

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

Wednesday, June 11, 2025

MINUTES

5:00 PM

Room 208, Municipal Building

Committee Present: Jennifer Bowles, Barbara Seymour, Gene Teague

Staff Present: Eric Payne, Kaylin Hernandez, Patricia Hairston

Absent: Andy Hall, Kimble Reynolds

1. Call to Order

2. Regular Agenda or New Business

a) Deliberation on Language Revision, Powers of the City (Powers 11, 28, and 38)

- Power 28 (Health Department):
 - Ms. Seymour and Mr. Payne presented edits to Power 28, following their assignment at the previous meeting, as shared via email.
 - Ms. Seymour emphasized the importance of clearly distinguishing between City Council responsibilities and those of state agencies.
 - Her proposed edits removed language that encompassed the work of state agencies, such as food inspection and regulation, disease control and quarantine, the establishment and regulation of hospitals, and the record-keeping of vital statistics.
 - Mr. Payne proposed simplifications for clarity and concision.
 - The committee approved Ms. Seymour's revision, with minor modifications for brevity.
- Power 11 (Utilities):
 - The committee approved the language revision as proposed in the last meeting.
- Power 38 (Housing Authority):
 - Discussion was tabled to allow the Housing Authority time to review and submit recommended revisions.

b) Discussion of the Charter Review Process

- Mr. Payne shared a conversation with Delegate Eric Phillips, who expressed hesitation in submitting Charter revisions in consecutive General Assembly sessions.

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- The committee agreed that revisions over the next year would allow for more extensive review and collaboration.
 - Members would like to speak with the City Council to consider extending the Charter review process and expanding the committee to encompass more career field perspectives.
- c) Consideration of Language Revision, Chapter 2 (City Council)
- The committee reviewed draft revisions to Chapter 2, Sections 1 through 4, for readability and concision.
 - The revisions, generated with assistance from artificial intelligence, were approved with minor manual language edits to preserve the integrity of City powers.
- d) Consideration of Language Revision, Chapter 3 (Ordinances)
- Discussion was deferred to the next scheduled meeting.
- e) Discussion of Recommendations for Changes to Swearing-In, Oath of Office
- The committee discussed aligning City language with updated state law on council swearing-in and filling vacancies.
 - Ms. Hernandez was tasked with drafting a language revision for Chapter 2, Section 5, to reflect the state's current legal language.

3. Adjournment