

# **HOMELESS & ADDICTION COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Thursday, September 11, 2025**

**10 A.M.**

**City Hall Council Chambers**

**300 West Crowell Street**

**Monroe, NC**

- Item 1. Public Comments**
- Item 2. Homeless Census Update**
- Item 3. “City Care Date” for Homeless Discussion**
- Item 4. Finalize Billboard Awareness Discussion**
- Item 5. Approval of Minutes - April 10, 2025 and June 18, 2025**

***ATTENTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS:***

**Please contact DOUG BRITT at 704.282.4568 to confirm your attendance. Thank you.**

**CITY OF MONROE**  
**HOMELESS AND ADDICTION COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**APRIL 10, 2025 MINUTES**

The Homeless and Addiction 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 5:00 p.m. on April 10, 2025 with Chair Gary Anderson presiding.

**Present:** Chair Gary Anderson, Member Joseph Quinto, Member Sheila Crunkleton, Member Gray Biber

**Absent:**

**Staff:** Doug Britt, Lt. Renee Hower, Officer David Lange

Chair Anderson called the Homeless and Addiction Committee Meeting of April 10, 2025 to order at 5:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

**Item 1.**      **Public Comment** – Tripp Helms wanted to comment on an agenda item regarding an update on homeless issues by the police department. He did not think it was necessary or appropriate to rely on just the police department to know the nuances and cause of homelessness, or the solution to homelessness in Monroe. He also had comments on the ordinance passed by the council regarding camping or sleeping on city or private property within the city limits. He feels the ordinance is so broad that it forces the police to use their discretion on whether to enforce or not. He also has not seen the ordinance published yet and stated concern that if the minutes are not read, no one would know it existed. He also stated a concern regarding the perception of the homeless shelter in the community.

**Item 2.**      **Update on Homeless Issues - Monroe PD**

Chair Anderson welcomed and introduced Lt. Hower who give a brief update on the homeless issues within the City of Monroe. Lt. Hower stated she had been in contact with code enforcement who has been working with the police department in cleaning up homeless camps. To date there has been 15 camps in the last 3 months cleaned up, but they have no idea where they go other than another private property or vacant land. A good eight of those fifteen camps have quite a large amount of homeless living within the camp. Lt. Hower further stated there has been no increase in numbers of arrests for homeless people, although code enforcement has said they run into an excess of 300 homeless people on a regular basis.

Officer David Lange spoke next explaining he is in the process of gathering names, so officers can actually attach a face with a name to follow where they are, and for medical reasons. He cruised around for three days and collected 156 names of those willing to talk to him. Officer Lange explained he has gotten quite familiar with the homeless population. He stated the problem was bad, but continues to get much worse, and he is not sure what the draw is. Possibly the three open air drug markets on the east side of the city making it easy to get drugs, and the homeless shelter where they can get three meals a day. This list will help officers, for example, there was an overdose at the mall and EMS had no idea who he was, but officers at the scene were able to identify him. He explained there are quite a few overdose deaths within the homeless community, but new ones keep coming. It is a never-ending cycle.

Member Crunkleton asked if Officer Lange had any suggestions, as there seems to be no answers to the homeless problem. Officer Lange stated for Monroe, the majority of them have addiction or mental health issues. The homeless problem is the number one issue within the city and continues to grow. There is the

drug issue, the prostitution issue, and the criminal element making a living off their addictions. He suggested a group of smart people who care about the homeless issue sit down and formulate a solution. Officer Lange stated the biggest strength against homelessness and the crime that comes with it is knowledge. He feels by identifying the homeless population and becoming familiar with the members helps officers to learn their routines and to hold them accountable.

A brief discussion ensued regarding what possible solutions could be, as the current situation seems overwhelming. Chair Anderson and members suggested forming a larger pool of participants consisting of those such as police, EMS, fire, the mayor, city manager, Melissa from the homeless shelter, and others focusing on the complex issues, as the problems are bigger than what this committee can solve. Chair Anderson stated he would speak with the city manager and let the committee know.

**Item 3. Finalize Billboard Awareness**

No new information discussed.

**Item 4. Approval of Minutes – February 13, 2025**

**Motion:** Member Crunkleton made a motion to approve the February 13, 2025 Minutes as presented

**Second:** Member Biber

**Action:** The motion to approve passed unanimously.

There being no further business, Member Quinto made a motion to adjourn the Homeless and Addiction Committee Meeting of April 10, 2025 at 6:15 p.m.

**Second:** Member Biber

**Action:** The motion passed unanimously.

Attest:

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Gary Anderson, Chair

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Heidi Bumgarner, Clerk

**CITY OF MONROE  
HOMELESS AND ADDICTION COMMITTEE MEETING  
ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION  
JUNE 18, 2025 MINUTES**

The Homeless and Addiction Committee of the City of Monroe, North Carolina, met at the Old Armory located at 500 S Johnson St in Monroe, North Carolina at 10:00 a.m. on June 18, 2025 with Chair Gary Anderson presiding.

**Present:** Chair Gary Anderson, Member Joseph Quinto, Member Sheila Crunkleton, Member Gray Biber

**City Staff:** Mayor Robert Burns, Councilwoman Surluta Anthony, City Manager Mark Watson, Assistant City Managers Jeff Wells and Lisa Hollowell, Chief of Police Rhett Bolen, Planning Director Lisa Stiwinter, Assistant Planning Director Doug Britt, Sgt. Mark Isley, Officer Purnell Sowell, Code Enforcement Officer III Robert Rushing, Deputy Fire Chief Bryan Kindley, City Fire Dept Engineer Jason Easter, Strategic Projects Manager Teresa Campo, Grants Lisa Kerner, City Clerk Bridgette Robinson, Communications Payton Mills, Planning Administrative Assistant II Heidi Bumgarner

**Others:** CEO Union County Homeless Shelter Melissa McKeown, City of Monroe Resident Myles Kuly

Chair Anderson called the Homeless and Addiction Committee Roundtable Discussion of June 18, 2025 to order at 10:03 a.m.

**Item 1. Roundtable Discussion**

The purpose of the roundtable is to discuss the ongoing challenges for the homeless in the City, to share updates on current efforts, and explore meaningful next steps for tackling the homeless crisis in the City of Monroe. Chair Anderson introduced himself to all those present, stating the City continues to provide financial support through the local Homeless Shelter and public safety services as part of our commitment to helping those in need and in keeping the City safe. In order to make a greater impact, the City must develop a broader, collaborative effort to address homelessness more effectively. Together, we need to work towards sustainable solutions.

City Manager Watson stated addressing homelessness is a shared responsibility, and as a City, we are committed to doing our part in a compassionate manner. A meaningful solution will require collaboration among our local governments, nonprofits, and service providers. My goal is that through working together, we can create lasting change.

Chair Anderson introduced the facilitator Audra McKay who asked those present to introduce themselves and share a key concern or insight from each agency, before reviewing current efforts, highlighting programs and services already making a positive impact in Monroe. The participants broke into groups to examine service gaps, explore ways to improve inter-agency coordination, and discuss strategies to build pathways to stable housing, and then share some of the key points with the main group.

Key points and reoccurring themes shared by the groups included:

- 1) Understanding the scope of the homeless situation within the City through collective data amongst all stakeholders.
- 2) Coordination and communication so as to maintain data from a unified source
- 3) Provide safe place for unsheltered people to go with access to toilets, running water. Secure place for their belongings
- 4) Need strong partnerships with organizations, both public, private and nonprofits, churches, hospitals, DSS, SPCC etc. for various assistance.
- 5) Research other municipalities success in handling homeless situation
- 6) Understanding homeless success stories – opportunity to be brought to the table
- 7) Identify permanent housing program – incentive programs, affordable housing
- 8) Create a task force to drill down further on actions to take

The roundtable concluded with a brainstorming session on actionable next steps, with several attendees committing to ongoing involvement.

Attest:

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Gary Anderson, Chair

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Heidi Bumgarner, Clerk