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Richmond Times-Dispatch

Wednesday, July 17, 2024

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Warnings were issued for P-card use

Emails notified ex-city spokesperson Burks multiple times that balances were overdue

SAMUEL B. PARKER
Richmond Times-Dispatch

City officials for months issued repeated warnings to former city spokesperson Petula Burks and executive assistant Raymond Dark Jr. about overdue balances on their

city-issued purchasing cards, internal emails obtained by the Richmond Times-Dispatch show. The correspondence also shows officials weighed whether to suspend the cards and worried that the situation would hamper city

operations and create a "negative image of the p-card program."

Burks' purchasing card was suspended in July 2023 due to a backlog of unpaid charges and accidental personal use. The Times-Dispatch previously reported. On July 1 of this year, Burks resigned amid questions surrounding the use of her card to obtain nearly \$100,000 worth

of services from consulting and advertising firms operated by her former business partner.

In response to a Freedom of Information Act request seeking internal emails related to Burks' resignation, Megan Field, a city policy advisor, on July 10 provided several messages between city officials. On Monday night, Field contacted The Times-Dispatch

with three additional emails that had not been included among the

Please see P-CARDS, Page A2

 **SEE THE DOCUMENTS:**
Aim your smartphone camera and tap the link to see the documents The Times-Dispatch obtained. **NEWSVU**

MOBILE NEWSROOM



MARGO WAGNER, TIMES-DISPATCH

Manager Rodney Saunders and Produce Lead Patricia Henshaw discuss Monday what they want to run in an ad for The Market at 25th in Richmond's East End.

Embodying Church Hill's spirit

The Market at 25th has opened doors to address food desert

SAVANNAH REGER
Richmond Times-Dispatch

At The Market at 25th, customers call Hester Sottile "auntie."

Sottile, a store associate, has been with the East End grocery store since before its doors opened in 2019. She did year-long training prior to opening and started as a greeter. In that

If you go

What: Richmond Times-Dispatch Mobile Newsroom

When: Wednesday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Where: The Kitchens at Reynolds, 2500 Nine Mile Road, Richmond

training, there was an emphasis on family, she said, and how the store was going to embody the spirit of Church Hill.

The Market at 25th is a "com-

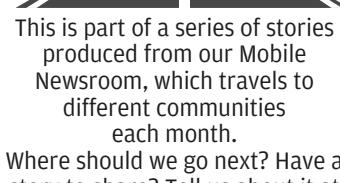
munity-driven" grocery store, located next to the Kitchen at Reynolds. It's also part of the Church Hill North Development plan, aimed to meet the needs of the community.

The Market at 25th "wanted to make this more like a family ... Well, for the employees to be more of a family than just everyday workers," Sottile said. "To be more family-oriented and being able to find out what their needs are. That's what they wanted." Developing Church Hill North

Please see THE MARKET, Page A21

ON THE MOVE

**The Times-Dispatch
Mobile Newsroom**

 This is part of a series of stories produced from our Mobile Newsroom, which travels to different communities each month.

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Why Squirrels chose ballpark builders

City deferred to team for Diamond District stadium

ERIC KOLENICH
Richmond Times-Dispatch

Leaders from the Flying Squirrels, the city of Richmond and their developers flew to New York City last September to meet with Major League Baseball for

an urgent discussion. The goal: to figure out how to build the Diamond District ballpark.

When the meeting had ended, the parties agreed the Squirrels would choose the ballpark's builders, replacing the companies already selected. The Double-A baseball franchise hired a project manager, a designer and a general contractor.

Groundbreaking is expected within weeks.

But the arrangement has led to a question — why did a minor league baseball team get to choose the builders of a publicly funded ballpark, outside of an official procurement process designed to ensure affordability and fairness?

Please see BALLPARK, Page A6



Goldman

Please see GOP, Page A4

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Sen. Menendez guilty of taking bribes in cash and gold

PAGE A16

Weather

Hot, heavy thunderstorms
High 96
Low 75

FORECAST • A22

A News

Lotteries
A2

Stocks

Opinions
A18

A15

Scoreboard
B2

B Sports

Marketplace
B9

C Food

Comics
C5

Television
C6

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