



May 26, 2026
Martinsville City Council
Meeting Minutes

Call Open Session to Order - 6:00pm, Council Chambers; Municipal Building; 55 W Church St, Martinsville VA

Council Members in Attendance: Mayor Jones, Kathy Lawson, Rayshaun Gravely, Julian Mei.

Councilman Rawls entered after the vote was taken.

a. Discuss and Consider Motion to go into Closed Session. Motion made by Vice Mayor Lawson and Second by Councilman Mei. Council convened in Closed Session with the Following 4-0 vote.

- Councilman Mei; aye
- Councilman Gravely; aye
- Vice Mayor Lawson; aye
- Mayor Jones; aye

Closed Session 6:00pm, Rm 32; Municipal Building

City Council met in closed session beginning at 6:00pm to discuss the following:

- a. 2.2-37.11 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; With regard to Youth Advisory Committee interviews.
- b. 2.2-37.11 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. With regard to Facility Show-Cause Order.



The following City Council Members were in attendance: Kathy Lawson, Rayshaun Gravely, Julian Mei, and Mayor Jones. Staff in attendance were City Manager, Robert Fincher and City Attorney Representative, Stephen Durbin of Sands Anderson.

Councilman Rawls left Closed Session at 6:10pm.

Return to Open Session and Certification of Closed Session - 7:00pm, Council Chambers; Municipal Building

A. Upon a motion by Vice Mayor Lawson, and second by Councilman Mei, City Council certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge:

(i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under Section 2.2-3711; and

(ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting by Council.

B. Approved with the following 4-1 vote.

- Councilman Mei; aye
- Councilman Gravely; aye
- Councilman Rawls; abstain
 - Cited Reason: Left Closed Session early.
- Vice Mayor Lawson; aye
- Mayor Jones; aye

Regular Session - 7:10pm, Council Chambers

Attendance:

- Call to Order
- Pledge of Allegiance



- Invocation
 - Led by Pastor Faith Weedling, First United Methodist Church

- Take Any Action Necessary as A Result of the Executive Session
 - None

- Presentations and Proclamations
 - Presentation of a Proclamation Honoring June 1-7, 2026 as “Thank Your City Worker Week”
 - Planning Commission Monthly Update

- Regular Agenda or New Business
 - Discuss and Consider Items of Consent
 - Confirmation of the Following Meeting Minutes:
 - May 12, 2026
 - Appointment of Cordell Daniels and Olivia Turner to YAC for a term ending in December 31, 2026
 - Consideration of a Request to Apply for Grant by Youth Advisory Committee
 - Items of Consent Approved with the following 4-0 vote:
 - Councilman Mei; aye
 - Councilman Rawls; abstain
 - a. Not present for May 12 Meeting
 - Councilman Gravely; aye
 - Vice Mayor Lawson; aye

- Hold a Public Hearing for and Subsequently Discuss and Consider Ordinance No. 2026-9, Rezoning Approximately 13.05 Acres of Property along Chatham Heights Road and Bob Gregory Street from "C-C, Commercial Corridor" and "R-N, Neighborhood Residential" to "R-T, Residential Transitional"



- Motion to Open Floor for Public Hearing made by Vice Mayor Lawson and Second by Councilman Mei
 - Approved with the following 5-0 vote.
 - Councilman Mei; aye
 - Councilman Gravely; aye
 - Councilman Rawls; aye
 - Vice Mayor Lawson; aye
 - Mayor Jones; aye
- Stacy Niblet
 - Asked for Clarification on Zoning
- Motion to Close Public Hearing made by Vice Mayor Lawson and Second by Councilman Mei
 - Approved with the following 5-0 vote.
 - Councilman Mei; aye
 - Councilman Gravely; aye
 - Councilman Rawls; aye
 - Vice Mayor Lawson; aye
 - Mayor Jones; aye
- Approved with a Motion from Vice Mayor Lawson to approve on first reading, made by Vice Mayor Lawson and Second by Councilman Gravely.
 - Approved with the following 5-0 vote.
 - Councilman Mei; aye
 - Councilman Gravely; aye
 - Councilman Rawls; aye
 - Vice Mayor Lawson; aye
 - Mayor Jones; aye
- Hold a Public Hearing for and Subsequently Discuss and Consider Adoption of Budget Ordinance for FY 26-27 on First Reading
 - a. Motion to Open Floor for Public Hearing made by Vice Mayor Lawson and Second by Councilman Mei
 - Approved with the following 5-0 vote.
 - Councilman Mei; aye
 - Councilman Gravely; aye
 - Councilman Rawls; aye
 - Vice Mayor Lawson; aye
 - Mayor Jones; aye



- Michael Greene
 - Questions about City Schools' Budget
 - Compared School Systems to Southwest Virginia
 - Closest in size was Patrick County
 - \$14,850 per student for Patrick County
 - \$14,115 per student for Franklin
 - \$16,665 per student for Henry County
 - \$17,192 per student for Martinsville
- Gwen Williams
 - Concerns of higher property taxes and suggested finding alternative ways to adjust budget deficits
 - Reduction of salaries, bonuses, and administrative costs
 - Residents not having to fully bare the burden
- Joey Martin
 - Concerns of tax burden on average citizen
 - Asked will rates/taxes have to be increased next fiscal year
 - Asked about consolidation of services with the County
- Jennifer Bowles
 - Spoke on consideration of services with the County and reversion
 - Spoke on maintaining the levels of Service with current budget and acknowledging the likelihood of such is thin
 - Taxes will continue to be raised year after year
- Rachel Huntsicker
 - Need for maintaining City without reversion
 - Martinsville High School Graduation has spirit and is more family-oriented
 - Spoke on charities and community resources available for those needing help
 - Spoke on the City needing to be able to fund City Operations



- b. Motion to Close Public Hearing made by Vice Mayor Lawson and Second by Councilman Gravely
 - Approved with the following 5-0 vote.
 - Councilman Mei; aye
 - Councilman Gravely; aye
 - Councilman Rawls; aye
 - Vice Mayor Lawson; aye
 - Mayor Jones; aye
- Motion to table from Vice Mayor Lawson and Second by Councilman Mei. Established June 8, 2026 at 3pm as a work session proceeding School Board Interviews.
 - a. Approved with the following 5-0 vote.
 - Councilman Mei; aye
 - Councilman Gravely; aye
 - Councilman Rawls; aye
 - Vice Mayor Lawson; aye
 - Mayor Jones; aye
- Discuss and Consider A Resolution Imposing a Temporary Moratorium on the Issuance of Solicitor's Permits & Peddler's Permits
 - a. Motion to Approve Resolution as Amended: Resolution to be readdressed on September 22, 2026 made by Councilman Mei and Second by Vice Mayor Lawson
 - Approved with the following 5-0 vote.
 - a. Councilman Mei; aye
 - b. Councilman Gravely; aye
 - c. Councilman Rawls; aye
 - d. Vice Mayor Lawson; aye
 - e. Mayor Jones; aye

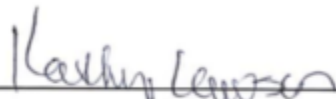
Adjournment

- A. Motion to adjourn made by Vice Mayor Lawson at 9pm.



 6.9.26

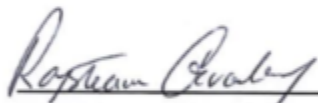
LC Jones, Mayor



Kathy Lawson, Vice Mayor



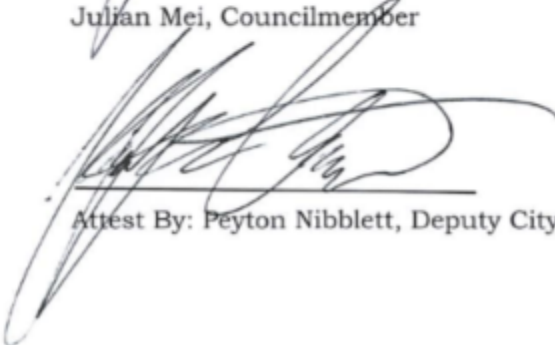
Aaron Rawls, Councilmember



Rayshaun Gravely, Councilmember



Julian Mei, Councilmember



Attest By: Peyton Niblett, Deputy City Clerk