

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

Wednesday, May 14, 2025

MINUTES

5:00 PM

Room 208, Municipal Building

Committee Present: Jennifer Bowles, Andy Hall, Barbara Seymour, Gene Teague

Staff Present: Kaylin Hernandez, Patricia Hairston

Absent: Kimble Reynolds

1. Call to Order

2. Regular Agenda or New Business

a) Discussion of Community Feedback Form

- The committee discussed the development of a community feedback form to gather input from both residents and City Council members regarding the City Charter.
- The form will include:
 - A brief explanation of what a City Charter is and how the survey results will be used.
 - A link to the full City of Martinsville Charter.
 - Questions such as:
 - "Have you read the City Charter?"
 - "Are you a registered voter?"
 - "Do you have suggestions or areas of concern?"
 - Optional fields for name and email.
- Ms. Hairston recommended setting the survey deadline for mid-to-late June to allow sufficient time for public responses.
- Ms. Hernandez will draft the form and circulate it to committee members via email for review and feedback in the coming days.

b) Consideration of Language Revision, Powers of the City

- The committee began reviewing AI-suggested revisions to the "Powers of the City" section, generated using ChatGPT with a focus on readability, conciseness, and modernization.
- Members collaboratively reviewed each proposed revision to ensure that the intent and legal meaning of the original language were preserved.
- The committee approved revisions to §§ 1 and 2, specifically reviewing Powers 1–7 and 24.

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- Key discussion points included:
 - Clarifying language related to municipal buildings. Mr. Hall is reviewing applicable state language, particularly regarding whether municipal buildings are distinct from court facilities.
 - Ensuring consistency in terminology, especially between terms like “City government” and “City Council.”
 - Retaining the phrase “The City shall remain a single ward,” with Mr. Teague recommending it remain unchanged.
 - Reorganizing complex powers (such as those related to taxation and assessments) into smaller subsections for improved clarity.
 - Seeking clarification on the Commissioner of the Revenue’s role in food inspection, to ensure consistency with state responsibilities.
- The committee agreed to reconvene in two weeks on Wednesday, May 28 to continue reviewing the Powers section.

3. Adjournment