

MEETING MINUTES

**Town of Waynesville
Homelessness Task Force**

Thursday, June 25, 2020

6:00—7:00 PM EST

Location: Zoom

<https://wcu.zoom.us/j/96689446161>

Dial in: 877 853 5247 US Toll-free

877 369 0926 US Toll-free

Meeting ID: 966 8944 6161

Meeting Facilitator: Amy Murphy-Nugen

TF Attendees: Police Chief David Adams, Juleah Berliner, Dale Burris, Sheriff Greg Christopher, Bob Cummings, Patsy Davis, Commissioner Kevin Ensley, Keri Guidry, Bill Guy, Mandy Haithcox, Jon Lynn McDermott, Linda Nulsen, Joey Reece, Joslyn Schaefer, Alderman Anthony Sutton, Brandon Wilson

Please read: NA

Please bring: NA

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was opened with a welcome message for the Task Force members along with members of the community. Interim Chair Murphy-Nugen reviewed the agenda and explained logistics for how to communicate in the Zoom interface and call. The primary purpose of this initial meeting was to serve as an organizing meeting of the Task Force. Agenda items included reviewing the Task Force charge and goals, responsibilities and expectations of Task Force Members, local conditions leading to the creation of the Task Force, expected deliverables, proposed work process, and, communications plan. In addition, opportunities for community feedback were shared.

Task Force Charge & Responsibilities

Interim Chair Murphy-Nugen reviewed the charge and goals of the Task Force as articulated by the Mayor and Board of Alderman:

1. Research the demographics of persons who are homeless in Waynesville and the causes of homelessness;
2. Examine stigmatization, criminalization and discrimination associated with homelessness;
3. Conduct a gap analysis to identify needs, existing community capacity, and additional resources necessary to prevent and respond to temporary and chronic homelessness; and,
4. Developing a collaborative community action plan to fill system gaps and improve existing programs.

Interim Chair Murphy-Nugen also reviewed expectations of Task Force members:

- Collectively, represent all sectors which serve individuals who are homeless
- Members should commit to the goals and objectives of the Task Force.
- Members should commit to attending at least 2 meetings per month and serving on at least one subcommittee/work group.
- Members should be residents of the Town
- In addition to members who represent the concerns of town residents, the members who are agency representatives should be those who have the ability to commit the resources/money of their organizations and/or who can obligate their agency or organization to collaboration in crafting solutions to homelessness.

In reviewing the charge and responsibilities of the Task Force, Interim Chair Murphy-Nugen also communicated the context of local conditions and considerations that resulted in the creation of the Task Force, which include but are not limited to:

- Lack of affordable housing options
- Perceived increase in the number of individuals who lack secure and stable shelter
- Identification of encampments (i.e. bridges, cars, abandoned buildings) serving as shelter
- Public health and safety concerns expressed by neighbors in proximity to encampments and/or individuals who are homeless
- Community and leadership agreeing that preventing and addressing homelessness is a shared priority

In contextualizing the issue of homelessness, Interim Chair Murphy-Nugen shared the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition of homelessness, which consists of four categories:

Category 1: Literally homeless

Category 2: Imminent risk of homeless

Category 3: Homeless under other federal statutes

Category 4: Fleeing/attempting to flee domestic violence (DV)

Each of these categories reflects specific criteria determined by HUD. Task Force members should review the categories as we discuss and determine what common definition of homelessness we will use to guide our work.

Interim Chair Murphy-Nugen also discussed the expected deliverables of the Task Force, which include:

A. Demographic profile of people who are homeless and the causes of their homelessness;

B. Identification of stigmatization, criminalization and discrimination associated with homelessness;

C. Gap analysis to identify needs, existing community capacity, and additional resources necessary to prevent and respond to temporary and chronic homelessness; and,

D. Collaborative community action plan to fill system gaps and improve existing programs.

Proposed Work Process, Communications Plan

Interim Chair Murphy-Nugen recognized both the need to respond to immediate needs of our neighbors who are homeless and to our neighbors who have been impacted by the presence of homelessness in our community. She also noted the complex nature of homelessness, explaining that it is a multi-faceted and multi-layered issue. Consequentially, the work of the Task Force is expected to occur over 12-months.

Interim Chair Murphy-Nugen prepared a survey for the Task Force members that asks for their feedback on guiding principles (i.e. processes that will govern the collective work of the Task Force), meeting schedule (i.e. how often, how long, etc.), process of decision-making (i.e. voting, etc.), and thoughts about possible issues needing immediate attention and response. The survey was distributed to Task Force members on Friday, June 26th and was asked to be completed by Friday, July 3rd.

Interim Chair Murphy-Nugen explained that all meeting materials and documents would be housed on the Town of Waynesville's website (link: <https://www.waynesvillenc.gov/homelessness-task-force>). Task Force members should expect materials to be posted no later than one week after meetings are held.

Feedback from Task Force Members

During the meeting, Task Force members were asked to provide feedback on any possible immediate actions. During this discussion, the following items were discussed:

- Community concerns involving safe and sanitary disposal of used syringes
- Ongoing community education related to our neighbors who are homeless and the community impacts of homelessness
- Ensuring the Task Force addresses the continuum of issues associated with homelessness—including strengthening service delivery systems to improve the quality of life for our neighbors who are homeless and addressing concerns of our neighbors and local businesses who are impacted by the proximity of homelessness in our community

Actions Between Now & Next Meeting

Interim Chair Murphy-Nugen indicated she would distribute the Task Force member survey on Friday, June 26th and asked members to complete the survey by Friday, July 3rd. This feedback will be used to establish future meetings as well as the work process for the Task Force.

Anticipated Items for Next Meeting Agenda

It is anticipated that the next meeting will address the following agenda items:

Review Task Force Charge & Process (i.e. guiding principles, meeting schedule, decision-making)

Key Issue Discussion (i.e. what is rapid response, what involves longer-term planning/action)

Rapid Response Planning
Work Plan & Work Groups (as time allows)

Additional Information:

The Homelessness Task Force is committed to providing opportunities for community feedback.

Community members: Please feel welcome to provide feedback here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TOWHTFJune2020Feedback>

Survey open until Friday, July 10



Minutes respectfully submitted by Amy Murphy-Nugen on July 2, 2020.

ⁱ Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.) *Homeless definition*. Retrieved from https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HomelessDefinition_RecordkeepingRequirementsandCriteria.pdf