

Radford University/Radford City Joint Commission Minutes

**The Hub on East Main Street
November 11, 2025 @ 8:45 am**

Attendees: Ben Bondurant, Angela Joyner, Nichole Hair, Melissa Skelton, Todd Meredith, Tricia Smith, Eric Plummer and Derek Neal. David Perryman, Susan Trageser, Kellie Artrip, Kelsi Jones and Bethany Usher attended via Zoom.

I. Welcome

The meeting was opened by Co-chair, Angela Joyner, who welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed appreciation for attendees from the city and university. A moment of gratitude for service was shared for Veterans Day.

II. Radford Community Fest 2025 recap

The group reviewed the success of the 2025 Radford Community Fest, which drew an estimated 2,000 attendees and featured 114 vendors, four bands, and various performers. The attendance count is believed to be lighter than 2024, however, it may be attributed to attendees turning off their location settings on their mobile devices. While attendance was slightly lower than the previous year, the event saw growth in vendor participation and positive community feedback. Suggestions for improvement next year include enhancing sound distribution, providing more shaded areas, and expanding areas for alcohol consumption (DORA district). Plans for the 2026 event are already underway, with a date of August 22, 2026. New initiatives such as a logo contest, a more selective vendor application process, and improved data collection methods were also discussed. **Next Steps:** Develop MOA for 2026 Community Fest. Explore additional opportunities for collection of economic impact data for major events. Explore DORA district, non-profit sponsorship alcohol license/event next year.

III. Highlander Festival

Discussion then shifted to the Highlander Festival, where concerns were raised about its overlap with Homecoming weekend. Ideas to enhance the festival experience included encouraging overnight stays through hotel partnerships, creating a weekend itinerary, and reintroducing traditional elements like a bagpipe parade. The group also considered forming a dedicated planning subcommittee to better coordinate the event. **Next steps:** Share feedback with university and city officials regarding multiple events, potential economic impact for businesses and opportunities for collaboration (Angela Joyner).

IV. Retail Study

An update on the regional retail study was provided, with ongoing discussions focused on business retention and attraction, particularly along East Main Street. **Next Steps:** Subcommittee has been convened to consult with regional partners, review recent

studies and develop proposal/plan for study. Identify timing for joint commission review.

V. Trunk or Treat Trail

The Trunk or Treat Trail event held on October 30, 2025, was also reviewed, with 34 RU student organizations and two administrative departments participating. There was strong engagement from students, faculty and community members.

VI. Member Updates

- Relevant updates related to work and initiatives in area/role

City Representatives

- Kellie Artrip – Radford City Council Member
- Todd Meredith – City Manager
 - Trish Cox will be the new CFO for the City of Radford
 - Nearing completion of current remediation phase of West Commerce Park
 - Nearing sale of Applebee's and Moog buildings
- Jerry Holdaway – Radford City Chief of Police
- Dan McKinney – Executive Director, Radford Chamber of Commerce
- Melissa Skelton – Director of Planning and Zoning and Interim City Clerk
- Ben Bondurant - Real Estate Rep and Developer
- Kelsi Jones – Owner of BT's Restaurant

University Representatives

- Susan Trageser- Vice President for Student Affairs
 - MLK Day of Service in January 2026 is being planned and non-profit partners are needed
- Angela Joyner – Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education
- Bethany Usher – Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Eric Plummer – Assistant VP for Public Safety
- David Perryman – Associate Vice President for Strategic Communications
- Nichole Hair – Economic Development and Community Engagement
 - New outdoor recreation conference, Adventure Works, will be scheduled in Fall 2026

Upcoming dates:

- Veteran's Day program – November 11
- Women's Basketball – November 11, November 16
- Men's Basketball – November 11, November 15
- Main Campus Open House – November 15
- RAD Talks – Judy Jenks (November 18 – Long Way Brewing)
- Radford City Council (November 24)

- Radford City Tree lighting (December 2 @ 5 pm)
- City Council Meeting – December 8 @ 7 pm
- Radford City Christmas Parade – December 9 @ 7 – 9 pm
 - Rain date: December 15
- Winter Commencement – December 12 – 13
- 2026 Radford Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting & Gala – February 6 @ 6 -9:30 pm