April 22, 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. Briefings and Presentations
   a. Electric Department Update
      i. Presented by Electric Department Director, Durwin Joyce. Largest Outages were August 19th, November 24th, December 11th, and March 16th. Ongoing pole replacements, substation transformer replacements, and negotiations to continue for a power supply for CY 2026-2028 with soon to come RFP. Capacity costs update consisted of unprecedented costs increase in the PJM capacity auction will lead to higher costs beginning in June 2025. Across the 13 state region, this year 2.2 billion was paid to generators. For June - May 26 planning period, PJM will pay $14.7 billion to generation owners. Currently pushback from legislators. Minet Billing will begin being processed through Utility Billing on May 15, with goals to increase efficiency.

   b. Building Relocation Options Briefing
      i. Presented by Greg Maggard, Public Works Managing Director, and Eric Payne, Interim Managing Director of Development. Municipal Building was built in the late 1960s with a life expectancy of 50 years. In 2018, the building exceeding its use of life. Building concerns surrounding air quality and deterioration of building infrastructure. A show cause order was entered by multiple judges on September 8, 2024. The show cause order outlined numerous deficiencies, immediate remediation actions, and requirements for additional testing and investigating. A test on February 2nd revealed elevated levels of particles in the air quality.In regards to the Show Cause Order, staff has inspected and repaired all known leaks within the building. Additional insulation was added to pipes within Judge Ziglar's courtroom. Air quality testing occurred on February 2nd and April 3rd 2025. And discussion on the potential relocation of Municipal staff and the results of the Facility Condition Assessment.

The City has selected a potential contractor to begin the Facility Condition Assessment on the Municipal Building. The engagement contract is undergoing legal review and is expected to be executed this week.

Remediation Effort Update
- Building Condition Assessment Underway
- Building-Wide Air Duct Cleaning
- Fire Department Inspections
- Judge Ziglar's Space Cleaning

Options for Relocation Include
- 101 E. Commonwealth Blvd. (Clocktower Building)
- Modular Trailers
- 730 E. Church St (Patrick and Henry Mall)
- 1 Ellsworth St (Old BB&T Building)
- 8 Lester St
- 20 Elsworth St

2. Discuss Consent Agenda Items
   a. Discuss and Consider Approval of April 1, 2025; April 7, 2025; and April 14, 2025 Meeting Minutes
   b. Discuss and Consider Approval of Facilitator-Provided Retreat Meeting Minutes for February 28, 2025

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 Councilwoman Kathy Lawson
4. Presentations and Proclamations
   a. Proclamation Honoring April 25, 2025 as National Arbor Day
      i. Presented to Heather Loberger of the City of Martinsville Tree Board
   b. Proclamation Honoring April 2025 as National Sexual Assault Awareness Month
      i. Presented to Tamika Whitfield of Southside Survivors Response Center
   c. Proclamation Honoring April 2025 as National Autism Awareness Month

i. Presented to Billie White of PHS Autism Center

d. Proclamation Honoring the week of May 4-10, 2025 National Corrections Officers and Employees Week

   i. Presented to Sheriff Steve Draper and Major Laura Hopkins of the Martinsville Sheriff's Department

e. Presentation of FY 25-26 Proposed Capital Projects

   i. Presented by Chief Operations Officer, Edena Reese-Atmore. A presentation of Capital Improvement Projects for FY 2025-26. These are requests and not recommendations at this time. Aging Infrastructure was the largest challenge for the Capital Budget. A Capital Improvement plan should aim to have lasting impact for the future, approx. 5 years. Questions were asked by Council regarding the possibility of joint collaboration between Henry County Sheriffs' Office and Martinsville Sherriffs' Office for the housing of inmates – Major Hopkins answered that conversations are underway and that Henry County and Martisnville Sheriiffs' Offices have been very collaborative. Questions were also raised regarded the Refuse Toters, Public Works would like to standardize cans and the retrofit to garbage trucks in order to implement the Refuse Ordinance being considered by Council. The current status of the Hydroelectric Dam was a subject of discussion; as of current, the Electric Department is seeking avenues that support the revival of the system. Currently working to source missing and outdated pieces in order to bring the system to functioning capacity. Currently working on possibility of grants for the purchasing of new generator units.

5. Consent Agenda

   a. Discuss and Consider Approval of April 1, 2025; April 7, 2025; and April 14, 2025 Meeting Minutes

      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.

   b. Discuss and Consider Approval of Facilitator-Provided Retreat Meeting Minutes for February 28, 2025

      i. Approved with a Motion 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.

6. Regular Agenda or New Business
    a. Discuss and Consider Building Relocation Options
        i. New Option for Consideration: Clocktower on Commonwealth.
        ii. Discuss and Consider 1 Ellsworth Lease Option
            1. Must give an answer by April 30th.
            2. 8 Lester for Utility Billing, Finance, Treasurer, Commissioner of Revenue, Public Works Office, Electric Department, MiNet Department on the second floor. Timeline for renovations are uncertain at the time, approx. 8 months to a year.
            3. John Garland, Bill Holland, Walt Boyle presented BB&T option to Council. Next March would likely be the earliest to move in. Temporary relocations would have to be considered.
                a. Council requested more time to review materials and reach a discussion. Will be brought back at a future meeting.

    b. Discuss and Consider the Allocation of Funds for the Development of the Commonwealth Waterline
        i. Presented by Greg Maggard, Managing Director of Public Works. An extension of 3,000 LF of waterline along Commonwealth Boulevard West to Memorial Blvd (approx. 12 lots). Project cost estimate is approximately 1.2 million. Pending Development Pro Formas, Firestone Tires estimates 10-12 new employees and Popeyes 60 new employees (40 FTE). Andrew Palmer of the Lester Group spoke on the timeline. Firestone will not close without firm commitment. Lester is working on the building of Chipotle and Commonwealth Blvd is experiencing frequent interest.
            1. Council requested more time to review materials and reach a decision. Will be brought back at a future meeting.

c. Discuss and Consider Approval of Resolution Approving Lease Purchase Financing with Bank of America Public Capital Corp - Direct Bank Loan to acquire Equipment
   i. Presented by Davenport
   ii. Council Approved the Resolution with a Motion made by Vice Mayor Lawson and Seconded by Councilman Mei. 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 Update to the Joint Dispatch Center By-Laws
   i. Presented by Fire Chief Howell.
   ii. Bylaws last updated in 1988, the current chantes focus on updating terms and language within the bylaws. The E911 Board is requesting the City Council to review and approve the changes to the Joint Dispatch Center Bylaws.
   iii. Approved with a Motion made by Councilman Julian Mei 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.

e. Discuss and Consider Approval of the receipt and expense for the awarded Operation Ceasefire Grant. This is a revision to the revenue and expense budget for the General fund.
   i. Presented by Chief Fincher.
   ii. Expansion of the Raven Gunshot Detection System. A ceasefire grant was applied for by the Police Department to allow for a test of gunshot detectors; several areas had gaps and uncovered. FUnds were requested from the Attorney General in order to cover the remaining gaps around the city. Construction of the expansion has begun. Presentation being given to Council and city for the sake of transparency to explain how the funds came about; they came about as part of a MOU agreement with the Virginia Office of the Attorney General.
   iii. Approved with a Motion 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.

7. Take any action necessary as a result of the Executive session.
    a. None.

8. City Hall Reporting and Announcements
    a. Financial Update moved to May 13th
    b. Public Information Update

9. Business From the Floor
    a. None

10. Comments by Members of Council
11. Comments by City Manager
12. Adjournment
    a. Mayor made the motion to adjourn at 9:30 PM.