defunding the Police Department. Mr. Wassberg reminisced on past violence in Richmond and suggested that it would get worse.

Deborah Bayer gave comments regarding a prospective purchase agreement that the DTSC was expected to execute with Hilco Redevelopment Partners/Campus Bay LLC. Ms. Bayer requested clarification for the entity responsible for the Richmond AstraZeneca site liability.

David Kafton gave comments in opposition to the proposed residential development at the Richmond AstraZeneca site. Mr. Kafton recommended that toxins at the site be removed before construction. Mr. Kafton expressed concerns regarding DTSC's remediation measures. Mr. Kafton urged the council to cancel the developer agreement for the site.

Jeanne Kortz expressed concerns regarding the DTSC's response to California residents at its May 19, 2021, Public Forum for requests to clean up toxic sites. Ms. Kortz suggested that there were other alternatives to toxic cleanup issues and the DTSC was less concerned about protecting the California residents and environment.

Naomi Williams urged the council to vote against defunding the Police Department and expressed the need for more police officers, not fewer. Ms. Williams recommended using anticipated funds to support new programs. Ms. Williams expressed concerns that defunding the Police Department would impact police emergency responses and staffing.

Karen Susag gave comments regarding the rights to health and environmental justice for residents living near toxic sites. Ms. Susag advised the council of their opportunity to avoid housing and health issues at the Richmond AstraZeneca site.

Oscar Garcia expressed concerns regarding the lack of community engagement for the Police Department's budgeting process. Mr. Garcia advised that the Iron Triangle neighborhood could be disproportionately impacted. Mr. Garcia acknowledged Vice Mayor Johnson III for reaching out to the Iron Triangle Neighborhood Council on this matter.

Alix Mazuet requested the council to stand for all Richmond residents and require the DTSC to fulfill its duties and responsibilities. Ms. Mazuet requested a thorough toxic cleanup and environmental analysis at the Richmond AstraZeneca site. Ms. Mazuet expressed concerns regarding the site's ownership and future liability.

Janet S. Johnson referred to the presentation given on sea level rise at the April 20, 2021, City Council meeting. Ms. Johnson advised that the DTSC had not considered sea level rise with its Richmond AstraZeneca site remediation plan. Ms. Johnson questioned if the City of Richmond would be liable if toxic water invaded the proposed development at the site?

Luis Padilla gave comments in opposition to decreasing the Police Department's budget. Mr. Padilla advised that the Fire Department depended on police security at scenes and delays in police response time affected patient care.

Emily Ross gave comments in support of the Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force's proposals presented at the May 10, 2021, City Council meeting. Ms. Ross advised that general community outreach on the matter was good and improvements to reach low-income communities were needed.

Nathaniel Bates gave comments regarding the lack of response to his concerns, expressed at the May 18, 2021, City Council meeting, regarding the filthiness and overgrown vegetation throughout Richmond. Mr. Bates inquired about why the unhoused individual that occupied the entryway to the Richmond Senior Center on Macdonald Avenue was not relocated to a shelter.

Doria Mueller-Beilschmidt gave comments regarding the health and environmental impacts caused by the toxaphene chemical residues found at the Richmond AstraZeneca site. Ms. Mueller-Beilschmidt advised that she sent the council additional information regarding this matter.

Eduardo Martinez shared his experience as a victim of crime in Richmond and how the California Marsy's Law was violated in his case.

### **EMERGENCY ITEM**

The matter to authorize a six-month pilot project for a short-term, minimal scattered site pilot program to allow interested hosts (churches and private site owners) to host one to four vehicles in their parking lots or vacant lots. The purpose was to begin the process of thinning out the unsanctioned sites (with an emphasis on Castro Street) and allow for healthier conditions for all. This pilot project had the ability to morph into the larger scattered site program once established and put into effect by an enabling ordinance; or direct staff to come back to the City Council with an urgency ordinance in three weeks that addressed a similar approach to a scattered-site program, was introduced by Councilmember McLaughlin. Discussion ensued. A motion was made by Councilmember McLaughlin, seconded by Councilmember Willis, to direct staff to return to the council in three weeks with a draft urgency ordinance to set up a scattered site model. Further discussion ensued. The following individuals gave comments via teleconference: Katrinka Ruk, Naomi Williams, Mark Wassberg, and Savitri Khalsa. The motion passed by the unanimous vote of the City Council.

## **STUDY AND ACTION SESSION**

**H-1.** The matter to receive and, if desired discuss and provide feedback to staff on, a summary report from the Richmond City Council workshop, and set a meeting date and time to determine Richmond City Council priorities, was introduced by City Manager Laura Snideman. The council recommended the following: Add to the Reports of Officers item on every City Council meeting agenda additional text that stated, “... *and comments from the public regarding the effectiveness of City Council meetings and offering a welcoming atmosphere for the public*”. Schedule June 29, 2021, as a potential meeting date to determine priorities. Revise recommendation 1b in the workshop summary report to state, “*councilmembers should be able to request research and data from staff if it is crucial for their ability to make informed policy decisions*”. Focus on the city’s budget recommendations and the American Rescue Plan Act funds. A motion made by Vice Mayor Johnson III, to schedule a City Council goal-setting meeting on June 29, 2021, after the city’s budget was adopted, failed for the lack of a second. Further discussion ensued. Jeanne Kortz and Mark Wassberg gave comments via teleconference. Further discussion ensued. A motion made by Councilmember Willis, seconded by Councilmember McLaughlin, tabled this matter by the following vote: **Ayes:** Councilmembers Jimenez, Martinez, McLaughlin, Willis, and Vice Mayor Johnson. **Noes:** Councilmember Bates and Mayor Butt. **Abstained:** None. **Absent:** None. The Council advised that it would agendaize for a future meeting, the matter to consider adding public comments to the Reports of Officers item on future agendas.

**H-2.** Mayor Butt announced recent resignations from City of Richmond boards, commissions, and committees; and announced vacancies as of May 19, 2021, and asked that interested individuals send applications to the City Clerk's Office.

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

Police Chief Bisa French provided an overview of the recent crime in Richmond.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m., in memory of George Floyd, to meet again on Tuesday, June 1, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.

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Clerk of the City of Richmond

(SEAL)

Approved:

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Mayor

**From:** [Cordell Hindler](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk Dept](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comments Open forum  
**Date:** Thursday, May 20, 2021 6:24:53 PM

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good Evening Mayor Butt, Council Members and City Staff, I have a couple of comments for the Record

1. I was Very Disappointed that the council did not approve to Reinstate the Finance and Public Safety Standing Committees
2. Also the Public should be allowed to return to the council Meetings

Sincerely  
Cordell

**From:** [Cordell Hindler](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk Dept](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comments H-1 Study Session  
**Date:** Thursday, May 20, 2021 6:32:10 PM

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good evening Mayor Butt , Council Members and City Staff, I think that the Council should consider having the Session around August to discuss the priorities

Sincerely  
Cordell

**From:** [Cordell Hindler](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk Dept](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comments H-2 Study Session  
**Date:** Thursday, May 20, 2021 6:35:46 PM

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good Evening Mayor Butt, Council members and City Staff, I have an Update in Regarding the Vacancies on Commissions, I have received some oral Communications from Richmond and De Anza and they are excited to hear about the youth council

Sincerely  
Cordell