

**Radford University/Radford City Joint Commission
Minutes**

**The Hub on East Main Street
September 8, 2026 @ 8:45 am**

Attendees: Kellie Artip, Angela Joyner, Todd Meredith, Sarah Turpin, Jason Slaughter, Kim Repass, Melissa Skelton, Ben Bondurant, Kelsi Jones, Tricia Smith, Eric Plummer, David Perryman, Stephanie Byers (Guest), Nichole Hair. Kelsi Jones attended via Zoom.

The meeting agenda is created by the Commission members and designed to create an opportunity to discuss collaborative initiatives, learn about specific topics and/or areas of interest, and develop relevant action plans as needed.

I. Welcome

The meeting was opened by Co-chairs, Angela Joyner and Kellie Artip, who welcomed everyone to the meeting.

II. Internships VA discussion

Stephanie Byers gave an overview of Internships Virginia as a statewide, state-funded initiative administered through VEDP to improve talent retention by expanding access to paid, high-quality internships. The program offers consulting support for internship design and wage matching for eligible employers, with support of up to \$7,500 per intern/year. The group reviewed employer eligibility, reimbursement limits, and annual internship caps, and noted that the program has expanded to local governments, with the employee threshold waived for localities.

Participants shared examples of successful internships and discussed how the program can address student retention, an aging workforce, and population decline. Ms. Byers clarified the minimum internship commitment, field flexibility, a possible connection to apprenticeships, and student eligibility requirements. Plans were announced for an October informational session at the Hub to engage local businesses, Chamber members, municipalities, and other interested organizations.

UPDATE: Regional Chambers of Commerce, Radford University's Center for Career and Talent Development will host a Workshop on October 16, 8 – 10 am, at the HUB, 1000 East Main Street, Radford, VA 24142. To register, click the below link:

https://d.docs.live.net/5bb98a9403b6aaee/Attachments/internshipworkshop_flyer_PRINT.pdf

III. Radford Community Fest Update

Tricia Smith and Melissa Skelton reported a successful third year for the Radford Community Fest, with increased attendance, expanded entertainment, increased volunteer participation, and strong community engagement. A preliminary attendance estimate of at least 6,000 attendees. The group discussed the event is approaching the possibility of sponsorship next year. Joint Commission members also praised the contributions of student interns and employees.

Looking ahead to 2027, the team identified possible improvements involving parking, entertainment, shade, vendors, and stage layout. Discussion also covered stronger participation by local businesses and ways to measure their traffic and economic impact. Joint Commission members considered promoting the festival at regional events and training local businesses on festival preparation and social-media promotion. Recurring interest in festival shirts was noted as a sign that the event is becoming a community tradition.

ACTION ITEMS: Joint Commission committee will review parking, entertainment, shade, vendors and stage layout, t-shirts sales, and ways to track the number of attendees next year.

IV. Highlanders Festival Update

Tricia Smith and Melissa Skelton reviewed advertising, attendance expectations, site layout, vendor and clan participation, the beer-tent location, sheep-herding placement, sound considerations, and the competition schedule. The planned programming includes mass bands, performances, sheep herding, Highland cattle, children's activities, library storytelling, and arts programming. The committee decided to sell both the prior and current shirt designs, with competitors receiving the new navy design.

Date: October 10, 2026 | 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Link: [Radford Highlanders Festival](#)

V. Radford Retail Strategy Update

The Retail Strategy Committee updated the group on a five-year retail strategy being developed with the City of Radford, the New River Regional Commission, the Chamber, and Retail Strategies. Input-gathering activities include a public stakeholder session on September 23rd, a walking tour of the retail areas, and a survey open through October 7th. The group also considered whether additional communication materials or a dedicated information page would help explain the initiative.

ACTION ITEMS: Share the following link with Stakeholders:

Link to survey:

<https://d.docs.live.net/5bb98a9403b6aaee/Retail%20Strategy%20Study/Retail%20strategies%20flyer.png>

VI. Joint Jurisdiction discussion

Participants discussed the history and legal requirements of a proposed concurrent-jurisdiction agreement between Radford University Police and the City of Radford Police Department. Under the proposal, University Police would assist in designated areas near campus while the city retains primary responsibility and dispatch authority. The group discussed large outside crowds, and the need for greater police visibility on high-volume weekends. They also discussed mutual aid limitations, joint training, mental-health response, traffic enforcement, and the operational benefits of concurrent jurisdiction.

University Police clarified that the proposal would mainly extend patrol coverage within existing areas and would not necessarily increase costs. The group agreed to return with a proposal for consideration.

ACTION ITEMS: University Police and the City of Radford Police Department will define the proposed jurisdictional agreement and provide a proposal for Joint Commission and City Council review.

VII. Member updates:

City Representatives

- Kellie Artrip – Radford City Council Member
- Todd Meredith – City Manager
- Jerry Holdaway – Radford City Chief of Police
- Sarah Turpin – Executive Director, Radford Chamber of Commerce
- Kim Repass – Director of Economic Development & Director of Tourism
- Melissa Skelton – Director of Planning and Zoning
- Ben Bondurant - Real Estate Rep and Developer
- Kelsi Jones – Owner of BT's Restaurant

University Representatives

- Tricia Smith – Interim Vice President for Student Affairs
 - Students will be returning August 19 - 20
- Angela Joyner – Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education
 - Annual Radford University Economic Development Luncheon – Kyle Hall – September 10th @ 11:15 – 1 pm
 - Launch updated economic impact study
- Bethany Usher – Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Rob Hoover – Vice President for Finance and Administration
- Eric Plummer – Chief of Police for Radford University
- Lisa Ghidotti – Assistant Vice President for Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives
 - Economic Development business leaders luncheon is being held September 10th

- Nichole Hair – Director of Economic Development and Community Engagement
- David Perryman – Associate Vice President for Strategic Communications

Calendar updates

- RAD Talks – Ashley Palazzo – “History of Radford University through Artifacts” – September 8 @ 7 pm – McConnell Library (Andrew Ross Student Art Gallery)
- AdventureWorks – September 8 & 9 @ 8 – 5 pm
- Economic Development Luncheon – September 10
- Radford City Council – September 14
- Board of Visitors – September 17 – 18
- Radford City Council – September 28 @ 7 pm
- Career and Internship Fair – September 24, 4 – 6 pm- Kyle Hall
- Business Over Breakfast at the HUB – October 7 @ 8 am – 9 am
- Highlanders Festival – October 10 – 9 am – Moffett Lawn
- Radford City Council – October 12 @ 7 pm
- Joint Commission – October 13 @ 8:45 am – 10 am
- RAD Talks – Dr. Tiesha Martin - “Stronger Together: Advancing Youth Well-being Through Sport and Community Partnerships” – October 13 @ 6:30 pm – Radford City Recreation Center
- Internships VA Workshop – October 16 @ 8 – 10 am – Radford University HUB
- Radford University Alumni Homecoming – October 22 – 24
- Radford City Council – October 26 @ 7 pm
- Trick or Treat Trail – October 29 @ 4 – 6 pm