



August 7th, 2025
Martinsville City Council
Special Called, Closed Session Meeting Minutes

5pm, Call Open Session to Order -

Martinsville Municipal Building; Council Chambers

A Special Called, Emergency Closed-Session Meeting was held at Martinsville Municipal Building, on August 7, 2025 at 5 PM.

Council Members participating included Vice Mayor, Kathy Lawson; Julian Mei, Rayshaun Gravely, Aaron Rawls, and Mayor LC Jones.

Call Open Session to Order: Mayor Jones called the meeting to order in Council Chambers and advised Council would go into Closed Session beginning at 5 PM. In accordance with the Code of Virginia, Title 2.2 Chapter 37, Freedom of Information Act and upon a motion by Council Member Lawson and seconded by Council Member Mei with the following 5-0 recorded vote: Council Member Mei, aye; Council Member Lawson, aye; Council Member Gravely, aye; Mayor Jones, aye; Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;

Council convened in Closed Session to discuss the following matters:

- a. 2.2-3711 A(1) Discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body; In regards to City Attorney and City Manager positions, contracts, and performances.
- b. 2.2-3711 A(7) Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body. In regards to current, ongoing, and threatened litigation matters and employment law investigation.



- c. 2.2-3711 A(8) Consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to permit the closure of a meeting merely because an attorney representing the public body is in attendance or is consulted on a matter. Regarding the City Manager Contract.

7:15 PM, Return to Open Session and Certification of Closed Session -
Martinsville Municipal Building; Council Chambers

With a Motion by Lawson and Second by Mei, City Council certifies that only those matters permitted by the Code of Virginia Sec. 2.2-3711 and specifically referenced in the motion to enter closed session were discussed during the closed session. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:

Councilman Rawls, aye;
Councilman Gravely, aye;
Councilman Mei, aye;
Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
Mayor Jones, aye.

Council certifies that only business matters under the following:

- a. 2.2-3711 A(1) Discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body; In regards to City Attorney and City Manager positions, contracts, and performances.
- b. 2.2-3711 A(7) Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body. In regards to current, ongoing, and threatened litigation matters and employment law investigation.



- c. 2.2-3711 A(8) Consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to permit the closure of a meeting merely because an attorney representing the public body is in attendance or is consulted on a matter. Regarding the City Manager Contract.

7:15PM, Action Taken Out of Closed Session

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- A. Motion to terminate the employment of City Manager Aretha R. Ferrell-Benavides for the, but not limited to, following reasons: commission of an act of malfeasance, dishonesty, violation of city charter, city code, city policy, city rules and regulations, unsatisfactory performance, and any other behavior or conduct as City Council may deem to adversely affect the confidence of the public or the integrity of the City made by Julian Mei and second by Kathy Lawson.
 - a. Approved with the following 4-1 vote: Councilman Rawls, aye; Councilman Gravely, aye; Councilman Mei, aye; Vice Mayor Lawson, aye; Mayor Jones, no.
- B. Motion to authorize Sands Anderson to provide pertinent facts of the investigation to the Commonwealth Attorney made by Kathy Lawson, seconded by Councilman Rawls.
 - a. Approved with the following 5-0 vote: Councilman Rawls, aye; Councilman Gravely, aye; Councilman Mei, aye; Vice Mayor Lawson, aye; Mayor Jones, aye.

7:30 PM, Adjournment

Vice Mayor Lawson made the motion to adjourn at 7:30 PM.