

## August 8, 2023 Council Meeting

A meeting of the Council of the City of Martinsville, Virginia was held on August 8, 2023 in Council Chambers, Municipal Building, at 7:00 PM with Mayor LC Jones presiding. Other Council Members present included Kathy Lawson, Aaron Rawls, Lawrence Mitchell and Tammy Pearson. Staff present included Interim City Manager Glen Adams, Clerk of Council Karen Roberts, Steve Durbin, Attorney for Sands Anderson participating by phone, Finance Director Mandy McGhee, Public Information Officer Kendall Davis, Fire Chief Dan Howell, and Police Chief Rob Fincher.

Mayor Jones called the meeting to order. Pledge to the flag and invocation were led by Council Member Lawson. Mayor Jones welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that agendas could be found in the back of the room and on the City website.

Approve minutes from July 25, 2023 Council Meeting and the August 3, 2023 Closed Session – Council Member Lawson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; Vice Mayor Rawls seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor.

Hear an awareness discussion to educate the community on the process to foster a child or support children in need. There is a strong need for foster parents – Mayor Jones explained to the public that the City Council does not endorse Intercept Health which is one of four organizations that work with the Department of Social Services. Representatives Robin, Kyle and Hailey shared a PowerPoint outlining statistics, details on how foster care works, qualifications for foster parents, and how people can get involved and support the program. Intercept Health is looking for opportunities to share the need and ways to connect with local businesses and organizations. In Martinsville, there are only 10 children in foster care versus 167 in Henry County ranging in age from 0-21 years old with an average age of 9-10 years old. Teens are especially difficult to find homes for. Lawson suggested a DSS coordinator attend the next Council meeting and provide an update. Treatment foster care is for children with mental health diagnosis, a history of trauma, or other medical concerns so there is a higher level of need and the foster parents are given additional training. There is a huge push for kinship care in Virginia where the child will be placed with a family member.



- ✓ Intercept Health TFC is licensed to provide treatment foster care services in the state of Virginia.
- ✓ There are currently 513,000 children in foster care nationwide, there are a total of 153,000 homes available, that leaves 360,000 children without homes.
- ✓ Intercept is on a statewide mission to recruit the most willing qualified homes to provide a safe haven for these children.
- ✓ Basic Qualifications:
  - Can be married, single, widowed or divorced.
  - Must be over 21 years old.
  - Have a monthly income that is enough to pay monthly expenses.
  - Pass background checks: criminal history, child protective services, and driving record.
  - Need to have a physical exam and TB test or screening that shows that each household member is healthy and free of communicable diseases.
  - Must have bedspace/room available: no sleeping on the floor, on cots, or on couches.
- ✓ The approval process:
  - An orientation session that is scheduled at your convenience.
  - Presley Ridge Training that gives you the knowledge and skills to parent foster children
  - Home visits to make sure the home meets licensure standards.
  - A meeting at an Intercept office to introduce foster parents to Treatment Foster Care staff and review paperwork requirements.
  - Completing the Intent to Foster Assessment to tell us about your preferences about age, gender, race/ethnicity as well as what needs or behaviors you could work with.
- ✓ After approval:
  - Matching placements with your preferences and abilities.
  - Maintaining low caseloads so our workers can make frequent contact with foster parents and provide assistance as needed.
  - Offering 24/7 on-call support.
  - Arranging respite on an emergency or planned basis.



- Paying foster parents, a monthly reimbursement that is based on the child's age as well as the child's needs and behaviors. This is not income and is not reported on your taxes.
- Providing monthly foster parent training. This is a great opportunity to meet other foster parents and gain additional information about foster parenting.
- Intercept Health's **LifeBridge** Continuum of Care connects parents to additional support services.
- Access to local community support groups

- ✓ You will have 24/7 support and access to needed services while fostering with Intercept. We currently have office locations in:

- Stafford
- Chester
- Chesapeake
- Staunton
- Lynchburg
- Rocky Mount
- Danville
- Martinsville
- Wytheville
- Roanoke

If fostering is not for you or you are unsure: there are other ways to help!

- ✓ Offer support to those around you who are fostering: bring them a meal, volunteer to get groceries for the family, offer to watch the children to give parents a break.
- ✓ Find an organization and become a mentor/big brother/big sister.
- ✓ Educate yourself on the foster care system and the specific needs for your area.
- ✓ Get your church involved: LEARN ABOUT CARE PORTAL!



## Virginia Needs Foster Parents

Intercept Health is licensed and regulated by the Virginia Department of Social Services to provide foster care services in the state of Virginia.



## What the Numbers Tell Us

- 513,000 kids are in the United States foster care system.
- 153,000 homes are available nationwide.
- 360,000 plus or minus kids don't have homes.
- 5,000 of these kids are in Virginia's foster care system, and there simply are not enough Foster Homes available to provide the care and support our kids need.
- Locally, we are fortunate to have 11 foster homes available in the Henry/Martinsville, but our families are serving both locally and statewide.
- Intercept Health currently has offices in many areas of Virginia: Chesapeake, Chester, Danville, Lynchburg, Martinsville, Roanoke, Rocky Mount, Stafford, Staunton and Wytheville.



## How does Foster Care work:

- ✓ Intercept Health gets referrals from local DSS agencies in the state of Virginia.
- ✓ There is Foster Care and there is Treatment Foster Care (TFC). Intercept Health families receive more support and training to best prepare our homes for the trauma responses and medical needs that come with many children in foster care.
- ✓ When the DSS locality is unable to place a child in one of their homes due to the level of need, a state-wide referral to agencies licensed for Treatment Foster Care and work with placing the child in the best home for the child.
- ✓ TFC homes have their own case managers, parent trainers and support services.



## Basic Qualifications to become a foster parent:

- ✓ Can be married, single, windowed, or divorced
- ✓ Must be over 21 years old
- ✓ Have a monthly income that can cover your monthly expenses
- ✓ Pass a background check: criminal history, child protective services, and driving record
- ✓ Need to have a physical exam and TB test or screening that shows that each household member is healthy and free of communicable diseases
- ✓ Must have bedspace/room available: no sleeping on the floor, on cots, or on couches



Other ways you can get involved:

- Offer support to those around you who are fostering: bring them a meal, volunteer to pick up groceries for the family, offer to watch the children to give the parents a break.
- Find an organization and become a mentor/big brother or big sister.
- Educate yourself about the foster care system and the specific needs for your area.
- Get your church or community organization involved with CARE PORTAL and see how you can help our local foster families and community.
- Allow Intercept Health and other agencies to set up information tables at events, speak at events, hold information sessions at your home church, place flyers in local businesses, and yard signs in highly trafficked areas.



1-844-987-KIDS

[Intercepthealthtfc.com](http://Intercepthealthtfc.com)

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Kyle McMahan (Chief Development Officer)

Consider requested use of the National Guard Armory by I Won't Stop Family, LLC – Interim City Manager Glen Adams reminded Council that the Mayor and former City Manager were approached by a representative of I Won't Stop Family, LLC. Adams feels this would be a good use for the Armory and does not feel that it will have any negative impact on the current RFP or on the facilities. Chris Draper, Owner of the organization says he's kept up with the Armory for two years in hopes that he could utilize the location for his organization. The organization specializes in basketball skills for local youth development. He's felt "called" to help local youth and started training at the YMCA. He enjoys watching the children grow, earn scholarships and teaching them life lessons to keep them out of trouble. He understands that the use of the Armory is temporary. Youth sports helped guide him and give him life skills and that's what he hopes to pass on to local youth. Some of the children he started training 12 years ago, have returned to help him train children today. Council Member Lawson asked if Draper had a plan of where to go next. Draper said he does have other locations available but not as convenient as the Armory is. His plan is to eventually build his own training facility. He trains children from Patrick County, Danville, Martinsville and Henry County and one of his students from Danville is currently ranked #5 in the nation. Council Member Lawson made a motion to approve the agreement. Vice Mayor Rawls seconded the motion with all Council Members in favor.

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I Won't Stop Family, LLC is an organization that specializes in youth basketball skills development and is the only company of its kind in Martinsville, VA. We have identified a need for grass roots instruction focused on the minute disciplines of the game of basketball.

Current operations are held at Fairway Baptist Church located on Fairystone Park Highway. Our current location is not a gymnasium and is extremely small. We would love to utilize The Armory as it would allow us to better service the area of Martinsville. We understand this location would be temporary, as it is our ultimate goal to build a stand-alone facility or stabilize a location to service the community.

The Armory would give our countless Martinsville kids easier access with the ability to reach even more children within our area. It also provides a central location for our clients who come from the areas of Patrick, Franklin, Pittsylvania and Henry County as well as Danville City.

For over five years we have provided a family atmosphere to over 250 clients and 75 clients a week. We offer private, semiprivate, group, vertimax, shooting machine and team sessions and would love to offer open basketball runs for all age groups. We operate Mon-Fri from 4-9PM and Saturday from 10AM-3PM. We do not expect a handout and will pay the city rent and or utilities for using the gymnasium itself. Many of our kids have obtained countless awards, national and state rankings, and scholarships as a result.

Awards and accolades are awesome, but we love pouring into our kids. I Won't Stop Family uses basketball as a vehicle to teach youth important life skills that lead to success on and off the court. Of course, we teach them how to compete to win against others. But in doing so, they also learn how to accept defeat and remain confident enough to keep pushing forward. Basketball is a team sport, kids get to interact with others, both on their team and the opposing side. They learn how to cooperate with their team and build a sense of camaraderie. Getting good at basketball or anything doesn't happen overnight. Every skill taught develops a level of patience within our kids. Developing skills to be successful take time and patience. Kids who are patient with themselves and keep persevering will succeed outside of basketball. There is always a fear of failure, but basketball teaches dealing with that fear to emphasize effort over ability. Nothing great comes out of anything easy and getting good at basketball requires hard work. Kids and young adults need to learn the value of hard work and determination if they want to succeed. Basketball can be very demanding not only physically but mentally and emotionally. Emotional and mental stability is not a life lesson you can pick up through lecture but through basketball kids learn to maintain stability in all aspects. I highly suggest our basketball skills training because it's an activity our kids enjoy and can continue to learn valuable life lessons.

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Consider reallocation of approved FY24 Capital Funds for Water Treatment Facility – Interim City Manager Glen Adams explained the need for the reallocation approval for a sludge collector at the Water Plant. Two other water projects approved with the budget exceed the amount needed but were not ready for repair quit yet and the sludge collector is considered priority over those projects. Council Member Lawson made a motion to reallocate the requested funds, Council Member Pearson seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor.

Presentation of information regarding marketing campaigns and the Public Information Office – Public Information Officer Kendall Davis provided a PowerPoint explaining his plan to improve marketing for Martinsville and how Martinsville can learn from Danville's Public Information Department and Economic Development Marketing coordinator actions. Davis explained Danville's team structure and position responsibilities, use of marketing agencies including the rebranding campaign and the Schoolfield District campaign, utilizing rolls for effective outreach to include a Public Information Officer, Communications/Media Specialist, and Marketing Agency. Davis explained enhancing results with a media specialist and impactful marketing campaign results. Vice Mayor Rawls gave kudos to Davis for taking this research on himself and providing Council with great information. Council Member Lawson said the PIO in Danville is amazing to learn from.

# Marketing Martinsville Options

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW TO IMPROVE THE CITY'S MARKETING PRESENCE

## Learning from Danville

Recently, we had an insightful discussion with Danville's Public Information Department and Economic Development Marketing Coordinator to learn about their team's functioning and the role of Marketing Agencies in their processes. Key takeaways were:

- Team Structure
- Utilization of Marketing Agencies
- Targeted Marketing Campaigns
- Effective Collaboration

## Team Structure

### Public Information Officer:

- Manages media releases and website updates.
- Oversees the City of Danville-Government Facebook presence.
- Coordinates ribbon cuttings and related events.
- Creates written content and promotional materials.

### River City TV:

- Conducts Facebook Live coverage of ribbon cuttings and council meetings.
- Posts engaging photos and videos on social media.

### Marketing Coordinator:

- Designs captivating posts for the Office of Economic Development.
- Coordinates branding and marketing campaigns for economic development initiatives.

## Use of Marketing Agencies

### Rebranding Campaign:

- Currently undergoing rebranding with a new logo and shield.
- Budget allocation of approximately \$90,000 for the entire process.
- Elements of the campaign:
  - Soliciting community input.
  - Redesigning the logo and shield.
  - Executing print and digital marketing for the new logo.

### Schoolfield District Campaign:

- Marketing agency employed for a strategic campaign.
- Total expenditure: \$100,000.
- Objective: Developing a masterplan for the community centered around the upcoming casino.
- Elements of the campaign:
  - Creation of a dedicated Facebook page.
  - Design of a unique logo.
  - Conducting surveys to gather valuable insights.
  - Developing an engaging website landing page.

## Utilizing Roles for Effective Outreach

### Public Information Officer:

- Coordinates media interviews and news releases.
- Creates compelling content (articles, photos, videos) for website and social media.
- Manages the coordination of marketing campaigns.

### Communications/Media Specialist: (Part-Time Hire: \$15-17 hr, 20-29 hrs per week)

- Designs flyers and graphics for hiring, events, and departmental/council requests.
- Oversees website updates and maintenance.
- Assists in content creation across various platforms.

### Marketing Agency:

- Executes comprehensive rebranding campaigns for the City and MiNet.
- Develops targeted campaigns (e.g., Uptown Martinsville, housing, or community development).
- Provides expertise in SEO (Search Engine Optimization) strategies.

## Enhancing Results w/ a Media Specialist

### Hiring a Part Time Media Specialist will:

1. **Amplify Public Presence:**
  - Strengthen digital, print, and in-person representation for the City.
  - Improve visibility and engagement with the community.
2. **Elevate Outreach Quality:**
  - Benefit from specialized design expertise for more impactful communication.
  - Ensure high-quality content creation across various channels.
3. **Extend Event Coverage:**
  - Provide weekend and after-hours event coverage.
  - Capture and promote important moments beyond regular business hours.

## Impactful Marketing Campaign Results

### Rebranding Campaign: (\$70,000)

- Refreshed City logo to align with the Council's forward vision.
- Developed new signage, apparel, and print materials to garner positive feedback from citizens.
- Implemented an SEO strategy to enhance the City's digital first impression.

### Targeted Campaign: (\$90,000 to \$110,000)

- Set a new standard for how the marketing of our City and initiatives are handled.
- Crafted compelling content to engage and attract citizens.
- Successfully reshaped the City's narrative for both residents and visitors.

## Discussion

### Business from the Floor – no one

Comments by members of City Council – Council Member Mitchell participated on a ZOOM call with the Virginia Municipal League General Laws Committee on July 27 and several good topics were discussed including gaming machines. The Paradise Inn is scheduled for demolition next week and there will be a ceremony tomorrow for the public to attend. Council Member Pearson said she has questions about gaming machines and which ones are legal and illegal.

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Police Chief Rob Fincher said gaming machines and whether they are legal or not is confusing; the topic is currently in front of the Court of Appeals. Due to the City Code, there should be no gaming machines operating in the City, any machines offering a payout would be operating against City Code although there are several in question. Pearson said Council attended a productive meeting with Uptown Partnership, CPEG and the Chamber of Commerce. Uptown Partnership is moving forward to achieve the highest tier of Main Street certification. Council Member Lawson attended the VML meeting by ZOOM and will report at the next meeting. On August 9, Refuse Temple will provide free haircuts for students before school starts. Uptown Martinsville currently has a contest on their website to create an Uptown mascot. Lawson offered compliments to the Public Works Department and Electric Department for their continued support and assistance with local businesses. School starts next week so Lawson reminded residents to be careful and watch for school buses. Lawson said in Saturday's Martinsville Bulletin, there was a public notice about FEMA funding and emergency food and shelter programs; she feels that would fit in well with the housing coalition. Vice Mayor Rawls thanked those who have stepped up and taken responsibilities to improve Martinsville and recognized several employees and citizens by name. Mayor Jones also thanked Davis for what he's doing for the City. On August 26 there will be a Worship on the Lawn program to bring communities together sponsored by the Knights of Worship at the soccer complex at 5:00pm

Comments by Interim City Manager – Interim City Manager Glen Adams discussed the park upgrades committee meetings scheduled for August 24 and August 29; anyone with questions can reach out to Hannah in Community Development. Adams says he has met some of the nicest people in Martinsville and he feels that we need to focus on the people and their love for others in the community. Community Development Director interviews will be Thursday, the Public Works Director posting will close tomorrow, and the Civil Engineer position will close in two weeks. The City has good staff and there is a lot to be done. Staff is working hard to fill in the gaps; Adams appreciates their work and he is learning a lot

There being no further business, Council Member Lawson made a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.

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Karen Roberts, Clerk of Council

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LC Jones, Mayor