

City Manager's Report

Brian J. Borne, Interim City Manager
Week Ending December 10, 2021

Downtown

Matthew Black, Director

The city-wide wayfinding signage is almost complete with signs going along major thoroughfares and core downtown areas. Once all of the signs are installed, Rite Lite will go back and apply the finishing base pads for each sign. This will complete Phases I, II, & III of the city-wide wayfinding system.



Now through, Tuesday, December 14th you can vote on your favorite, downtown holiday storefront by commenting on the City's Facebook post pertaining to the promotion. The winning business will win \$400 in marketing assistance and three voters have a chance to win \$50 in downtown dollars.



Monroe-Union County Economic Development Services
R. Christopher Plate', Director



\$252 MILLION

723 JOBS

OVER 20 ANNOUNCE PROJECTS
JANUARY 2020 - DECEMBER 2021

Monroe-Union County Economic Development has had one of the busiest phases since our inception. From January 2020 through the beginning of December 2021, we have had 20 projects announce investments of just over \$252 million and new job opportunities for 723 people. This investment will generate new annual revenue for the City equivalent to \$0.035 of our tax rate. The achieved success occurred in the COVID-19 timeline, which we anticipated to be a recessionary period but instead turned into a windfall for the City. The economic development staff is just the “tip of the spear” on these projects, but to be successful, it requires the entire City team to be pulling in the same direction. We all depend on each other to make this community prosperous and keep costs low for our residents and businesses. As we close out 2021, our office wants to thank everyone in the City who make us so competitive on a global stage. Happy Holidays!

Energy Services

David Lucore, Director of Energy Services

Electric Division:

The warehouse has received a partial shipment of transformers and that has alleviated the shortage issue for the time being. We currently have enough transformers on hand to meet the demand and we expect more shipments in the coming months to keep us on track.

Bad Luck Mondays!

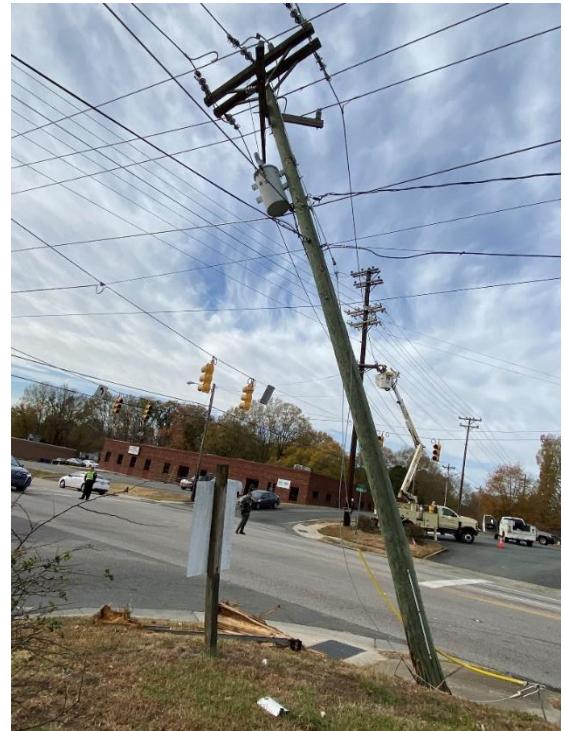


The past two Mondays have left the electric division scrambling. On Monday, November 29, at approximately 10 am, a tractor-trailer struck and broke a pole on Skyway Dr and Phifer St. Power was lost to over 320 customers in the area between Stafford St and Charlotte Ave from Hwy 74 to Belk Tonawanda Park. Journeyman Linemen Kevin Hatch and Adam Honey responded within six minutes. Additional crewmembers arrived a short

time later and were able to re-route and restore power to all customers in just over one hour. The pole had to be replaced which took the rest of the day until around 4:30 p.m.

On Monday, December 6, 2021, at approximately 9:30 a.m., Journeyman Linemen Kevin Hatch and Adam Honey responded to a serious vehicle accident on Highway 74 and Morgan Mill Road. The accident resulted in a car with victims being trapped inside by a Duke Energy guy wire. Kevin and Adam were on the scene quickly and were able to safely secure the guy wire and pole to allow first responders to extricate the victims without jeopardizing their own safety and without causing extensive damage to Duke's electric facilities. Had these men not been on the scene so rapidly, first responders would have had to cut the guy wire and hope for the best.

These incidents highlight the value of the City of Monroe having its own electric system. Our employees are in town working every day and respond to emergencies much more quickly than Duke Energy does.



Natural Gas Division:

The installation of main gas lines to the Simpson Farms subdivision was completed earlier this week.

Installation of main gas lines began in the Stallingsbrook subdivision on December 6. Kellerton Place, Phase II subdivision installation began the week of November 29.

Gas Technicians Norman McCaskill and Joe Nash responded to a call of “smells gas” on Friday, December 3. They were able to locate a leaking appliance and had to shut off gas temporarily to make the home safe. On Monday, December 6, I received a call from the residents’ daughter who expressed her appreciation of the way Norman and Joe took complete control of the situation and handled it with professionalism. In the words of their daughter, “Customer service seems to be a thing of the past and it was refreshing to see the excellent customer service these two men provided. They handled the situation very professionally and I appreciated that as my parents are nearly 90 years old.”

Great job Norman and Joe!

The gas and engineering divisions are preparing for our annual Liquefied Natural Gas LNG) Inspection by the North Carolina Utilities Commission (NCUC) on December 14, 2021.

Engineering:

Reviewing roadway conflicts for the subdivisions of Secrest Landing, Riverstone and Medlin Forest.

Working with our consulting engineers for bids for equipment needed for the Bio Gas Project.

Continuing electric and gas system loading study to ensure adequate capacity for new growth.

Working to update fiber optic network drawing s and maps including all splice points.

Administration:

In the two weeks from November 18 – 30, the administrative staff has created 115 work orders for the electric and gas crews, dispatched 38 customer appointments and emergency calls and submitted 45 requests for locates.

Engineering

Sarah McAllister, Director of Engineering

Stormwater gets the “Spotlight”

On December 7th, the Environmental Educator for the Engineering Department appeared on WCCB’s Rising Spotlight to talk about stormwater pollution as a representative of the Regional Stormwater Partnership of the Carolinas (RSPC). The City of Monroe is a proud member of RSPC, a collective of stormwater professionals and educators seeking to raise awareness of stormwater impacts in the Carolinas through the sharing of knowledge and resources. To view the segment and learn why it is important to keep leaves, fertilizers and pet waste out of our streets, storm drains and drainage ditches, check out the link below.

<https://www.wccbcharlotte.com/2021/12/07/rising-spotlight-regional-stormwater-partnership-of-the-carolinas-talks-stormwater-safety/>

Promotions:

Michael Smith was promoted from Solid Waste Technician to Equipment Operator I with the Street Division.

Fire

Ron Fowler, Chief, Fire Department

Fall Fire Hydrant Inspections:

The Fire Department recently completed inspections of all fire hydrants in the City. The City’s approximately 1,500 fire hydrants are inspected semiannually, in the spring and fall. Hydrants are inspected for proper operation and are trimmed around as necessary so they are visible. (Fire apparatus also have onboard mobile computers with the hydrants located on a map that aids firefighters in locating hydrants when responding to emergencies.) Fire hydrants are repainted by firefighters as needed during these inspections. Any repair needs located during the inspections are referred to Water Resources for the proper repairs. These inspections help ensure proper operation during emergencies and provide valuable insurance classification credit as well. Should you see fire hydrants that need attention, please let the Fire Department know.

Rising Spotlight: Regional Stormwater Partnership Of The Carolinas Talks Stormwater Safety

December 7, 2021 by Emily Bryson



CHARLOTTE, N.C. — We are in for some much-needed rain this week but with any heavy rain comes the chance for polluted water. City of Monroe Storm and Environmental Educator, [Ellen Dowling](#), joins Rising to tell us ways to keep our local waterways clean.

For more information please visit, [regionalstormwater.org](#).



Fire Department Explorers:



The Fire Department's Explorer Program continues to grow! We now have 23 explorers enrolled in the program and they are always excited to learn more about being a firefighter. Last month's meeting was at Fire Station 4 and included familiarization with the City's Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) apparatus. The Explorer Program is open to any youth, ages 14 to 20. Those interested may contact the Fire Department for more information on how to get involved.

Congratulations Captain Dennis Robinson:

Congratulations to Captain Dennis Robinson on his retirement with 30 years of service to the citizens of Monroe. Captain Robinson started as a public safety officer with the Monroe Public Safety Department, serving as a police officer and firefighter. He chose to continue his career with the Fire Department during the transition from Public Safety to separate Fire and Police Departments in 1999 and



rose to the rank of Captain. A reception was held to honor Captain Robinson on November 22nd where he was presented his retirement Resolution by Mayor Pro Tem Holloway and was also presented a watch and his fire helmet. Best wishes to Dennis and his family in his retirement.

Parks and Recreation

Ryan Jones, Director of Parks and Recreation

Ryan Jones, City of Monroe Recreation Superintendent was promoted to the Director of Parks and Recreation, effective December 9, 2021, following a competitive interview process. Ryan has served as Interim Director upon Tonya Edwards' retirement since November 15, 2021. Ryan has over 16 years in the recreation field and has been with the City of Monroe since October 28, 2015.

Parks Maintenance:

Leaf season continues to be busy! Leaf truck drivers are working an extra hour on their routes and on Saturday mornings to keep up with the amount of leaves. Leaf season takes place October – February. Drivers have a continuous route that they run and can typically complete a full route in 1-2 weeks depending on volume.

Recreation:

Basketball season is underway! Teams are playing within the county against other local athletic associations. Preseason practices will wrap up on Friday, December 17th. Teams will break for Christmas and the regular season will kick off in January! We had over 200 registered participants and for the first time in a very long time, we were able to field three all girls' teams.

The Christmas in Downtown Monroe event was held on Saturday, December 4th. The event featured Christmas music, train and trolley rides, a Christmas Bazaar Marketplace, Dessert competition and much more! We had a great crowd and perfect weather!





The Fall/Winter Program guide is now available. Link below:

https://issuu.com/cityofmonroe-parksrec/docs/com-291_programguide_fall_winter21-2d43cc09676ee2

***Planning and Development Department
Lisa Stiwinter, Director***

Community Development Division – New Project Reporting:

American Recovery Program Funds – Urgent Housing Repair

The City of Monroe will partner with Union-Anson County Habitat for Humanity (HFH) in repairing approximately 30 owner-occupied homes. Homeowners whose properties are located in a Qualified Income Tracts automatically qualify. Low-income property owners will also be considered, based on critical need. The program is being advertised through social media, the City's web and calendar pages, and through the list serve. Community Development has started a waiting list and HFH referred two properties they were unable to serve through the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA) Urgent Care Funding. We are waiting for an approved sub-recipient agreement in accordance with the federal guidelines and the laws of North Carolina.

American Recovery Program Funds – Urgent Housing Repair

The City of Monroe will partner with Monroe Union County Community Development Corporation in providing mortgage assistance to owner-occupied property owners in foreclosure.

The priority will be given to owners that are in the judicial foreclosure process and those that are in the 90-day default that did not qualify in the first round of funding. Homeowners whose properties are located in a Qualified Income Tracts automatically qualify. Low-income property owners will also be considered, based on critical need. The program is being advertised through social media, the City's web and calendar pages, and through the list serve. Community Development has started a waiting list, and we are working with the Union County Clerk to identify at risk property owners. We are waiting for an approved sub-recipient agreement in accordance with the federal guidelines and the laws of North Carolina.

American Recovery Program Funds – Economic Development Small Business Assistance

The City of Monroe will partner with South Piedmont Community College Small Business Center in providing Covid related assistance to small business owners that were negatively impacted by COVID-19, including compliance and sustainability. The priority will be given to small business owners that are located in a Qualified Census Tract. The parameters of the program will include stakeholder input from the Union County Chamber of Commerce. We are waiting for an approved sub-recipient agreement in accordance with the federal guidelines and the laws of North Carolina. In addition, we will work with Downtown Services to seek out a project(s) that may be eligible for downtown revitalization. Although our Downtown is not located in a Qualified Census Tracts, small business assistance may be allowed based on negative impacted businesses due to COVID-19 that are associated with tourism. Currently, we are working under a federal interim rule for compliance and awaiting additional information before proceeding with the determination of an eligible activity.

Promotions and New Hires:

Jessica Brummer, Permit Technician II in the Permit Center Division



Jessica Brummer has been promoted to the Permit Technician II. Jessica joined the Permit Center Division in the Planning and Development Department in 2004 as a Permit Technician and obtained her Law and Administration Certification in 2004. In 2016, Jessica decided to advance her professional career and graduated from South Piedmont Community College (SPCC) with an Associate's Degree in Business Administration. The Planning and Development Department appreciates Jessica's hard work, time spent, dedication and loyalty to the Permit Center for the past 17.5 years.

JoAnn Vega-Juan, Permit Technician II in the Permit Center Division



JoAnn Vega-Juan has been promoted to the Permit Technician II. JoAnn joined the Permit Center Division in the Planning and Development Department in 2015 as a Permit Technician and obtained her Law and Administration Certification in 2015. JoAnn provides the Permit Center with a very valuable customer service asset with her bilingual capabilities to read, write and speak Spanish. The Planning and Development Department appreciates JoAnn's hard work, time spent, dedication and loyalty to the Permit Center for the past six years.

Keri Mandler, Senior Planner in the Planning Division



Keri has been promoted to Senior Planner. Keri joined the Planning Division in the Planning and Development Department in 2015 as a Planner. She obtained her Zoning Official Certification in 2018 and her American Institute of Certified Planners Certification in 2020. Over the past six years, Keri has gained extensive knowledge and experience in both current and long-range planning. The Planning and Development Department appreciates Keri's hard work, time spent, dedication and loyalty to the Planning Division for the past six years.

Barry Kee, Building Inspector III in the Building Standards Division

Barry has been promoted to Building Inspector III. Barry joined the Building Standards Division in the Planning and Development Department in 2018 as a Building Inspector I. He obtained his Level II NC Standard Certifications in Building, Electrical, Plumbing and Mechanical in 2020 and his Level III NC Standard Certifications in Building, Electrical, Plumbing and Mechanical in 2021. The Planning and Development Department appreciates Barry's hard work, time spent, dedication and loyalty to the Building Standards Division for the past three years.

Megan Brightharp, Planner I in the Planning Division



Megan joined the Planning Division in the Planning and Development Department as the new Planner I. Megan comes to Monroe from the City of Carbondale, IL where she served as the Senior Planner since 2017. Megan received a Master's of Urban Planning Degree from SUNY at Buffalo, School of Architecture and Planning in 2017 and her Bachelor of Architecture from Tuskegee University in 2015. She is a crafting enthusiast and enjoys exploring a variety of different cuisines. The Planning and Development Department is excited to have Megan join our team.

Police Department
J. Bryan Gilliard, Chief of Police

Community Involvement/Youth Engagement:

Community Services held Coffee with a Cop on December 4th at Dandelion & friends Mercantile. Officers were on-site to talk with community members and business owners.





On November 30th, Adam Threatt with Food Lion Asset Protection came by the Monroe Police Department to donate some snacks and drinks. This donation was made in conjunction with Giving Tuesday.

School Resource Officers (SRO):

SRO Andrew Greene is assigned to Monroe Middle School. You can regularly find Officer Greene in the hallways and classrooms busy interacting with all of the students and staff at MMS. One of his favorite things to do within the middle school is to hand out snacks and drinks to the students; he believes that this activity affords him the time and ability to interact with the kids on a personal level. The kids enjoy this interaction with Officer Greene and it allows them the ability to speak with him about their day or things that are going on within the school or at home. Recently, Officer Greene spoke with several students about how they can become leaders within their communities. The School Resource Division of the Monroe Police Department works hard to ensure the safety of our schools, students and staff. But our SRO's understand and believe that being an SRO is so much more than being an officer assigned to a school and they prove this each and every day.



Monroe PD Patrol and Traffic Divisions:

On Friday, December 3rd, Officers from the Monroe Police Department attended the Tree of Life vigil at the State Capital in Raleigh. The vigil is to honor the 1,658 people killed in traffic crashes along North Carolina roadways in 2020.

The 1,246 white and blue decorations represent a life lost in a crash. The 412 red ornaments represent a life lost due to impaired driving.

The Monroe Police Department strives to remind everyone not drive impaired or distracted. Call a sober driver, buckle your seatbelt, and put your phone down!

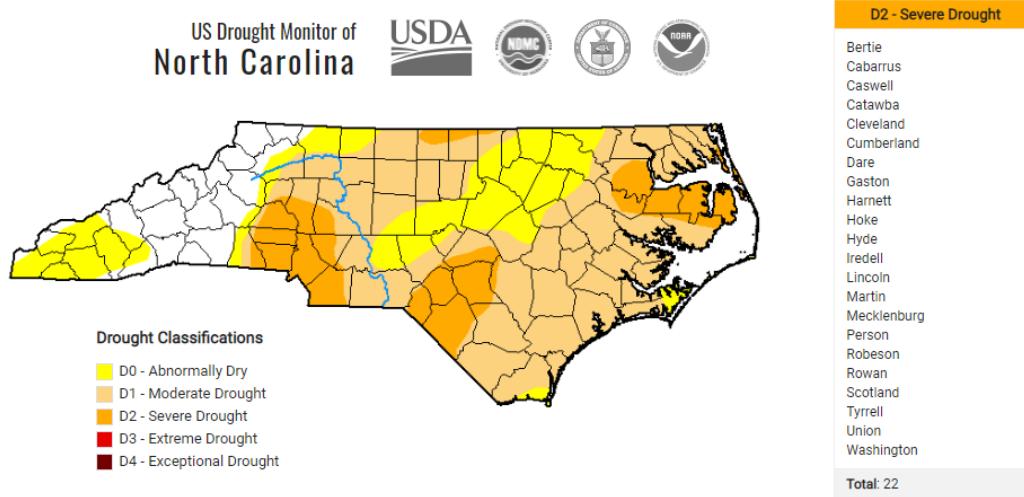


Water Resources

Russell Colbath, Director of Water Resources

Water Supply and Drought Update, 12-7-21:

The City's water supply remains secure even with the latest North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) drought status update. The most current update shows Union and 21 other counties with a "Severe Drought" level as shown below.



During periods of low rainfall, making use of the valuable stored water in City lakes is essential. The benefit of making efficient and effective use of this stored water supply is one key to meeting the City's needs, while keeping the cost of water service low to our citizens. Additionally, the City has surplus capacity in the Catawba River water supply contract with Union County. Use of the

Catawba supply capacity has been ramped up in response to low rainfall conditions and drought. **Based on all factors, the City has over 300 days of water supply currently available.**

The City Water Shortage Response Ordinance defines the following triggers and restrictions based on remaining days of water supply **.

<i>Water Shortage Stage</i>	<i>Response Level</i>	<i>Supply Remaining (Days)</i>
<i>Stage 1</i>	<i>Voluntary</i>	180
<i>Stage 2</i>	<i>Mandatory</i>	160
<i>Stage 2A</i>	<i>Mandatory</i>	130
<i>Stage 3</i>	<i>Mandatory</i>	100
<i>Stage 4</i>	<i>Emergency</i>	75
<i>Stage 5</i>	<i>Rationing</i>	50

**(Specific restrictions are defined in the Ordinance tables)

Based on the Ordinance, no action is needed at this time. Staff will however continue to monitor all water supply conditions daily, provide informational updates to the Interim City Manager, and encourage wise use of water and water conservation on the City's website.

Long term, the City is developing additional water supply sources including potential added Catawba River supply, Yadkin River supply, and City lake supply augmentation as part of the City Reclaimed Water Master Plan. The City also has bulk reclaimed water supply available for non-potable uses. Contractors can receive a permit to purchase bulk reclaimed water at any time. Any inquires or concerns about City Lakes or water supply can be directed to the Water Resources Department at 704-282-4601.