



May 13, 2025
Martinsville City Council Meeting Minutes

6:00 pm - Work Session

Council Chambers, Municipal Building

Members Present: Mayor Jones, Vice Mayor Lawson, Aaron Rawls, Julian Mei, & Rayshaun Gravely

1. Workshop with Charter Review Committee
 - a. Charter Review Committee made a presentation regarding their work thus far. Plans are: Focusing on Charter accessibility and readability, Gather input from necessary stakeholders, review findings and develop recommendations, and present final report to City Council ahead of the upcoming legislative session. The Charter Review Committee is tasked with the important task of reviewing the current City Charter and making recommendations prior to the upcoming legislative session. The current charter has not been updated since around 1950 and the language and powers of the city need to be modernized.
2. Discuss Consent Agenda Items
 - a. Discuss and Consider the Following Meeting Minutes: April 22, 2025; and April 29, 2025.

- **Council recessed at 6:30 -**

7:00 PM - Regular Session

Council Chambers, Martinsville Municipal Building

Members Present: Mayor Jones, Vice Mayor Lawson, Aaron Rawls, Julian Mei, & Rayshaun Gravely

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge to American Flag
3. Invocation
 - a. Led by Johnny Robertson



4. Presentations and Proclamations

- a. Proclamation Honoring May as Small Business Month
 - i. Presented to BeWitched Diner, a recently opened restaurant to the Uptown Area. Touch of Soul and Southern Seasons were also honored but unable to attend.
- b. Proclamation Honoring National Police Week
 - i. Presented to Martinsville Police Chief Fincher
- c. Proclamation Honoring May as Mental Health Awareness Month
 - i. Presented to Bridging Hope

5. Consent Agenda

- a. Discuss and Consider the Following Meeting Minutes: April 22, 2025; and April 29, 2025.
 - i. Approved with a Motion made by Vice Mayor Lawson and Seconded by Councilman Rayshaun Gravley. **Approved with the following 5:0 vote: Mayor Jones, aye; Vice Mayor Lawson, aye; Councilman Mei, aye; Councilman Gravely, aye; Councilman Rawls, aye.**

6. Regular Agenda or New Business

- a. Discuss and Consider Approval of March 17, 2025 Meeting Minutes
 - i. Motion to table minutes made by Vice Mayor Lawson and Seconded by Councilman Julian Mei. **Approved with the following 5:0 vote: Mayor Jones, aye; Vice Mayor Lawson, aye; Councilman Mei, aye; Councilman Gravely, aye; Councilman Rawls, aye.**
- b. Discuss and Consider Refuse Ordinance
 - i. Presented by Public Works Director, Greg Maggard. The Refuse Ordinance was tabled previously due to lack of community involvement. Bringing back to Council for second reading. Councilman Rawls spoke with members of the Planning Commission and wants to give them time to collect citizen feedback – would like to move to the June 10th Council Meeting.
 - ii. **Tabled to the June 10 Council Meeting** with a Motion made by Councilman Rawls and Seconded by Vice Mayor Lawson. **Approved with the following 5:0 vote: Mayor Jones, aye; Vice Mayor Lawson, aye; Councilman Mei, aye; Councilman Gravely, aye; Councilman Rawls, aye.**



- c. Discuss and Consider Temporary Lease Options for City Staff
 - i. Presented by Public Works Director Greg Maggard. Following up on April 29th Community Meeting. Considerations for temporary lease options.
 - ii. **Tabled to be brought back on June 10 Council Meeting** with a Motion made by Vice Mayor Lawson and Seconded by Councilman Rawls. **Approved with the following 5:0 vote: Mayor Jones, aye; Vice Mayor Lawson, aye; Councilman Mei, aye; Councilman Gravely, aye; Councilman Rawls, aye.**
- d. Discuss and Consider Virginia Municipal League (VML) Policy Committee Nominations/Appointments
 - i. Presented by City Manager, Aretha R. Ferrell Benavides for the VML Policy Committee Nominations.
 - 1. Community and Economic Development: Councilman Mei
 - 2. Finance Committee and General Laws: Mayor Jones
 - 3. Human Development and Education: Councilman Gravely
 - 4. Infrastructure: Vice Mayor Lawson
- e. Discuss and Consider Proposed Real Estate Tax Rate for FY 25-26
 - i. Motion made by Julian Mei for a Set Revenue Rate of \$0.7352 representing 2% levy increase, seconded by Councilman Rawls. Failed with the following 3:2 vote: Mayor Jones; nay. Councilman Gravely, nay. Councilwoman Lawson, nay. Councilman Mei, aye. Councilman Rawls, aye.
 - ii. Motion made by Kathy Lawson for a Revenue Rate of \$0.7713. Motion was retracted by Vice Mayor Lawson.
 - iii. Motion made by Kathy Lawson for 4.5% Levy increase, representing a rate of 0.7533, seconded by Rayshaun Gravely. Call to Question Motion made by Kathy Lawson and Seconded by Gravely. Approved with the following 3:2 vote: Mayor Jones; nay. Councilman Gravely, nay. Councilwoman Lawson, nay. Councilman Mei, aye. Councilman Rawls, aye.
 - iv. 4.5% Levy increase, representing a rate of 0.7533, **Approved with the following 3:2 vote. Mayor Jones, aye. Councilwoman Lawson, aye. Councilman Gravely, aye. Councilman Mei, nay. Councilman Rawls, nay.**



7. Discuss and Consider Proposed Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget Ordinance First Reading
 - i. Motion to table the Overall Budget and table the discussion until the May 27th Meeting and adopt the school budget on the May 20th meeting, made by Kathy Lawson and seconded by Councilman Gravely. Kathy Lawson made the motion to amend her motion to withdraw her motion. Motion withdrawn with a 5:0 vote: Mayor Jones, aye. Councilwoman Lawson, aye. Councilman Gravely, aye. Councilman Mei, aye. Councilman Rawls, aye.
 - ii. Motion to Adopt Budget Ordinance, City and Schools' on First Reading as Amended by Kathy Lawson and seconded by Rayshaun Gravely. Approved with a 3:2 vote: Mayor Jones, aye. Councilwoman Lawson, aye. Councilman Gravely, aye. Councilman Mei, nay. Councilman Rawls, nay.
8. Take any action necessary as a result of the confidential legal memorandum as a result of ongoing opioid litigation.
 - a. Council was provided with confidential legal information by outside legal counsel Sands Anderson. Asking for a motion to dismiss Milan Farmer and Henry Shine Act.
 - b. Motion made by Julian Mei and Seconded by Aaron Rawls. Approved with the following 5:0 vote: Mayor Jones, aye. Councilwoman Lawson, aye. Councilman Gravely, aye. Councilman Mei, aye. Councilman Rawls, aye.
9. City Hall Reporting and Announcements
 - a. Financial Update
 - b. Public Information Update
10. Business From the Floor
 - a. Joseph Nichols
 - b. Michael Sanguedolce
 - c. Karen Doyle
 - d. Zach Mize
 - e. Johnny Robertson



11. Comments by Members of Council
12. Comments by City Manager
13. Adjournment