

November 11, 2014

The regular meeting of the Council of the City of Martinsville, Virginia, was held on November 11, 2014, in Council Chambers, Municipal Building, at 7:30 PM, Closed Session beginning at 7:00pm, with Mayor Kim Adkins presiding. Council Members present included: Mayor Kim Adkins, Vice Mayor Gene Teague, Sharon Brooks Hodge, Mark Stroud and Danny Turner. Staff present included: Leon Towarnicki, City Manager, Brenda Prillaman, Linda Conover, Wayne Knox, Jeff Joyce and Sean Dunn.

Mayor Adkins called the meeting to order and advised Council will go into Closed Session. In accordance with Section 2.1-344 (A) of the Code of Virginia (1950, and as amended) and upon a motion by Mark Stroud, seconded by Sharon Brooks Hodge, with the following 5-0 recorded vote: Adkins, aye; Teague, aye; Hodge, aye; Stroud, aye; and Turner, aye, Council convened in Closed Session, for the purpose of discussing the following matters: (A) Appointments to Boards and Commissions as authorized by Subsection 1. (B) A prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business' or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the community as authorized by Subsection 5. (C) Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members, attorneys or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, or other specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel, as authorized by Subsection 7. 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 Session. On a motion by Gene Teague, seconded by Sharon Brooks Hodge, with the following recorded 5-0 vote: Adkins, aye; Teague, aye; Hodge, aye; Stroud, aye; and Turner, aye, Council returned to Open Session.

Board actions taken: On a motion by Gene Teague, seconded by Mark Stroud, with 5-0 vote, Council appointed Gene Clark, 1021 Morningside Lane, to a 4 year term ending 10/31/18 on the Southern Virginia Recreation Facilities authority.

Following the invocation by Council Member Mark Stroud and Pledge to the American Flag, the Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced two agenda items have been added. The Mayor also announced a public hearing will be set for the next meeting, November 25, for comments on the Bethel Lane water tank issue, however, due to large attendance at tonight's meeting, Council will take their public comments tonight.

Addendum-Recognition of 2014 local veterans' award recipients: Mayor Adkins shared the following information and recognized Mr. Barbour and Mr. Hayzlett: at the annual Veteran's Day Program held Sunday, November 9th at the National Guard Armory, two area veterans were honored for service to their country, community, and fellow veterans. Billy Barbour received the Veteran of the Year Award given by the area's Veterans Service Organizations. Barbour joined the Army in June, 1952, serving two years of active duty in Korea and six years in the Army Reserves and has been involved with local veterans groups for many years and volunteers extensively throughout the community. Robert Hayzlett, Jr. received the Martinsville-Henry County Outstanding Veteran of the Year Award which was jointly presented by Martinsville Mayor Kim Adkins and HC Board of Supervisors member Debra Buchanan. Hayzlett served more than 20 years in the Army and has received numerous medals and commendations and has been involved in JROTC, helping local veterans, and likewise volunteers extensively throughout the community.

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Addendum-Proclamation-Stop the Violence: Mayor Adkins read a proclamation regarding Stop the Violence and representatives of the combined group D-Truth and Positive Elevation Movement were present to accept the proclamation.

Minutes: On a motion by Mark Stroud, seconded by Sharon Brooks Hodge, with a 5-0 vote, Council approved the minutes of the September 22, 2014 Council tour and the September 22, 2014 Neighborhood meeting.

Public hearing re: 200 Sellers Street communications tower special use permit on first reading: Wayne Knox briefed Council with following information: The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on September 18, 2014 on a request from GCS Electronics & Communications to approve a special use permit to allow construction of a 100 ft. communications tower on their property at 200 Sellers Street. As per Section XIII, G, 4, of the City of Martinsville Zoning Ordinance, telecommunication equipment including towers is a use permitted by special use permit in the M-1 District. The applicant desires to install the tower in order to provide a point-to-point link to a main microwave hub in Spencer, VA. No one spoke for or against the special use permit at the public hearing. The Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend to City Council that the special use permit be granted with the following conditions:

- a. The tower shall either maintain a galvanized steel finish, or subject to any applicable standards of the FCC or FAA, or be painted a neutral color.
- b. The tower shall not be artificially lit, unless required by the FCC or FAA. If lighting is required, City Council may review and approve the design that would cause the least disturbance to surrounding views.
- c. No advertising of any type shall be allowed on the tower.
- d. The tower must meet or exceed current standards of the FAA, the FCC, and any other agency of the federal government with authority to regulate towers
- e. The tower shall be equipped with appropriate anti – climbing devices.
- f. The owner of the tower shall ensure that it is constructed and maintained in compliance with standards contained in applicable federal, state, and local building codes and regulations.
- g. If the tower is abandoned in the future, the owner shall remove the tower within ninety (90) days of receipt of notice from the building official or city manager notifying the owner of the removal requirement.
- h. A survey must be submitted consolidating the multiple parcels and combining them into one parcel on a plat of survey. This will make the tower setbacks to code. The plat of survey must be submitted for review by the City of Martinsville and recorded with the Circuit Court Clerk.

It was also noted that the proposed location of the tower is already within an area with secured fencing so there would be no need for additional fencing around the tower itself. Giles Smith of GCS Electronics also spoke briefly. On a motion by Danny Turner, seconded by Mark Stroud, with a 5-0 vote, Council agreed to set the public hearing to be held at the first meeting in December due to advertising requirements as described by the City Attorney. Mayor Adkins opened the public hearing. Mark Price, 936 Bethel Lane, asked that Council delay making a decision on the Sellers St. project and conduct more research. There were no other public comments and Mayor Adkins closed the public hearing. A motion was made by Gene Teague, seconded by Danny Turner to approve the special use permit on first reading. Mr. Towarnicki shared the following information he had received from Dr. Hershey at the health department:

Health Risks Associated with Antenna Installations - The following is an excerpt from an October 16th e-mail from Health Department Director Dr. Jody Hershey regarding this issue – *“I have spent some time today researching the topic of cell phone towers as they relate to the public’s health. Bottom line, there are lots of theories and concerns, but no scientific evidence that cell phone towers are definitely linked to cancer or any other health problems. Current scientific research does not provide clear evidence that the low levels of radiofrequency (RF) radiation from cell phone towers increases the risk of cancer or other health effects. RF exposures to those living near cell phone towers are well below federal safety limits. Research is ongoing to ensure that current safety standards for RF radiation from cell phone towers is adequately protective of public health. The best summary article (that also includes other web site links to reputable national organizations) that I can find is from the American Cancer Society: “*
<http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/othercarcinogens/athome/cellular-phone-towers>

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With the following 4-1 recorded vote: Adkins, aye; Teague, aye; Hodge, nay; Stroud, aye; and Turner, aye, Council approved the special use permit on first reading. Council Member Hodge pointed out that more research needs to be conducted on microwave frequencies before final vote on this issue at next meeting.

Public hearing on renaming Chatham Road and ordinance approval on first reading: Wayne Knox briefed Council with following information: The issue of renaming of Chatham Road has been discussed at length on several occasions in the recent past. The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on October 7, 2014 and at the meeting, several residents from the Chatham Heights area spoke on the subject of the name change and its history. The Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council rename the road "Chatham Heights Road". Mayor Adkins opened the public hearing. There being no public comments made, Mayor Adkins closed the public hearing. On a motion by Danny Turner, seconded by Mark Stroud, with the following recorded 5-0 vote: Adkins, aye; Teague, aye; Hodge, aye; Stroud, aye; and Turner, aye, Council approved the ordinance on first reading to rename Chatham Road.

Staff update on Bethel Lane water tank: Leon Towarnicki briefed Council with the following information: At the October 14, 2014 Council meeting, comments were made during business from the floor regarding City plans to install cell phone antenna equipment on a City water tank on Bethel Lane. During that discussion, staff agreed to research three issues - how other communities handle requests for installation of private communications equipment on government-owned facilities and buildings; cost to demolish/remove the unused Bethel Lane tank; and an assessment of the historical significance of the tank, since the tank was constructed in 1894. Following that discussion, Council requested additional information on potential health issues related to cell towers and antennas and the cost to paint and maintain the tanks.

<p>DATE: November 11, 2014</p> <p>TO: The Honorable Mayor and Members of Council</p> <p>FROM: Leon Towarnicki, City Manager</p> <p>SUBJECT: Bethel Lane Tank Site</p> <p>As a result of recent discussions and concerns expressed by neighborhood residents regarding the possible installation of cell phone antenna equipment at the Bethel Lane Tank site, staff indicated an intent to provide research regarding several issues that could assist in the decision-making process. Specifically, staff agreed to: (1) assess and determine whether the existing Bethel Lane "standpipe" tank has historical significance; (2) obtain an estimate for demolition/removal of the tank; and (3) determine how other communities handle requests for installation of cell tower equipment on existing government structures and facilities, such as buildings and elevated tank structures. Additionally, during discussion of this issue at the October 14, 2014 meeting, Council requested a review/assessment of potential health risks associated with cell phone antenna equipment as well as costs to paint and maintain the existing tanks.</p> <p><u>Background:</u> The Bethel Lane tank site consists of 3 tanks adjacent to Bethel Lane. Additionally, 2 tanks are located on Tank Street, a short distance away. The Bethel Lane tanks are the oldest, with installation dates of 1894 (standpipe), 1920 (concrete tank) and 1936 (steel tank). There are two newer steel tanks on Tank Street. All tanks are in use except for the standpipe which was last used in the 1980s.</p> <p><u>Historical Significance</u> – Currently having discussions with Carl De Hart, City Archivist, regarding assessment of the historical significance of the tank, and research is continuing. The tank (standpipe) is the City's first water tank, constructed in 1894, and actually constructed when Martinsville was still a town, and considerably smaller (geographically) than what currently exists. The tank is constructed of riveted steel plate, as opposed to currently-used welded structures. The tank is not known to be listed on an "inventory" of historical structures.</p> <p><u>Estimate for Demolition/Removal of the Tank</u> – An estimate from a demolition contractor was obtained for removal of the tank – approximately \$15,000, with credit for any recycled</p>	<p>material included. If the tank is removed, there would be other expenses to remove/cap off piping, remove the concrete pad and re-seed, etc. Total cost is estimated to be approximately \$20,000.</p> <p><u>How Other Communities Handle Antenna Requests</u> – An inquiry was posted through the Virginia Innovation Group and a number of responses were received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Campbell County – staff processes the request, conducts an administrative review/impact to local facilities, and makes a recommendation to the Board. Board conducts a public hearing and makes the final decision.• Staunton - staff develops the lease and presents to City Council; Council conducts a public hearing and then authorizes the City Manager to execute a final version of the lease.• Town of Clarksville – Town Manager prepares the lease, Council conducts a public hearing, and the Mayor/Town Manager are authorized to act on behalf of the town for final negotiations.• Prince George County - County Attorney and Utilities Director work on the lease, an administrative review process is conducted, and final approval is through Planning and Inspections staff members. Water tanks when constructed require a conditional use permit from the Board and a public hearing is held at that time.• Rocky Mount – staff negotiates an attachment agreement and Council votes/authorizes the manager to execute the agreement. Public input is not directly sought but sometimes offered during the "comments from citizens" phase of the meeting.• Town of Stanley – lease agreement is drawn up by attorneys and Town Council approves after conducting a public hearing.• Town of Vienna – proposed antenna leases must meet zoning code and also obtain approval from the Planning Commission and other advisor bodies. The public has an opportunity to contribute at all of the public meetings. Final approval authority rests with the Town Council.• King George County – building and zoning approval is required and final approval is through an administrative process. <p>The City's Attorney has reviewed the matter and is of the opinion a public hearing for this type of lease is not required by state law. After review of the process used in other localities, it is staff's recommendation, however, that a public hearing be set for the November 25th Council meeting regarding this particular antenna installation request, with outcome of that hearing being Council's authorization to execute (or not execute) the lease agreement. Furthermore, it is recommended a similar process be used for future requests.</p>
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Health Risks Associated with Antenna Installations - The following is an excerpt from an October 16th e-mail from Health Department Director Dr. Jody Hershey regarding this issue – “I have spent some time today researching the topic of cell phone towers as they relate to the public’s health. Bottom line, there are lots of theories and concerns, but no scientific evidence that cell phone towers are definitely linked to cancer or any other health problems. Current scientific research does not provide clear evidence that the low levels of radiofrequency (RF) radiation from cell phone towers increases the risk of cancer or other health effects. RF exposures to those living near cell phone towers are well below federal safety limits. Research is ongoing to ensure that current safety standards for RF radiation from cell phone towers is adequately protective of public health. The best summary article (that also includes other web site links to reputable national organizations) that I can find is from the American Cancer Society: ”

<http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/othercarcinogens/athome/cellular-phone-towers>

Additionally, staff research parallels the findings of Dr. Hershey.

Costs to Paint/Maintain the Tanks: (Bethel Lane Tank Site – 5 Tanks)

Standpipe , painted 3/99, cost \$11,373 – estimate \$15K every 15 years - \$1000/year
Steel Tank, painted 1998, cost \$185,000 – estimate \$200K every 15 years - \$13,300/year
Concrete Tank, painted 6/11, cost \$65,500 – estimate \$70K every 15 years - \$4,700/year
Tank Street #1, painted 4/10, cost \$67,716 – estimate \$75K every 15 years - \$5000/year
Tank Street #2, not yet painted – estimated \$75K every 15 years - \$5000/year

Total estimated cost per year for all 5 tanks - \$29,000.

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Mr. Towarnicki reported that future considerations for antennae leases will come through the public process. Mayor Adkins opened the public hearing: (1) Mark Price of 936 Bethel Lane: noted he was speaking on behalf of his residential and church community; noted health concerns of his community regarding the antennae placement on the water tower on Bethel Lane; asked that tank be dismantled as it is an eyesore. (2) Renado Hairston of 1450 Mt. Olivet Road and owns property at 605 Fifth Street: noted that the existence of several lawsuits is evidence enough that City Council should proceed cautiously and he feels concern is warranted. (3) Tyler Milner of Axton: commended the community for taking advantage of the public forum to encourage better government. (4) Joe Martin, 27 E. Church St.: agreed that leases need to come before the governing body. (5) Chad Martin asked the issue being taken to Planning Commission. Mayor Adkins closed the public hearing. There was lengthy Council discussion regarding condition of the tower, possibly having Planning Commission review leases, whether removal of tank is feasible, and funding issues with possible grants. A motion was made by Danny Turner, seconded by Sharon Brooks Hodge to send the issue to the Planning Commission. The motion failed with a 2-3 vote (Adkins-nay, Teague-nay, Stroud-nay, Hodge-aye, Turner-aye). A motion was made by Gene Teague, seconded by Mark Stroud, with a 5-0 vote, to direct the City Manager to not enter into a contract with Verizon on this issue. A motion was made by Sharon Brooks Hodge, seconded by Danny Turner, with 5-0 vote, to direct the City Manager to take down the Bethel Lane tank including exploring grant funding options and to have completed by June 30, 2016. City Attorney Eric Monday was given clarification that no advertising will be necessary and there will not be a public hearing on this issue at the next meeting.

Update from Jennifer Doss regarding Beaches to Bluegrass Trail plan: Jennifer Doss of the M-HC Economic Development Corporation Tourism office briefed Council on the Beaches to Bluegrass Trail concept which first appeared in the 1979 Virginia Outdoors Plan as the ‘Trans-Virginia Trail’ and the ‘Southside Virginia Trail’. Initial planning was spurred by needs surfacing across the corridor: demand for more non-

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motorized connections to destinations, a lack of recreational amenities in rural areas, and a loss of industry leaving many out of work. The concurrent abandonment of significant stretches of railroad corridor provided the opportunity to encourage trail development and ecotourism to begin to address these needs. Various entities worked independently to plan and complete sections of trail, such as the popular Virginia Creeper Trail and New River Trail State Park. This plan recommends a route that connects completed trails, documents the level of support for those routes, and sets a framework for the completion of trail projects throughout the corridor at the regional and local level. On a motion by Gene Teague, seconded by Sharon Brooks Hodge, with a 5-0 vote, Council approved the following resolution in support of the Beaches to Bluegrass Trail project:

WHEREAS, the Beaches to Bluegrass Trail is a proposed, statewide, shared-use trail that will connect the Cumberland Gap to the Chesapeake Bay through southern and southwestern Virginia; and
WHEREAS, trails, bicycle routes and lanes, pedestrian walkways, and greenways encourage walking, running, bicycling and horseback riding, which lead to healthier lifestyles for our citizens, as well as energy independence and reduced carbon emissions; and
WHEREAS, trails, bikeways, paths, and greenways foster economic development, create jobs, attract visitors to our community and encourage a better, more healthy and enjoyable quality of life for our workers and citizens; and
WHEREAS, time spent in nature helps renew the mind, body and spirit and trails, bikeways, paths, and greenways contribute to safer, more livable, family-friendly communities; and
WHEREAS, The City of Martinsville, Virginia and the surrounding county are blessed with a moderate climate and exceptional scenery, all well-suited for outdoor recreation; and
WHEREAS, The City of Martinsville has the good fortune to already be a destination for trail users who enjoy using the Dick & Willie Trail and the Uptown Connection Trail and Silverbell Trails;
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED on this 11th day of November, 2014, that Martinsville City Council strongly supports the development of the Beaches to Bluegrass Trail; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that The City of Martinsville is committed to working with other localities to connect these trails, bikeways, paths, and greenways; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that The City of Martinsville is committed to working with our state and congressional representatives to support legislation promoting active, human-powered transportation facilities for the betterment of our county, region, state, and country.

Staff update on Refuse Fund: Director of Public Works, Jeff Joyce, briefed Council with the following information:

Refuse Fund Revenues FY 13-14

Collection Revenues	
Residential and Commercial Accounts	\$ 1,637,067
City Government Accounts	\$ 31,216
Total Collections Revenue	\$ 1,668,283

Recyclables Revenue

Sale of Recyclables – Includes all material collected from Recycling Collection Center, scrap metal from Bulk Item Collection Program, and recyclables from governmental operations.

Total Recyclables Revenue	\$ 21,396
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Renewable Energy Credits (RECs)

Sale of RECs – Includes revenue from the sale of renewable energy credits accumulated from the production of electricity by the landfill gas generator. 4,517 mwh for calendar year 2013 @ \$17.84/mwh.

Total RECs Revenue	\$ 80,628
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Carbon Credits

Sale of Carbon Reduction Tons (CRTs) – Includes revenue from the sale of carbon credits issued for the destruction of 25,000 CRTs from landfill gas flare and generator.

Total Carbon Credit Revenue	\$ 10,000
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Recovered Cost for Electricity Generated

Recovered Cost – Includes revenue for the sale of 3,509 MWH of electricity to the Martinsville Electric Department that would have otherwise been purchased from outside entities.

Total Recovered Cost	\$ 200,044
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Interest and Site Lease Revenue

Interest from CD	\$ 15,000
First Piedmont Transfer Station Site Lease	\$ 85,378
Total Interest/Site Lease Revenue	\$ 100,378

Total Revenues	\$ 2,080,729
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Refuse Fund Expenditures FY 13-14

Collection/Disposal Expenditures

Collection and Disposal Cost – Includes expenditures for all waste collection operations, bulk and brush collection programs, and disposal fees at the First Piedmont Transfer Station.

Total Collections/Disposal Cost \$ 805,045

Landfill Maintenance/Generator Operations Expenditures

Landfill Maintenance/Post Closure Care Cost \$ 175,058

LFG Generator Operations Cost \$ 333,812

Total Landfill O/M Cost \$ 508,870

Debt Service Expenditures

Debt Service – Includes loan/interest payments on loans for landfill closure, gas collection system, and LFG generator construction.

Total Debt Service Cost \$ 59,592

General Expense Expenditures

General Expenses – Includes charges for collections, billing, safety, communications, central garage, and taxes.

Total General Expense Cost \$ 117,242

Total Expenditures \$ 1,490,749

FY 13-14 Refuse Fund Net Revenue \$ 589,980

Refuse Fund Revenue/Expenditures

1st Quarter FY 14-15

Revenue

Residential/Commercial/Government Accounts \$ 454,725

Sale of Recyclables and Carbon Credits \$ 27,162

Total Revenue \$ 481,887

Expenditures

Collection/Disposal Cost \$ 321,857

Landfill Post Closure/Generator Cost \$ 121,208

Debt Service/General Expense Cost \$ 445,040

Total Expenditures \$ 888,105

FY 14-15 1st Quarter Net Revenue \$ - 406,218

Approval of CEDS list: Wayne Knox briefed Council regarding updating the annual CEDS listing and consists of projects that are thought be in various stages of readiness. Some are underway and may remain on the listing with others being in the planning or conceptual stage. In order to have a chance for funding, either now or in the future, they should be included in this listing and this new listing will then be submitted to the West Piedmont Planning District Commission for inclusion in their overall plan.

On a motion by Sharon Brooks Hodge, seconded by Mark Stroud, with a 5-0 vote, Council approved the CEDS list as amended. Mr. Knox pointed out the following items are also to be included:

Community Development Project- CDBG Martinsville Area & Central Business District – City of Martinsville
Priority Type – 1 /III
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purchase blighted properties on Starling Avenue and adaptively reuse - NSP, Historic Tax Credits - \$1,000,000 - 20 indirect jobs• Purchase blighted warehouse, in Uptown, complete feasibility study, adaptive reuse – IRF, historic tax credits, EZ, \$7,000,000 - 20 positive indirect jobs• Purchase blighted building on Fayette Street, in Uptown, complete feasibility study, adaptive reuse, IRF, historic tax credits, EZ, - \$5.5 million – 10 indirect jobs• Work with partners to develop an amphitheater on Depot Street – NEA, ARC, - \$100,000 - 5 indirect jobs• Work with PAA to develop an Arts Garden on Mulberry Street – NEA, - \$75,000, matching, \$75,000 – 5 positive indirect jobs• Smith River Artisan Trail implementation & support - City - \$5,000, Partners - \$50,000 – 20 positive indirect jobs• Commonwealth Corridor Enhancement and pedestrian linkages to Uptown & Fayette Street – VDOT, CDBG - \$1.5 million – positive indirect jobs• Purchase of West Church Street property, complete feasibility study,, adaptive reuse – IRF, CDBG - \$1,000,000 – 20 positive indirect jobs
Priority Type – 1 /I
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write Arts and Cultural plan for Arts & Cultural District – NEA - \$25,000, City - \$25,000, ARC - \$32,000 – positive indirect jobs

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Consent Agenda: On a motion by Gene Teague, seconded by Sharon Brooks Hodge, with a 5-0 vote, Council approved the following consent agenda:

BUDGET ADDITIONS FOR 11/11/2014				
ORG	OBJECT	DESCRIPTION	DEBIT	CREDIT
FY15				
General Fund:				
01100909	490104	Advance/Recovered Costs		2,054
01331108	501300	Sheriff/Corrections - Part-time & Temporary Wages	1,490	
01331108	502100	Sheriff/Corrections - Social Security	92	
01331108	502110	Sheriff/Corrections - Medicare	22	
01331108	506008	Sheriff/Corrections - Vehicle Equipment & Maint.	298	
01331110	506200	Sheriff/Annex - Prisoner Allowance	152	
		Reimbursement from Henry County for litter pickup for September		
01100908	480420	Misc Revenues - Donations/Senior Services		290
01100909	490801	Recovered Costs - Senior Services		2,843
01714212	506016	Senior Citizens - Program Supplies	290	
01714212	501300	Senior Citizens - Part-time Wages	1,838	
01714212	502100	Senior Citizens - Social Security	114	
01714212	502110	Senior Citizens - Medicare	27	
01714212	506049	Senior Citizens - Vehicle Fuels	864	
		Bingo & Tea donations; Transportation Grant July, Aug. & Sept.		
01101918	436418	State Grants - TRIAD/S.A.L.T. Grant		2,250
01217078	506132	Sheriff Dept. - TRIAD/S.A.L.T. Grant Supplies	2,250	
		Grant for Crime Prevention for Seniors		
Total General Fund:			7,437	7,437

2015 City Legislative Agenda: Eric Monday briefed Council reviewing changes after Council discussion at their October 28 meeting. On a motion by Gene Teague, seconded by Mark Stroud, with a 5-0 vote, Council approved the following 2015 Legislative Agenda including changes made at this meeting:

The City of Martinsville appreciates the efforts its legislators undertake at both the state and federal level on behalf of its citizens. Listed below are the City's priorities requested of its legislative delegation in 2015.

Virginia General Assembly

Transportation

1. In the short term, upgrade those portions of Route 220 overlaying I-73 to interstate standards. Any construction or upgrades to the I-73 corridor should begin on those sections passing through Henry County.
2. Continue to place priority on Route 58 improvements, particularly the section between Stuart and Hillsville, Virginia.

Education

1. City Council endorses the agenda proposed by the Martinsville City School System and also endorses the educational priorities adopted by Henry County, on behalf of its school system.
2. Oppose the imposition of unaided education mandates and in the event of revenue cuts by the Commonwealth opposes targeted cuts by the Commonwealth, instead preferring local decision making authority on where to make any such cuts.
3. Recognizing its potential to promote economic development within our community and region, continue support for the development and funding of the New College Institute; urge that any funding reductions to New College Institute, if considered, be minimized to the greatest extent possible; and support the affiliation of The New College Institute as a branch of a four-year public university.
4. Request the Commonwealth to fully fund the expenditures imposed upon local school systems by implementing the Standards of Quality.
5. Encourage the Commonwealth to continue or increase the current levels of financial support provided to Patrick Henry Community College.
6. Encourage the Commonwealth to provide financial support to the College of Henricopolis School of Medicine.

Economic Development

1. Maintain current levels of funding for economic development incentives, including but not limited to the Governor's Opportunity Fund.
2. Enhance the authority granted to localities to address and eliminate blighted properties, and the formation of interstate compacts to allow expedited recourse against out-of-state property owners.
3. Continue current funding levels of the Virginia Museum of Natural History.
4. Request enhanced state and federal financial assistance for localities which exceed the average state unemployment rate by 150% for a period of five consecutive years.
5. Support continued tourism awareness initiatives in the Martinsville-Henry County region.

Governance

1. Request the appointment of a joint gubernatorial/legislative commission to examine the structure of local government in Virginia, the commission's mandate to include:
 - a. Examination of local government in the other 49 states for potential adaptation to Virginia.
 - b. Enable cities to expand their revenue base

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- c. Elimination of the “zero-sum” revenue base structure, which creates friction between cities and counties.
- d. Elimination of redundant services and programs between contiguous cities and counties.
2. Require full funding for HB 599 funds, in fulfillment of the Commonwealth’s commitment to cities in return for their acquiescence in the annexation moratorium.
3. Require that the Commonwealth fully fund its obligations to the Virginia Retirement System, and refrain from borrowing from VRS funds.
4. Request the elimination of “local aid to the Commonwealth” in the state budget; local aid artificially inflates state revenues by shifting responsibility for cuts in vital services onto localities.
5. Elimination of all unfunded mandates from the Commonwealth to localities.
6. Oppose any elimination or alteration of local revenue streams, and specifically oppose any amendment to the current manner in which the Business Occupation and Licensing Tax and the Machinery and Tools Tax are levied.
7. Request at a minimum, level funding for operational requirements of the Henry-Martinsville Department of Social Services.
8. Request that the General Assembly leaves intact the fire programs fund and the rescue squad assistance funds and not use these funds as a way to balance the state budget.
9. Request that the Commonwealth fully fund its obligations to constitutional officers.
10. Oppose any attempt to curtail the doctrine of sovereign immunity for localities.
11. Oppose any attempt to permit collective bargaining for state and local government employees.
12. Oppose any amendment of the existing burden of proof or process in local tax appeals cases.

United States Congress

1. Oppose any effort to impose additional taxation or regulation of electrical power generation by coal or natural gas.
2. Urge the Federal Highway Commission to adopt the CTB’s designated route for I-73, or alternatively to preserve the current record of decision in the event the CTB’s route is rejected.
3. In the short term, upgrade those portions of Route 220 overlaying I-73 to interstate standards.
4. Request \$3.72M in funds for the redevelopment of brownfields extending from the former American Furniture and Sara Lee sites, along Aaron Street, to Rives Road.
5. Request \$6.25M in funds for the elimination and redevelopment of blighted areas in the city.
6. Request legislation to provide special federal incentives to businesses locating in regions which have experienced job losses in excess of 5% of the total workforce and/or declines in median incomes since the adoption of NAFTA, WTO or GATT. Target such areas for increased federal funding in education or workforce retraining.
7. Extend high speed broadband service throughout southern Virginia.
8. Request enhanced state and federal financial assistance for localities which exceed the average state unemployment rate by 150% for a period of five consecutive years.
9. Oppose the EPA’s proposed expansion of the definition of “waters of the United States” in 40 CFR 230.3.

Staff Designations

City Council empowers the following staff members to speak on its behalf and in its best interests to the Virginia General Assembly and United States Congress, its members and committees:

City Attorney Eric Monday

City Manager Leon Towarnicki

Other department heads as appointed by the City Manager

Business from floor: Mr. Kirby-Boden Street-spoke about concerns expressed regarding Church Street Auto and the City Manager was directed to bring back a formal report and assessment at next meeting.

Council comments: Turner-commended MHS ball team; Stroud-thankful for water tower issue resolution and thanked medical and health care professionals for their work; Hodge-pointed out concerns of Fayette Street business owners regarding parking limitations and long term effect of parking lot being full; Teague-offered congratulations to Jennifer Bowles on her election to Council, congratulated those who ran for office and being willing to serve and he also thanked citizens for their support.

City Manager comments: Mr. Towarnicki reported a worksession will be set up to discuss two significant projects. Council agreed to hold worksession on Thursday, November 20, 2014 from noon to 2pm and asked that an invitation to attend the worksession be extended to Council Member-Elect Jennifer Bowles.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 pm.

Brenda Prillaman
Clerk of Council

Kim Adkins
Mayor