

Rachael Gangelhoff

From: Lynelle Wilcox <lynellx@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 3:46 PM
To: CityRecorder; Julie Hoy; Vanessa Nordyke; Paul Tigan; Linda Nishioka; Shane Matthews; Deanna Gwyn; Dr. Irvin M Brown; Mai Vang; Micki Varney
Subject: Public comment for work session 091725 agenda item 2

Mayor Hoy and City Councilors

My name is Lynelle Wilcox. I live on Norway Street in Ward 1.

I've been attending City Council meetings and listening sessions related to safety and livability in Salem. Thank you for your focus and time on this topic. I realize we're now at the point of identifying which recommendations can move forward, in fiscally sustainable ways, and/or as pilot or temporary projects.

Context: As you proceed with these hard discussions and decisions, some context seems crucial for balance. Law enforcement officers have shared that **businesses are mostly experiencing livability crimes – feces, broken windows, camping, fires, trash, petty theft – crimes that reflect people having nowhere to have basic human needs met. Nowhere to sleep, go to the bathroom, eat, or live.**

Business owners should not have the workload of cleaning those things up, and they should not have the risk of higher repair and insurance costs. They should not have situations that make staff and/or customers afraid to patronize their businesses. Changes may reduce livability crimes and scary situations AND education can help reduce some fears.

And every human being should have the means and access to having basic human needs met. The duality matters and is interconnected – when basic human needs are met, livability crimes decrease.

Actual violence: Meanwhile, we have shootings, gang violence, and sheltered adults and teens who specifically commit violence against people experiencing homelessness. Last year one TEENAGER beat a 64 year old homeless man to DEATH. Just this month, a business owner casually admitted that he dumps vomit, feces, and food onto homeless people on his property. (How is that not a bias crime?)

In July 2025, two young adults were arrested for throwing eggs at people experiencing homelessness. How is any of this a safe and livable environment for unsheltered homeless?

National data reflects that homeless people are more likely to be the victims of violence than perpetrators of violence against a stranger. See this national report: https://nationalhomeless.org/wp-content/uploads/2024-Hate-Crimes-Report_for-web.pdf

This report is hard to read; hard to swallow the realities of the level and types of cruelties that are done to people specifically because they are homeless. It tears my soul, and yet I think it's a responsibility to sometimes budget some time to learn what people are experiencing.

In Salem, some women and men share that they first began doing meth when they were homeless, because they need to stay awake at night in order to stay safe. Men sleeping on sidewalks have shared that they sometimes woke up because some men are peeing on them as they sleep. The bars let out, and THIS is their fun? Homeless women AND men are in danger every day and night of their lives.

Imbalance: Businesses are mostly experiencing livability crimes and the tangible and intangible results of those crimes. People experiencing homelessness are experiencing actual ongoing violence. BOTH sets of experiences matter, but the scale is out of balance. And the imbalance seems to be growing. I'm sure you've each heard that Brian Kilmeade of Fox News said to just kill homeless and mental ill people with involuntary lethal injection:

https://x.com/SpencerHakimian/status/1966714947208888512?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1966871593948483781%7Ctwgr%5E70f588e46979d3052f123e87085daab8f98c6423%7Ctwcon%5Es3_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Fnews%2Fworld%2Famericas%2Fus-politics%2Fbrian-kilmeade-fox-news-host-kill-homeless-b2826035.html

Somehow, Brian Kilmeade still has his job. That says more about our current culture than I wanted to know, yet we NEED to know that. Brian Kilmeade's words reflect how other people are also thinking and feeling. The other-ing of people experiencing homelessness is growing.

Safety and livability for people experiencing homelessness is more necessary than ever. Safety and livability for all aligns with the Declaration of Independence words that *"All men are created equal and are endowed with certain unalienable rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."* Safety and livability for all aligns with **our city's values of community belonging and inclusion.**

Common ground: I'm grateful that the proposed recommendations of the Homeless Service Team Expansion, Community Policing Officers, Salem Outreach and Livability Services Team Expansion, and a Co-Response Model Pilot Program each enable more safety and livability for people experiencing homelessness, for businesses, and for the general public **as long as each is done in ways that build trust and relationships.**

As you consider the possible paths for increasing safety and livability for all people in Salem, please keep the current imbalance in mind as part of the context for these hard topics.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lynelle Wilcox

Rachael Gangelhoff

From: lorrie walker <dakotalor@msn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 4:36 PM
To: CityRecorder; Gretchen Bennett; Trevor Womack; Gina Cepeda;
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Cc: commissioners@co.marion.or.us
Subject: Salem Safety & Livability workshop 9/17/25

All,

I would like to add that I am concerned about the safety of Unsheltered due to hateful comments made by various people in Salem and elsewhere.

Salem Businesspeople have said they don't want to see Unsheltered on sidewalks, etc. (In public mtg at Lancaster business forum)

Unsheltered have been victims of assault by feces (openly admitted by Salem business owner) urinated on while sleeping by people leaving bars.

Yelled at. Honked at. To list a few.

The return of bicycle police would help with targeting of Unsheltered as well.

The recent Fox News person who talked about murdering them. Hate. Fear mongering. Stigma.

Please, always keep in mind that Unsheltered have people who care and love them. They are us.

Oregon's broken mental health system is hurting many people.

Respectfully,

Lorrie Walker

Ward 2

Legal Guardian & Advocate for unsheltered & mentally ill

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