

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

Wednesday, May 28, 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, Peyton Nibblett

Absent: Kimble Reynolds

1. Call to Order

2. Regular Agenda or New Business

a) Consideration of the Powers of the City

- The committee continued reviewing the AI-suggested revisions to the “Powers of the City” section, comparing each with the original Charter language to ensure consistency with the original intent.
- The committee approved the revision to Power 8 as presented.
- For Power 9, members requested a clearer version and re-ran the original text through AI. The second suggested version was approved, and the committee opted to combine Powers 9 and 10 into a single paragraph due to overlapping subject matter.
 - During the discussion, members raised questions about rules and regulations regarding burial of the dead (Power 10).
 - Ms. Hernandez was asked to research relevant state code and determine whether these references could be summarized or replaced with a state code citation instead of being spelled out in full.
 - Ms. Hernandez was also tasked with cross walking all powers with the Code of Virginia to identify where state law already grants similar authority, which could streamline or replace duplicative language in the Charter.
- The committee reviewed Power 11, noting that the initial AI revision omitted important elements (e.g., armories and outdoor markets). Members reprocessed the original version through AI, and approved the second suggested revision as more accurate.
- Members reviewed and approved Powers 12–16, which all pertain to Public Utilities. To simplify and streamline this section, they directed Ms. Hernandez to develop a combined version that consolidates these related powers.

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- Similarly, Powers 17 and 18 were reviewed and approved, and the committee recommended combining them into a single paragraph.
 - These powers concern streets, transportation, and public spaces, and were deemed close enough in scope to consolidate.
 - Members chose to remove outdated references to the “telegraph” and add “fiber optic” to reflect modern infrastructure.
- b) Review of the City Charter, Chapter 2 (City Council)
- Item was deferred to the next scheduled meeting.
- c) Review of the City Charter, Chapter 3 (Ordinances)
- Item was deferred to the next scheduled meeting.
- d) Discussion of Recommendations for Changes to Swearing-In, Oath of Office
- Mr. Teague shared an email earlier in the day regarding potential updates to the oath of office language, based on a PowerPoint presentation from Vice Mayor Lawson.
 - While the committee did not discuss this item during the meeting, it will be reviewed when the committee reaches the relevant Charter section.

3. Adjournment