

CITY OF MONROE
SPECIAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING
300 WEST CROWELL STREET
MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA 28112
TUESDAY, MAY 6, 2025 – 3:00 P.M.
AGENDA
www.monroenc.org

- Item 1.** Public Comment Period
- Item 2.** Approval of Minutes – March 4, 2025
- Item 3.** Review Accomplishments and Goals of the Committee
- Item 4.** Committee Impact Discussion
- Item 5.** Other Business

ATTENTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Please contact Angie Sustar at asustar@monroenc.org or 704-282-4651 to confirm your attendance. Thank you.

CITY OF MONROE
SPECIAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 4, 2025
MINUTES

The Special Needs and Disabilities Committee of the City of Monroe, North Carolina met in the City Hall Council Chambers located at 300 West Crowell Street in Monroe, North Carolina at 3:00 p.m. on March 4, 2025 with Chair Julie Thompson presiding.

Members Present: Council Member Julie Thompson (Chair), Mayor Robert Burns, Committee Members Kelly Stegall, Melinda Plue, and Karen Heath, Property Management Director Ryan Jones (ex-officio), and Clerk Angie Sustar

Staff: Assistant City Manager Lisa Hollowell

Chair Thompson called the Special Needs and Disabilities Committee Meeting of March 4, 2025 to order at 3:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance. A quorum was present.

Item No. 1. Public Comment. None

Item No. 2. Approval of Minutes – February 4, 2024.

Motion: Member Melinda Plue made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 4, 2024 Minutes as presented.

Second: Member Kelly Stegall

Action: The motion to approve passed unanimously with the following votes.

AYES: Chair Thompson, Mayor Burns, Members Stegall, Heath, and Plue

NAYS: None

Item No. 3. Autistic Child Signage Policy. Chair Thompson advised that the policy was presented at the Public Safety Meeting yesterday. She will confirm with Senior Staff Attorney Terry Sholar that the policy will go before city council at the March meeting.

Item No. 4. Committee Impact Discussion. South Piedmont Community College Associate Vice President, School of College and Career Readiness and SNDC member, Kelly Stegall provided an overview of SPCC's supports and services for adults with IDD. Their goal is to increase access, enrollment, program completion, credential attainment, and employment.

South Piedmont is one of 15 colleges in NC that is part of the Access to Achievement initiative. This initiative is granted by the NC legislature and provides additional funding to support the above mentioned goals.

To improve access and increase belonging, the College has:

- developed a college-wide professional development campaign for instructors and staff

- improved the front-door experience through clearly-defined processes and procedures and a more accessible website
- increased accessible spaces
- In collaboration with Special Olympics, South Piedmont is the first community college in NC to host a Unified Sports Club for athletes with and without disabilities. The first sport will be disc golf and will start on Wednesday, March 5.

The Access to Achievement Coordinator is the primary point of contact for all individuals with IDD at South Piedmont. This position assists students with developing person-centered academic plans, securing accommodations, connecting students to resources for barrier assistance, i.e., transportation, food security, childcare, and connecting students with academic support. Additionally, the College is developing a mentorship program to connect students with and without disabilities who are in the same programs.

The College also provides supported pathways for students with IDD. Current academies include Pet Care and Food Service. Staff are actively working to develop a horticulture pathway and in collaboration with Wingate University, an Early Childhood Education for the Workforce pathway. Academic opportunities are tied to credential attainment and employment.

Finally, funding is provided through three streams: Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title II, North Carolina Community College System funding, and Access to Achievement funding provided through the NC Legislature.

Mayor Burns stated that he would like this information presented at a City Council Strategic Meeting and asked Member Stegall if she would be willing to do so.

Item No. 5. Other Business. Mr. Jones asked if the committee was interested in a Special Needs and Disabilities Expo event to highlight and provide exposure to opportunities and services for individuals with disabilities and their families. The committee provided a favorable response and Mr. Jones will speak with the Parks and Recreation department about a possible date and will provided an update.

Chair Thompson stated that an Expo could possibly be added to the SNDC's list of goals being compiled for May and asked if a date for the Expo could be announced at that time.

Member Stegall advised the Thrive Union Resource Fair hosted by SPCC is scheduled for August 2025. The mission of Thrive Union is to create and maintain an environment where our entire community collaborates to alleviate poverty and increase economic mobility. Their vision is to build a sustainable community where everyone can thrive.

Resource List Update: Mr. Jones stated that he would compile the results from the most recent survey and to add to the previous information gathered. He will email the updated survey results to the committee. He advised that responses have been consistent with some of the needs previously identified by the Committee.

Mayor Burns shared an email from a gentleman with Autism expressing his feelings of isolation due to limited opportunities and asked the city consider offering such opportunities. This gentleman and others would benefit from the Expo.

Member Heath mentioned that there could possibly be employment opportunities at the Science Center or Dowd Theater for individuals with special needs or disabilities.

There being no further business, Member Melinda Plue made a motion to adjourn the Special Needs and Disabilities Committee Meeting of March 4, 2025.

Second: Member Karen Heath
Action: The motion passed unanimously.

AYES: Members Stegall, Heath and Plue, Chair Thompson, and Mayor Burns
NAYS: None

The meeting adjourned at 3:46 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Angie Sustar,
Business Administration Analyst
Property Management Department

DRAFT