



October 14, 2025
Martinsville City Council
Meeting Minutes

4:30pm, Call Open Session to Order -

Martinsville Municipal Building; Council Chambers

A Closed-Session Meeting was held at Martinsville Municipal Building, on October 14, 2025 at 4:30 PM.

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

Councilman Rawls entered at 5:00 PM.

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 4:30 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 4-0 recorded vote:

Council Member Mei, 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. (A1) In regard to the Economic Development Authority (EDA) Board Interviews. 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;
- b. 2.2-3711. (A8) In regards to Baldwin Building status and PSA Litigation. 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.

5:00 PM, Closed Session -

Martinsville Municipal Building; Room 226

Council convened in Closed Session to discuss the following matters:

- c. 2.2-3711. (A1) In regard to the Economic Development Authority (EDA) Board Interviews. 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;
- d. 2.2-3711. (A8) In regards to Baldwin Building status and PSA Litigation. 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.



7 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.

Martinsville City Council certifies that only business matters under the following were discussed:

- e. 2.2-3711. (A1) In regard to Economic Development Authority (EDA) Board Interviews. 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;
- f. 2.2-3711. (A8) In regards to Baldwin Building status and PSA Litigation. 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.



7 PM Regular Session

Martinsville Municipal Building; Council Chambers

Council Members Present: Rawls, Gravely, Mei, Lawson, Jones.

1. Call to Order
 - a. Mayor Jones called the meeting to order beginning at 7PM. Audio issues persist. City will continue streaming with assists from local broadcasting agencies.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Invocation
 - a. Led by Pastor William Williamson
4. Action Taken Out of Closed Session
 - a. Jim Frith and Michael Scales were unanimously reappointed to the Economic Development Authority Board of Directors for four-year terms, expiring December 31, 2029.
 - b. Motion to reappoint Jim Frith and Michael Scales to the Economic Development Authority (EDA) for a term of four years ending in 12/31/2029 made by Councilman Mei and Second by Vice Mayor Lawson.
 - i. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:
 - Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - Councilman Mei, aye;
 - Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - Mayor Jones, aye.



5. Presentations and Proclamations

- a. Proclamation Honoring Dr. Zebedee Talley for 10 Years of Distinguished Service as Superintendent and a Lifetime of Dedication to Education, Presented to Dr. Talley; Martinsville City Public Schools' Superintendent
- b. Proclamation Honoring the Life and Legacy of Frank W. Mariels; Presented to Joe Keiper; Virginia Museum of Natural History Executive Director
- c. Proclamation Honoring October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Presented to Pat Via; CEO and Co-Founder of MLC Cancer Foundation
- d. Proclamation Recognizing October as Code Compliance and Inspector Month, Presented to City Community Development Department
- e. Hear a Report from Council Members that Attended VML Annual Conference in Roanoke, Virginia
 - i. Virginia Municipal League is a state-based organization that serves as an avenue for advocacy and a resource for public-service officials.
 - ii. Topics Included:
 - VML Legislative Agenda
 - Sales Tax for Local Schools
 - Designated Outdoor Refreshment Areas
 - a. Creating Confined Spaces for Alcohol Consumption
 - Automated Traffic Safety Enforcement
 - ADA Compliance on Local Government Technology
 - Clean Water Assistance
 - Citizen Centric Report
 - Housing Development Creating Increased Enrollment in City Schools
 - Data Centers need to be specified in Comprehensive Plan
 - Tourism is the first date for Economic Development



- Shaun Campbell from local WPPDC did Presentation on Housing
- Safety for Elected Officials

- Evaluating City Managers and Department Directors Best Practices
- Community Policing and Public Safety
- New Officers being introduced in Council Meetings
- Affordable Housing
- Community Engagement
- Financing for Public Utilities

6. Consent Agenda

- a. Discuss and Consider Remaining 2025 Holiday Schedule
 - i. Council approved the remaining 2025 holiday schedule, granting employees an extra day before Thanksgiving and on Christmas Eve.
 - Motion to Approve made by Vice Mayor Lawson and Second by Councilman Gravley.
 - Approved with the following 5-0 vote:
 - a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - c. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - e. Mayor Jones, aye.
- b. Discuss and Consider September 16, 2025 and September 23, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes
 - i. Motion to approve made by Vice Mayor Lawson and Second by Councilman Mei.
 - Approved with the following 5-0 vote:
 - a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - c. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - e. Mayor Jones, aye.



7. Regular Agenda or New Business

a. Discuss and Consider Support of BRIC Vision 2025 -- GO Virginia Grant Request

- i. Council approved providing a non-cash, in-kind match and a letter of support for the BRIC Vision 2025 and Go Virginia grant, supporting advanced manufacturing research in the region.
- ii. Motion to authorize Interim City Manager to prepare and submit a Letter of Support made by Aaron Rawls and Second by Kathy Lawson.

1. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:

- a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
- b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
- c. Councilman Mei, aye;
- d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
- e. Mayor Jones, aye.

b. Hold Public Hearing and Discuss and Consider Approval of a Resolution Authorizing the Donation of City-Owned Real Property to the Economic Development Authority of the City of Martinsville, Virginia

- i. Public Hearing being held for the full acre of property with a future conveyance to be discussed. At this time, the 3.662 acre is being considered.
- ii. Motion to Open Public Hearing made by Kathy Lawson with a Second by Aaron Rawls.

1. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:

- a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
- b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
- c. Councilman Mei, aye;
- d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
- e. Mayor Jones, aye.



- iii. Motion to Close Public Hearing made by Kathy Lawson and Second by Julian Mei.
 - 1. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:
 - a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - c. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - e. Mayor Jones, aye.
- iv. Motion to convey the 3.661 acre property to the Economic Development Authority and adopt the Resolution as submitted made by Vice Mayor Kathy Lawson and Seconded by Rayshaun Gravely.
 - 1. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:
 - a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - c. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - e. Mayor Jones, aye.
- c. Hold Public Hearings for and Subsequently Discuss and Consider Approval of Rezoning Ordinances
 - i. Motion to Open Public Hearing for Rezone Certain Properties of Commonwealth Boulevard Properties (EDG to CC) made by Kathy Lawson with a Second by Aaron Rawls.
 - 1. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:
 - a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - c. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - e. Mayor Jones, aye.



- ii. Motion to Close Public Hearing for Rezone of Commonwealth Boulevard Properties (EDG to CC) made by Kathy Lawson and Second by Julian Mei.
 - 1. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:
 - a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - c. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - e. Mayor Jones, aye.
- iii. Motion to approve Ordinance of Rezone of Commonwealth Boulevard Properties (EDG to CC) on first reading made by Kathy Lawson and Second by Councilman Mei.
 - 1. Approved with the following 5-0 Vote
 - 2. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - 3. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - 4. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - 5. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - 6. Mayor Jones, aye.
- iv. Motion to Open Public Hearing for Rezone of Five Points neighborhood (CC to RT) made by Kathy Lawson with a Second by Julian Mei.
 - 1. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:
 - a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - c. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - e. Mayor Jones, aye



- v. Motion to Close Public Hearing for Rezone Five Points neighborhood (CC to RT)
 - 1. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:
 - a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - c. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - e. Mayor Jones, aye.
- vi. Motion to approve Ordinance of Rezone of Five Points neighborhood (CC to RT) on first reading made by Kathy Lawson and Second by Councilman Mei.
- vii. Approved with the following 5-0 Vote
 - 1. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - 2. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - 3. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - 4. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - 5. Mayor Jones, aye.
- viii. Motion to Open Public Hearing for Rezone of 100 South Jackson Street (CC to RT) made by Kathy Lawson with a Second by Julian Mei.
 - 1. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:
 - a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - c. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - e. Mayor Jones, aye



- ix. Motion to Close Public Hearing for Rezone of 100 South Jackson Street (CC to RT) made by Kathy Lawson and Second by Julian Mei.
 - 1. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:
 - a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - c. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - e. Mayor Jones, aye.
- x. Motion to approve Ordinance of Rezone of 100 South Jackson Street (CC to RT) on first reading made by Kathy Lawson and Second by Councilman Mei.
- xi. Approved with the following 5-0 Vote
 - 1. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - 2. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - 3. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - 4. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - 5. Mayor Jones, aye.
- xii. Motion to Open Public Hearing for Rezone of Properties along Bridge, East Market, College, and Railroad Streets (various to RT) made by Kathy Lawson with a Second by Julian Mei.
 - 1. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:
 - a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - c. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - e. Mayor Jones, aye



- xiii. Motion to Close Public Hearing for Rezone of Properties along Bridge, East Market, College, and Railroad Streets (various to RT) made by Kathy Lawson and Second by Julian Mei.
 - 1. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:
 - a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - c. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - e. Mayor Jones, aye.
- xiv. Motion to approve Ordinance of Properties along Bridge, East Market, College, and Railroad Streets (various to RT) on first reading made by Kathy Lawson and Second by Councilman Mei.
- xv. Approved with the following 5-0 Vote
 - 1. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - 2. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - 3. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - 4. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - 5. Mayor Jones, aye.
- xvi. Motion to Open Public Hearing for Rezone of 500 Blue Ridge Street (CC to RT)made by Kathy Lawson with a Second by Julian Mei.
 - 1. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:
 - a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
 - b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
 - c. Councilman Mei, aye;
 - d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
 - e. Mayor Jones, aye



xvii. Motion to Close Public Hearing for Rezone 500 Blue Ridge Street (CC to RT) made by Kathy Lawson and Second by Aaron Rawls.

1. Approved with the following 5-0 vote:

- a. Councilman Rawls, aye;
- b. Councilman Gravely, aye;
- c. Councilman Mei, aye;
- d. Vice Mayor Lawson, aye;
- e. Mayor Jones, aye.

Vice Mayor Kathy Lawson asked Kris Bridges, Chief Zoning Official, for the potential of a comprehensive rewrite as opposed to the smaller amendments. A work session, joint with the City Council and Planning Commission, would be beneficial in order to create a Comprehensive, streamlined Zoning Ordinance.

City Hall Reporting and Announcements

- A. City News and Events
- B. News Update from City Registrar
 - a. Early voting and election information provided, with reminders about official correspondence.

Business From the Floor

- A. James McNair
 - a. NAACP requested a \$5,000 sponsorship for its November 14th Freedom Fund Scholarship Gala and outlined its ongoing community initiatives.



B. Chareil Hylton

- a. Chareil Hylton raised concerns regarding the responsibilities of local officials to uphold constitutional duties. He noted that when state authorities do not fully address certain issues, it becomes important for county officials and the community to take appropriate action. He expressed concern that the clerk of court did not file a requested document into the public record as expected, which he believes is an important duty of the office. He urged Sheriff Steve M. Draper to address this matter publicly and work toward a resolution.

Adjournment

- A. Vice Mayor Lawson made the motion to adjourn at 8:30 PM.



**PROCLAMATION FROM THE CITY OF MARTINSVILLE
HONORING DR. ZEBEDEE TALLEY FOR 10 YEARS OF
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AS SUPERINTENDENT AND A
LIFETIME OF DEDICATION TO EDUCATION**

WHEREAS, Dr. Zebedee Talley has faithfully served Martinsville City Public Schools (MCPS) for more than 45 years, beginning his career in 1978 as a History teacher, Gifted Students teacher, and U.S. Government teacher; and

WHEREAS, throughout his tenure, Dr. Talley has demonstrated his commitment to student success by founding the first MCPS Gospel Choir, coaching track, cross country, and basketball, and inspiring generations of students both inside and outside the classroom; and

WHEREAS, his path of leadership included service as Vice Principal at both Martinsville High School and Martinsville Middle School, and later as | Co-Principal of Martinsville Middle School, before assuming the role of Superintendent in 2015, where he has faithfully led our schools for the past decade; and

WHEREAS, his excellence in education has been widely recognized, including being named MCPS Teacher of the Year in 1990, receiving the NAACP Clyde Williams Award, several Piedmont District Coach of the Year honors, the Samuel S. Trott Educational Award, and the 2022 Trailblazer Award from the Radford University Black Alumni Networking Group; and

WHEREAS, under Dr. Talley's leadership as Superintendent, Martinsville City Public Schools has proudly achieved nine consecutive years of full accreditation, demonstrating his unwavering dedication to academic achievement and organizational excellence; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mayor L.C. Jones, Mayor of the City of Martinsville, Virginia, on behalf of the City Council and a most grateful city, do hereby honor and commend Dr. Zebedee Talley for his ten years of distinguished leadership as Superintendent of Martinsville City Public Schools and for his lifetime of dedicated service to the cause of education in Martinsville; and

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hands and caused the Seal of the City of Martinsville to be affixed this 14th day of October, 2025.

LC Jones, Mayor
Mayor of the City of Martinsville



PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING OCTOBER AS CODE COMPLIANCE AND INSPECTOR MONTH

WHEREAS, the City of Martinsville acknowledges the vital role of code compliance officers, building inspectors, and neighborhood services staff in safeguarding public health, safety, and the aesthetic integrity of our community; and

WHEREAS, these professionals are often the first responders to concerns about property maintenance, safety hazards, and neighborhood quality, working diligently to resolve issues and enhance the livability of our city; and

WHEREAS, through their work, they help prevent hazards, reduce blight, and ensure that properties meet standards that protect the well-being of all citizens; and

WHEREAS, their work extends beyond enforcement, encompassing education, community engagement, and collaboration with residents to promote understanding and compliance with city codes; and

WHEREAS, thriving neighborhoods depend not only on grand design or new investment, but also on steady attention to detail—on safe structures, clean lots, proper upkeep, and the enforcement of rules designed to protect every citizen; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the month of October as “Code Compliance & Inspector Month” signals to every resident, property owner, business, and city worker that we value this work, that we honor those who do it, and that we stand together in the belief that well-kept, safe, and beautiful neighborhoods are essential to opportunity, pride, and dignity for all;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, **L.C. Jones**, Mayor of the City of Martinsville, Virginia, do hereby proclaim **October 2025** as “**Code Compliance & Inspector Month**” in the City of Martinsville. I urge all citizens to recognize and support the efforts of our code compliance officers and inspectors, and to participate in activities that promote the safety, health, and well-being of our community.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hands and caused the Seal of the City of Martinsville to be affixed this 14th day of October, 2025.

LC Jones, Mayor
Mayor of the City of Martinsville



**PROCLAMATION HONORING OCTOBER 2025 AS BREAST
CANCER AWARENESS MONTH IN THE CITY OF
MARTINSVILLE**

WHEREAS, breast cancer touches the lives of countless families, striking mothers, daughters, sisters, grandmothers, and friends, as well as men who also face this disease, leaving no community untouched; and

WHEREAS, every diagnosis carries with it a story of courage and resilience—stories of neighbors here in Martinsville who have faced treatments, endured struggles, and inspired us with their strength and hope; and

WHEREAS, far too many lives have been cut short by breast cancer, and the heartbreak of loss reminds us of the urgency to stand together in remembrance of loved ones, and in support of those still fighting; and

WHEREAS, survivors embody the spirit of perseverance and healing, while families, caregivers, and medical professionals demonstrate extraordinary compassion in walking beside them through the darkest days; and

WHEREAS, raising awareness, promoting early detection through screenings, and supporting research not only saves lives but also honors the memory of those we have lost and brings us closer to a future free from this disease; and

WHEREAS, October is nationally recognized as *Breast Cancer Awareness Month*, uniting people across our nation and here in Martinsville in solidarity, reflection, and action in the fight against breast cancer.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, *L.C. Jones*, Mayor of the City of Martinsville, Virginia, do hereby proclaim **October 2025 as BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH** in the City of Martinsville and encourage all citizens to honor survivors, support families, remember those we have lost, and commit ourselves to raising awareness, offering compassion, and advancing the cause of prevention and cure.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Martinsville to be affixed this 14th day of October, 2025.

LC Jones, Mayor
Mayor of the City of Martinsville



**PROCLAMATION FROM THE CITY OF MARTINSVILLE
HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF FRANK W.
MARIELS**

WHEREAS, the City of Martinsville recognizes and honors individuals whose lives exemplify dedicated service, quiet generosity, and lasting contributions to the betterment of our community; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Frank W. Mariels, a lifelong resident of Martinsville, faithfully served his city as a lead traffic-light technician and electrician, ensuring the safety and reliability of essential public services; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Mariels lived a humble and modest life, yet demonstrated a remarkable spirit of craftsmanship, curiosity, and community pride through his talents, including building and designing award-winning projects during his youth; and

WHEREAS, upon his passing, Mr. Mariels bestowed a transformational gift of more than \$4.4 million to the Virginia Museum of Natural History Foundation, the largest donation in its history, ensuring new opportunities for education, exhibits, and public engagement for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, his selfless generosity and dedication reflect the very best of Martinsville's values—commitment, service, and care for future generations; and

WHEREAS, the City of Martinsville wishes to honor Mr. Mariels not only for his extraordinary contribution but also for his example of how a life of modest means and quiet dignity can create a legacy of profound impact.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, L.C. Jones, Mayor of the City of Martinsville, Virginia, do hereby recognize and honor the life and legacy of **Frank W. Mariels** with gratitude and respect, and encourages all citizens to remember and celebrate his remarkable contributions to our community.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Martinsville to be affixed this 14th day of October, 2025.

LC Jones, Mayor
Mayor of the City of Martinsville

 11-5-2021

LC Jones, Mayor



Peyton Nibblett, Deputy City Clerk