



MINUTES -- CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA

Tuesday, January 28th, 2025

4:00 pm Rules of Council Workshop
Room 208, Municipal Building

6:00 pm Closed Session
Room 208, Municipal Building

7:00 pm Regular Session
Council Chambers, Municipal Building

4:00 pm - Rules of Council Workshop and Work Session

Room 208, Municipal Building

- a. Discuss and Consider Rules of Council
 - i. Council met in a workshop to discuss the Rules of Council. A legislative document that outlines rules of procedure for Council Meetings, Council officers, Council appointed positions, Council-Council relations and Council-Staff Relations.
- 1. Discuss Consent Agenda Items
 - a. Discuss and Consider Approval of January 14th, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes
 - i. Council discussed January 14th, 2025 Minutes.

6:00 pm - Closed, Executive Session

Room 208, Municipal Building

A Closed meeting of the City of Martinsville, Virginia's Council, was held on September 18, 2024, at 6:00 PM in Conference Room 208, Martinsville Municipal Building, Martinsville, VA. Council Members participating included Kathy Lawson, Julian Mei, Rayshaun Gravely, and Mayor Jones. Council Member, Aaron Rawls was absent. Staff present included City Manager, Aretha Ferrell-Benavides; Assistant to the City Manager, Peyton Nibblett, Chief Operating Officer Edena Reese-Atmore, City Attorney Designee and Interim Managing Director of Development Eric Payne, and Managing Director of Public Works, Greg Maggard.



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Mayor Jones called the meeting to order and advised Council would go into Closed Session beginning at 6:00 PM. In accordance with the Code of Virginia, Title 2.2 Chapter 37, Freedom of Information Act and upon a motion by Council Member Lawson and seconded by Council Member Mei with the following 4-0 recorded vote: Council Member Mei, aye; Mayor Jones, aye; Council Member Lawson, aye; and Council Member Gravely, aye. Council convened in Closed Session to discuss the following matters: (A) Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members, attorneys or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, or other specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel, as authorized by Subsection 7.

- a. Discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for appointment in relation to Boards and Commissions appointments.
- b. Discussion or Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members, attorneys or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, or other specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel, as authorized by Subsection 7. In relation to Building Show-Cause Litigation as well as City personnel matters.

There was no action taken out of the Closed session. There being no further business, Mayor Jones motioned to adjourn and Councilor Lawson seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7pm.

7:00 pm - Regular Session

City Council Chambers, Municipal Building

I. Call to Order

Present: Jones, Lawson, Mei, Gravely

➤ **Absent:** Rawls

- a. Mayor Jones called the meeting to order beginning at 7:15 PM.
- b. **Approved** to move out of Closed Session by Motion made by Councilor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei. Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.
 - i. 4:0 Vote



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- II. Pledge to the American Flag
- III. Invocation
 - a. Led by Pastor Tremayne King
- IV. Proclamations and Presentations
 - A. Proclamation Honoring Black History Month 2025, African Americans and Labor
 - 1. Presented by Mayor Jones and Council
 - B. Presentation Summer Reading Library Program by Blue Ridge Regional Library
 - C. Presentation of Parks Plan by Citizen Advisory Board
 - 1. Moved until next meeting, February 25th, 2025
 - 2. **Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei. Approved with the following vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye
 - a) Approved with 4:0 Vote
- V. Consent Agenda
 - a. Discuss and Consider Approval of January 14th, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes
 - i. Consent Agenda **Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei. Approved with the following vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye
 - ii. Approved with 4:0 Vote
- VI. Public Hearing
 - A. None
- VII. Regular Agenda or New Business
 - ❖ Motion made to recess as Martinsville City Council and convene as Martinsville Housing made by Vice Mayor Lawson and Seconded by Councilman Mei and Redevelopment Authority by Roll Call Vote approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.



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A. Discuss and Consider V.M. Draper/ Tanyard Purchase Agreement

- i. **Topic:** The property commonly referred to as the VM Draper property, currently owned by Tanyard LLC, occupies a potentially advantageous location for economic development, but has fallen into disrepair. The Martinsville Redevelopment and Housing Authority has negotiated with the owners to purchase the property for the price of \$125,000, which represents a reduced price accounting for the deteriorated condition of the structures. A purchase and sale agreement has been negotiated with counsel for Tanyard LLC and is ready for approval.
- ii. **Discussionary Period Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei. Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.
- iii. **Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei. Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.

B. Discuss and Consider Authorizing Exclusive Option for Negotiation of YMCA Acquisition

- i. **Topic:** The property commonly referred to as the Family YMCA Incorporated of Martinsville & Henry County, will be available for purchase in the near term, once the new YMCA is completed in 2027. The YMCA is located at 3 Starling Avenue in Martinsville, VA, which is part of the historic Uptown District. The Virginia Museum of Natural History, part of the Smithsonian, has expressed an interest in acquiring this building, along with other potential buyers. Given the strategic location of the current YMCA facility and its ability to spur economic development activity in Martinsville, the City of Martinsville has a vested interest in seeking an exclusive option for the negotiation of a purchase agreement with the YMCA, which will afford the parties an opportunity to determine the most advantageous use for this facility, should it be required. The City of Martinsville has negotiated an option price of \$1,000 for an exclusive negotiating period of 90 days, with an option to extend the same for 60 additional days. This option agreement is ready for approval.
- ii. **Discussionary Period Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei. Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.
- iii. **Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei. Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.



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- ❖ Motion made by Vice Mayor Lawson to reconvene as Martinsville City Council by Roll Call Vote approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.

C. Discuss and Consider Authorizing Administrative Signing of Electric Master Agreements

- i. **Topic:** Martinsville receives approximately 50 percent of its power needs from market power. We have typically entered one to three-year contracts, depending on pricing. After responses are received from the RFP and the provider is chosen, the contract is executed within 1-2 days. Due to pricing volatility, RFPs are sent out strategically during the years when future purchases are needed. Due to the fast-moving market, prompt execution is necessary to lock in pricing for the required timeframe. By entering into these agreements, we will receive responses from these parties when an RFP is issued for market purchases. The agreement also gives the city manager the authority to sign future purchase power contracts.
- ii. **Discussionary Period Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei.
- iii. **Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei. Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.
- iv. Approved with 4:0 vote.

D. Discuss and Consider Authorizing Termination of Solar Development Power Purchase Agreement

- i. **Topic:** In July, 2020 the City and Martinsville Solar, LLC (the “Company”) entered into a power purchase agreement whereby the Company would construct a solar development on a portion of the land formerly owned by E.I. DuPont de Nemours (formerly known as Lynwood Golf Course). The Company has decided not to move forward with the project. The Agreement provided that in the event of a termination by Company, the City would have the right to purchase the property for one dollar (\$1.00). The City also was to receive a termination payment of \$320,000.00 as liquidated damages. Staff and legal counsel have reviewed the termination agreement and have incorporated recommended edits into the final draft. The City has the right to acquire the property for \$1.00, which could be used for future economic development or other beneficial use, and receive the termination payment as a result of the termination of the agreement.
- ii. **Discussionary Period Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Mei and Seconded by Councilor Lawson.
- iii. **Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei. Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.
- iv. Approved with 4:0 vote.



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E. Discuss and Consider Second Reading of Refuse Ordinance

1. **Topic:** Chapter 18, Article 2 of the City Code has not been updated since 1982. This article deals primarily with the city's administration, enforcement, and collection of refuse. The current article is vague and requires antiquated enforcement actions. The revisions proposed in this Article, Article 2, meet the key outcome by providing for increased administration, enforcement, and refuse collection. The revised Article 2 provides additional definitions for clarity, allows for more effective enforcement, and increases efficiency in collection operations.
2. **Discussionary Period Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Mei and Seconded by Vice Mayor Lawson.
3. **Tabled until February 11th, 2025** Meeting with Motion made by Councilor Mei and Seconded by Councilor Lawson. Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.
4. **Tabling Approved** with 4:0 vote.

VIII. Actions necessary as a result of the Executive Session

1. Consider authorizing agreed order setting forth courthouse evaluation and remediation plan in Show Cause litigation

- i. **Tabled until February 11th, 2025** with Motion made by Vice Mayor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei. Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.

1. **Tabling Approved** with 4:0 vote.

2. Council Appointment of Board Applicants

- a. Motion and Roll Call Vote

A. Charisse Hairston, Arts and Cultural - 12-31-26

- b. **Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Mei and Seconded by Councilor Lawson. Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.

- c. Approved with 4:0 vote.

B. Dean Cook, Tree Board - 1/28/28

- a. **Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Mei and Seconded by Councilor Lawson. Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.

- b. Approved with 4:0 vote.

C. Heather Loberger, Tree Board - 1/28/2027

- a. **Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei. Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.

- b. Approved with 4:0 vote.

D. Linda Casa, Tree Board - 1/28/26

- a. **Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei.



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Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.

b. Approved with 4:0 vote.

E. Christine Stewart, Tree Board - 1/28/28

a. **Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei.

Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.

b. Approved with 4:0 vote.

F. Anna Wheeler, Tree Board - 1/28/2027

a. **Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei.

Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.

b. Approved with 4:0 vote.

G. Koby Johnson, Southern Area Agency on Aging Board of Directors 1/28/28

a. **Approved** by Motion made by Councilor Lawson and Seconded by Councilor Mei.

Approved with the following roll call vote; Lawson, aye; Mei, aye; and Gravely, aye; Jones, aye.

b. Approved with 4:0 vote.

9. City Hall Reporting and Announcements

A. Public Information Officer

B. Financial Update

10. Communications from Visitors / Business from the Floor

A. Caleb Robertson

B. Joseph Martin

11. Comments by Members of City Council

12. Communications by City Manager

13. Adjournment

a. Mayor made the motion to adjourn at 8:30 PM.