

**CITY OF MONROE
COMMITTEE ON DISABILITIES
300 WEST CROWELL STREET
MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA 28112
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2025 – 3:00 P.M.
AGENDA
www.monroenc.org**

- Item 1.** Public Comment Period
- Item 2.** Approval of Minutes – September 2, 2025
- Item 3.** Review Mission Statement
- Item 4.** Develop Goals
- Item 5.** Announcements

ATTENTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Please contact Angie Sustar at asustar@monroenc.org or 704-290-1838 to confirm your attendance. Thank you.

**CITY OF MONROE
COMMITTEE ON DISABILITIES
SEPTEMBER 2, 2025
MINUTES**

The Committee on Disabilities 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 September 2, 2025 with Chair Julie Thompson presiding.

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

Staff: Assistant City Manager Lisa Hollowell

Chair Thompson called the Committee on Disabilities Meeting of September 2, 2025 to order at 3:01 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance. A quorum was present.

Item No. 1. Public Comment. None

Item No. 2. Staff Notes for Information Purposes Only – May 6, 2025.

Item No. 3. Meeting Schedule. Chair Thompson noted that currently the regular monthly meeting is scheduled for the first Tuesday of every month and asked Committee members to provide feedback and indicate their preference for keeping or changing the schedule. Committee members expressed their preferences for keeping the current meeting schedule.

Item No. 4. Renewal of Goals. Chair Thompson initiated a discussion regarding the committee’s transition from a twelve month committee to a Citizen-based committee. She opened the floor for members to bring new items to the attention of the committee and to discuss the renewal of goals moving forward. Chair Thompson was made aware that an “ACEing Autism” event has been scheduled at different times this fall. Also, she stated that the Dowd Center Theatre is offering “sensory” showings every month and the response has been very positive.

Mr. Jones suggested categorizing priorities into three or four areas, using examples such as facility-based, program-based, and event-based. He noted that this would help to better compartmentalize goals and that a benefit of this approach would be the ability to route specific programming goals to the appropriate department, which would streamline the process of his reporting back to the committee. He can include the overview of the outcome of goals previously prepared.

He stated that the committee could determine initially what areas, tasks, and facility services that the City provides and then put those into categories and that way he can differentiate where

things go. Something along the lines of programs, facilities, procedural, or processes infrastructure.

Member Stegall suggested the committee revisit its mission and set goals at the beginning of each session or annually. This would focus the committee's efforts, potentially leading to greater accomplishments, and allow members to conduct external work in preparation for meetings. It was noted that while goals may need to be changed based on community needs, focused long-term planning could increase productivity.

Member Plue shared that the City of High Point has been designated as an "Autism Friendly City" and suggested that the committee check into the process and criteria to obtain this designation. The information gathered would serve as information for future goals for the committee.

Mr. Jones noted the benefit of prioritizing and narrowing goals to achieve more successful and tangible outcomes. He suggested that breaking down the overarching objective into smaller, more manageable tasks would prevent the committee from feeling overwhelmed and would allow checking things off on a smaller, more frequent basis.

Member Stegall shared that even though that designation is specific to autism, the overall accessibility of the community would improve.

Chair Thompson proposed that for the next meeting to categorize the committee's goals and then define specific objectives for each category. In preparation for the October meeting, members were asked to consider specific goals they would like to see achieved and the appropriate categories of those goals. A long-term approach for goal planning should also be considered.

Mr. Jones offered to provide an example by organizing the committee's previous year's accomplishments into categories. This approach would assist in presenting the committee's work to various department directors to ensure any future goals are aligned with the department's resources, time, and existing projects.

Chair Thompson announced that the former twelve-month committee is now a permanent committee. The initial task will be to build an infrastructure to improve communication and distribution of information to the relevant departments.

Member Plue stated that there was a mission statement created at the beginning but that she wasn't at the meeting and requested the verbiage for her reference. She asked if the committee could adjust the mission going forward as needed.

The members discussed the mission statement. Chair Thompson indicated it could be revised at anytime, and Member Plue agreed this was a good starting point. Member Plue was provided a copy of the mission statement and read it aloud to the committee. She noted that the document requires additional work.

Member Stegall stated that the mission was to promote inclusion, accessibility, and equal opportunity for all Monroe Citizens with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities (IDD). She stated we made some changes about services and there was some concern about utilizing the term direct programs that it may insinuate direct services. The committee opted to take that out and change it to ensure access or increase access.

Item No. 5. Discussion of Guidelines for Committee Members. Chair Thompson advised that the Citizens Appointment Committee met and approved Jonathan Belk’s application.

Mr. Jones advised that due to Jonathan’s residence outside of city limits, the recommendation is to approve his nomination as an ex-officio member. An ex-officio member serves as a non-voting member. The recommendation will be presented to Council for approval on September 9. Upon approval, Jonathan will be able to take part in the next meeting.

Members discussed vacancies on the committee, the need to attract new candidates, and general committee information, terms, and processes.

Item No. 6. Recommendation of Chairperson.

Chair Thompson made the recommendation to have Melinda Plue assume the position of Chair of the Committee on Disabilities.

Second: Member Kelly Stegall
Action: The motion of recommendation to have Melinda Plue assume the position of Chair of the Committee on Disabilities passed unanimously with the following votes.

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

There being no further business, Chair Thompson made a motion to adjourn the Committee on Disabilities Meeting of September 2, 2025.

Second: Member Stegall
Action: Motion passed unanimously.

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

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Angie Sustar
Business Administration Analyst
Property Management Department