

**CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE
CITY OF MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA**

Thursday, April 10, 2025

MINUTES

5:00 PM

Room 208, Municipal Building

Committee Present: Jennifer Bowles, Kimble Reynolds, Barbara Seymour, Gene Teague

Staff Present: Eric Payne, Kaylin Hernandez, Patricia Hairston

Absent: Andy Hall

1. Call to Order

2. Regular Agenda or New Business

a) Consideration of City Charter Reorganization

- A presentation was shared outlining a proposed Charter review process and timeline, including a PowerPoint that synthesized previous discussions and grouped the second Council touchpoint within the “input-gathering” phase. Committee members agreed to revisit and revise the timeline collaboratively as the process evolves.
- Members reviewed an Excel document that mapped out the existing City Charter by chapter, section title, and page range, with a corresponding reference sheet summarizing the Danville Charter structure for comparison.
- Mr. Teague shared a separate Martinsville Charter spreadsheet designed to help the committee track proposed edits. The worksheet includes:
 - Each Charter section listed individually by row,
 - Fields to enter suggested edits, observations, and notes, and
 - A structure that allows members to work through the Charter in manageable, “bite-sized” sections. Mr. Teague welcomed feedback on the structure and encouraged members to suggest alternate formats if desired.
- Ms. Hernandez shared a supplemental spreadsheet that tracked the frequency of references to key government entities throughout the Charter (e.g., Mayor, City Council, City Manager, Courts), as a method for evaluating consistency and structure.

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- b) Discussion of the Use of Artificial Intelligence, Powers of the City
- Ms. Seymour introduced the idea of leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) tools to support the committee's review, specifically to:
 - Improve readability and clarity,
 - Suggest concise, modernized language,
 - Reorganize complex or redundant sections.
 - Ms. Seymour shared a Word Document with the committee that had the first round of AI-suggested edits for the Charter, modernizing the language and format for a general audience.
 - The committee discussed the idea and expressed strong interest in the approach. They agreed to proceed with testing it on Chapter 1, Incorporation and Powers.
 - Ms. Hernandez was tasked with inputting the full chapter into ChatGPT, reviewing the AI-suggested edits, and sharing results at the next meeting.

3. Adjournment