

Richmond City's Pitiful State of Finance The Wheels Have Fallen Off

Facts Reported In the Richmond Times Dispatch and on Richmond TV Stations

- "1760% increase" in one Richmond citizen's car tax this year, while many others complain.
- "8,300 Richmond tax rebate checks mistakenly sent to Hartshorn Community Council."
- "2,000 Richmond tax rebate checks sent to wrong addresses. 156 rebates were issued for parcels that did not exist in 2024."
- "Richmond sent \$554,000 to deceased retirees over the past nine years. Most of that money never recovered."
- January 2025 water crisis caused by utter incompetence. State of Va. says, the crisis was "completely avoidable and never should have happened."
- April 2025, 5900 gallons of fluoride was accidentally discharged into city drinking water, at 387% above the recommended level.
- 2024 Restaurant tax fiasco.... One restaurant received a "\$68,000 bill related to an \$800 late fee." Another restaurant was "mistakenly billed \$424,000."
- There are "\$60 million in delinquent utility bills," according to a February, 2025 report from Richmond city auditor. Others report tens of thousands of mistakenly estimated bills. A department in chaos.
- The Times Dispatch has reported that the city's beleaguered DPU study commission referred to the Richmond "utilities department direct(ing) over \$100,000,000 in profits into the city's general fund over five years." The \$100 million profit figure is wildly overstated. This calls that commission's credibility into question. It's time to fold.
- In 2016, the Richmond Times Dispatch reported, "5,800 properties with unpaid real estate taxes, totaling \$27.7 million." Current estimates suggest that by 2025 those figures have doubled.

Commentary

Richmond government is recklessly handling our money. The city finance department is in shambles. Even though much of this was caused by Levar Stoney and CAO Lincoln Saunders, our very smart Mayor, Dr. Avula, appears to not have the personnel nor the resources to deal with this. It is noteworthy that Mayor Avula has not yet restored the city employee directory with phone numbers, and thus most city employees hide behind a stone wall called 311, and are virtually unreachable.

What is needed beyond the immediate dismissal of the finance director, is an impartial, top to bottom, six month independent review of city finances. Using no outside consultants, the city should impanel a blue ribbon commission headed by thoughtful and local CEOs of our largest area companies and staffed by loaned MBA finance experts from those companies. City staff should play no role, except to provide information.

Citizens are fed up. It appears that there's no wise finance person in sight. It's past time for the incompetence to stop.

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