

Montpelier Homelessness Committee
Draft Meeting Minutes
May 21, 2026

Attendance: Zack Hughes Chair, Sophie Lewis, Nolan Caver, Dawn Little, Lee Wilschek

City Council Rep: Jim Sheriden, Cary Brown

City Planning Manager: Matt Jelacic

City Manager: Kelly McNicholas Kury

Guests: Marc Gwinn, Montpelier Mayor, Peter Kelman, Beth Ann Maier, Steven Whitaker, Richard Shier,

Absent Marty Roberts, Ali McGurik,

1. Introductions

- a. Zack did not have his laptop so Jim Sheriden facilitated the meeting. Introductions were completed. Zack made a motion to accept the previous meeting's minutes, Dawn seconded. All in favor.

2. Public Comment

- a. Richard Sheir requested that the committee consider meeting in the evening so that people who work during the day can attend. He asked that the committee put this on the agenda for their next meeting for full discussion and suggested recruiting a member of the MBA to the committee. The MBA is concerned about aggressive loitering and public intoxication. A suggestion was made that the committee hold one meeting during the day and one meeting in the evening. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

3. City Updates

- a. Cary discussed a recent memo that included draft language for the Encampment Policy that expanded and clarified the definition of "area with high sensitivity", and included additional information about what constitutes abandoned items that may be disposed of and how personal items will be maintained.
- b. Peter asked and Cary confirmed that the language only refers to camping, not to people hanging around downtown.
- c. Sophie asked if there are any areas in the city that do not meet the expanded definition of high sensitivity. Cary said that there are areas that are not high sensitivity, however that is not the same as saying people can camp there.
- d. Zack expressed concern that this will impact activities that people engage in which are legal, such as panhandling. Cary confirmed that the policy is not meant to address that.
- e. Dawn asked that the city not punish all unhoused individuals for the behavior of one person. If an encampment is peaceful and one person disrupts that, it is not fair to make everyone move.

- f. Matt shared a map with locations for possible picnic tables, trash collection, etc. He asked if anyone on the committee would like to go out with him to look at locations. Dawn and Zack expressed interest and will contact Matt for next steps.
- g. The City Council agenda has a standing item regarding unhoused individuals. At the next meeting Jim will bring the concern raised about the potential for the expanded definition of high sensitivity to impact people hanging around but not camping in the downtown area. He will also pass on the request that one person's behavior should not negatively impact the entire community.

4. Street Outreach

- a. Zack has been monitoring the numbers of unhoused individuals in anticipation of more people coming outside as the weather gets warmer. He will be starting the water distribution as well once it gets hot. He is also monitoring transportation access which continues to be an issue.
- b. Dawn has been working with and supporting individuals who are in traumatic situations. She also responds to providers who are looking for information about available resources. Her program will also start water distribution program when it gets hot.

5. Other Business

- a. Matt shared that he has been asked to join a conversation about housing with THRIVE. The conversation will include representatives from other cities and will focus on housing in Washington County.
- b. Matt has also been in contact with COTS and is gathering additional information about the single room occupancy units they have built in Burlington.
- c. Peter shared issues around organizations and making sure missions align
- d. Lee mentioned passing flyers and posting them on a bulletin board behind Another Way and going to Sunrise. To anyone she comes across.
- e. Stephen brought up concerns around the bar being set low and band aiding. Need to continue to look at the alternatives and raise the bar more With emphises around shower and shelter being priority

6. Adjourn:

Zack makes motion to adjourn.

Lee Seconds.

Vote all in favor

Motion passed meeting adjourned 3:30 PM.

Respectfully,

Sophie Lewis.

Zachary Hughes