

County of Henry

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Fax (276) 634-4781

December 3, 2019

The Honorable Kathy Lawson
Mayor, City of Martinsville
P.O. Box 1112
Martinsville, VA 24114

Dear Mayor Lawson:

I am writing this letter to you on behalf of the Henry County Board of Supervisors. We thank you for your letter of November 5, 2019 and we are interested in maintaining this communication. Clearly the entire Martinsville-Henry County area would be impacted by a decision by the City to revert, and a consistent and courteous dialogue is essential to mitigating any potential negative impacts on our citizens.

Our Board of Supervisors feels the future of our two public school systems is the most important and impactful issue facing us in the immediate future, and our Board wants to concentrate on this sole issue at the outset.

We propose:

- The hiring of a third-party entity to conduct a facilities study of the city school system and the county school system buildings, to determine the feasibility of combining the systems through the city's contracting with Henry County for educational services; a merger of the divisions; or another method. Our Board also believes that bringing in an unbiased third party would greatly enhance our chances of success.
- Henry County would pay two-thirds of the cost of hiring the entity, with the City paying one-third of the cost.
- The Henry County Administrator and the City Manager would work with their respective staffs and with the respective school superintendents to craft a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit the third-party vendor for this study.
- Once the study is complete, a meeting of the two Boards and the two school boards would be convened to review its findings and to determine a path forward.

Additionally, our Board respectfully requests that City Council delay any vote concerning reversion until after the proposed study is completed and discussed at the meeting suggested above. Enhancing educational opportunities for our young people is the best way to attain a prosperous future for our community, and we believe this approach would allow all parties to focus our efforts on that goal.

Thank you for your consideration of the items listed above. We look forward to your response.

On behalf of the Henry County Board of Supervisors,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Adams", with a large, stylized initial "J" and "A".

Jim Adams
Chairman

Cc: City Manager
City Attorney
County Administrator
County Attorney