

May 28, 2024 Council Meeting

A Work Session was held at 12:00 pm on May 28, 2024, in Room 208, Conference Room, Municipal Building. Mayor Jones, Vice Mayor Rawls, Council Member Lawson, Council Member Pearson, City Manager Aretha Ferrell-Benavides, Chief Operating Officer Edena Reese-Atmore, Public Information Officer Kendall Davis, Finance Director Mandy McGhee, Assistant Finance Director Crystal Ferguson, Public Works Director Greg Maggard, Community Development Director Keith Holland, and Human Resources Director Travis Hodge were in attendance. Council Member Mitchell was not in attendance.

Community Development Director Keith Holland explained the Arts & Cultural Committee membership requirements.



Purpose

- Since its creation in 2010, many of the organizations included in the Arts & Cultural Committee Membership Requirements are no longer active or relevant to the committee or its purpose.
- Recruiting members for the ACC has proven difficult with the current requirements.
- The ACC has been lacking members for several years now with over half of membership currently vacant.
- There are other organizations that can be added to the membership requirements to ensure recruitment of the best talent and most qualified individuals to assist in the arts and cultural efforts of the committee.

Comparison of Requirements

UPDATED REQUIREMENTS

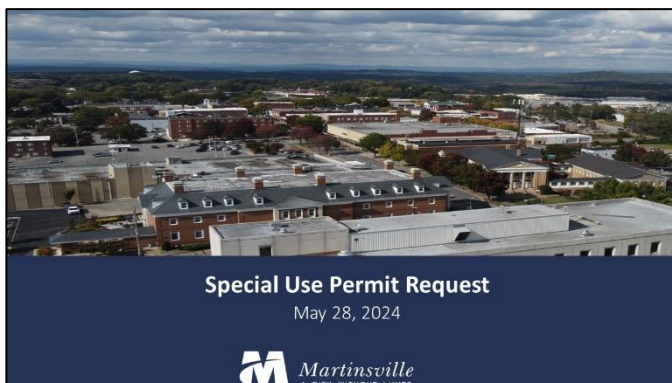
- (1) Representative from Piedmont Arts Association
- (1) Representative from Studio 107
- (1) Representative from Virginia Museum of Natural History
- (1) Representative from MHC Historical Society
- (1) Representative from Ray Hollingsworth's Dance Studio
- (1) Representative from FAH Museum
- (1) Representative from Rooster Walk
- (1) Local Artist
- (3) City Residents or Business Owners or Local Artists

CURRENT REQUIREMENTS

- (1) Representative from Piedmont Arts or Studio 107
- (1) Representative from Virginia Museum of Natural History
- (1) Representative from Southern VA Artisan Center
- (1) Representative from MHC Historical Society
- (1) Representative from Architectural Review Board
- (1) Representative from West Piedmont Planning District Commission
- (1) City Business Owner
- (4) Citizens

Questions?

Community Development Director Keith Holland explained the need for a Special Use Permit Request for 1048 Independence Drive.



Purpose

- Special Use Permit request of Tony Williams.
- To allow for a live-work residence at 1048 Independence Drive.
- The live-work residence will consist of an art and woodworking shop.
- The property is large at approximately 19.18 acres and will be buffered from view.
- The property is zoned R-C, where live-work residences are allowed by Special Use Permit.

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Planning Commission Public Hearing • A public hearing was legally advertised and held before Planning Commission on April 17, 2024. • Adjoining property owners were notified of the Planning Commission public hearing. • There was one (1) public comment received during the public hearing. • The Planning Commission recommended APPROVAL by a vote of 4-0. • Adjoining property owners were notified of the City Council public hearing. • Staff has received no comments or concerns regarding this request to date.	Questions?
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Consider setting a public hearing for Council’s June 13, 2024, meeting for the purpose of receiving names of citizens interested in appointments for two 3-year terms ending June 30, 2024, on the Martinsville City School Board.

City Council Executive Session began at 6:00 PM. In accordance with the Code of Virginia, Title 2.2 Chapter 37, Freedom of Information Act to discuss the following: (1) 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, concerning Board and Commission appointments, (2) 2.2-3711.A.3: Discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose or disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, concerning the former BB&T Building agreement. At the conclusion of Closed Session, each returning member of Council certified that (1) only public business matters exempt from open meeting requirements were discussed in said Closed Session; and (2) only those business matters identified in the motion convening the Closed Session were heard, discussed, or considered during the meeting. A motion was made by Council Member Lawson; seconded by Council Member Pearson with the following 5-0 recorded vote in favor to return to Open Session: Council Member Lawson, aye; Mayor Jones, aye; Council Member Mitchell, aye; Vice Mayor Rawls, aye; and Council Member Pearson, aye.

Regular Session began at 7:00 PM.

Call to Order - Mayor Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. He welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that an agenda could be found online and in the back of the room.

Pledge to the American Flag and Invocation by Council Member Kathy Lawson.

In accordance with the Code of Virginia § 2.2-3708.3.2, Council Members and the City Attorney agreed to allow Council Member Mitchell to participate electronically due to a medical issue.

Council Member Lawson made a motion to move all consent agenda items to the regular agenda. Council Member Pearson seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor.

Community Development Director Keith Holland summarized the need to amend the Arts & Cultural Committee Membership requirements as discussed in the Work Session. Vice Mayor

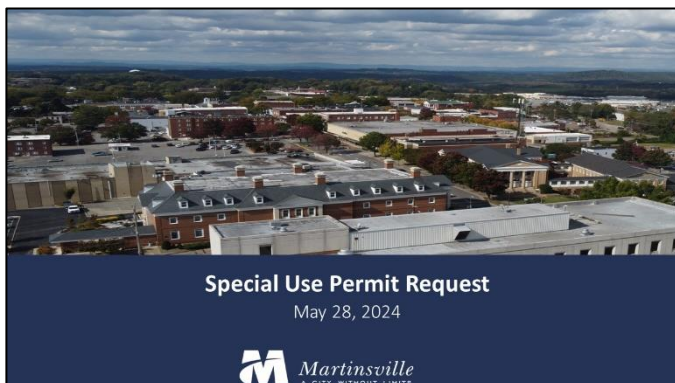
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Rawls made the motion to approve the requested composition of the board to include four (4) citizens at large, three (3) representatives from cultural and museum organizations and change the membership from eleven (11) members to seven (7) members. Council Member Lawson seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor.

City Manager Aretha Ferrell-Benavides explained that while the public hearing was advertised, it was not listed on the agenda. She asked the City Attorney if Council could make a motion to add the public hearing to tonight's meeting or would they be required to do the public hearing another night. According to Attorney Steven Durbin, since the public hearing was advertised, Council can add that to the agenda for tonight.

Mayor Jones explained that a public hearing had been scheduled for the purpose of receiving names of citizens interested in appointments for two (2) 3-year terms on the Martinsville City School Board on June 14, 2024. Council Member Lawson made a motion to set the public hearing; Council Member Pearson seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor.

Council Member Lawson made a motion to add the Special Use Permit public hearing to tonight's agenda. Council Member Pearson seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor. Community Development Director Keith Holland presented a PowerPoint detailing the Special Use Permit request at 1048 Independence Drive which was approved and recommended by the Planning Commission. Mayor Jones opened the public hearing. Tony Williams, the property owner shared his history and details about his work and his plans for the business and his residence. Vice Mayor Rawls expressed concern about the metal building on a residential lot. No one else approached the podium. The Mayor closed the public hearing. Council Member Lawson requested additional time and suggested this topic be added to the next June 14 Council agenda. Mayor Jones pointed out that the meeting would be on a Friday and would start at 4:00pm.



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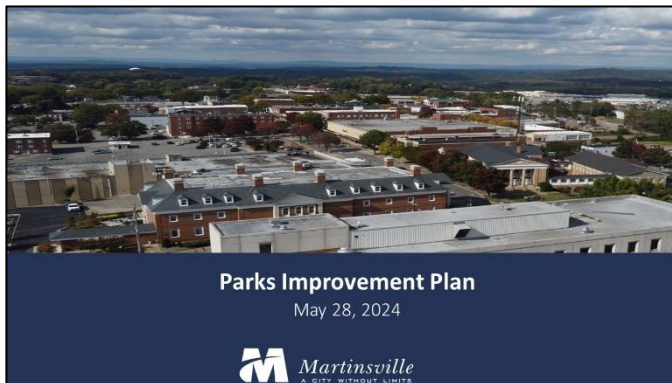
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Questions?

Presentation of Martinsville Parks Improvement Study by Graham Smith, Site Collaborative regarding the Parks Improvement Plan.



Purpose

- In 2023 City Council designated ARPA funds to conduct a city-wide parks improvement plan
- Site Collaborative, a planning consulting firm out of Raleigh NC was selected
- There were many efforts to engage the community to receive input from citizens, including surveys and community meetings
- 13 total public parks in the Martinsville system encompassing over 300 acres
- Capital improvements can be spread out 5-10 years and utilize a range of creative options to address needs
- Graham Smith with Site Collaborative will present an overview of the plan

Questions?

The presentation of the Martinsville Energy Action Plan was developed in cooperation with George Mason University, which was participated in by Zoom.

Communications from Visitors / Business from the Floor – Debbie Youngman, former librarian at Clearview Elementary School said she lives in Ridgeway. Youngman shared information and images on a damaged prayer box that her church had installed. The church received permission from the City to install the prayer box in 2021 across the street from the church. Her concern is that the box has been damaged multiple times. Rico Johnson, owner of Kornna Kitchen at 37 East Main Street thanked Council for giving his business the opportunity to be showcased. He expressed concern for the lack of businesses and visitors to Uptown Martinsville. Mike Sanguadolche, 708 Starling Avenue shared that there is an open prayer meeting and bible study at the Ground Floor and invited the public to join.

Comments by Members of City Council (5 mins) – Council Member Lawson shared that

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there was a tragic accident last Friday after the Magna Vista graduation, and two young ladies lost their lives. Lawson offered condolences to their family. Lawson attended the Memorial Day service at Roselawn, and this year was the best message she's ever heard. Mustang Baseball season started with their first game and first win last night with fabulous attendance. Congratulations to the Lady Patriot Softball team for winning the World Series over the weekend, they are the first team from Virginia to win it. In April, a group of veterans attended the Council meeting; Council donated the money given to them that night to the Veterans Association. Council Member Pearson said her son graduated college this year and it makes her think of all the local high school and college graduates. It's a happy, but scary time for families. Her heart goes out to the graduates and their families. Vice Mayor Rawls recognized that time is running out to make a change to the economic development of the City. There are opportunities but the City needs to make moves to attract businesses. Mayor Jones thanked residents for coming out. Tomorrow at 6:00pm, Shasta Carmichael will hold a prayer meeting at Tammy's Grill for the families of the young ladies who were killed. Jones encouraged citizens that change is just around the corner.

Communications by City Manager – City Manager Ferrell-Benavides pointed out that one of the two young ladies who recently passed away in a car accident was a city employee's stepdaughter; she asked for a moment of silence.

Monthly Financial Update provided by Finance Director Mandy McGhee.

Adjournment – Council Member Lawson made a motion to adjourn at 9:00pm

Karen Roberts, Clerk of Council

LC Jones, Mayor