

Amy Johnson

From: lorrie walker <dakotalor@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, August 11, 2025 4:45 PM
To: citycouncil; CityRecorder; Trevor Womack
Cc: Sen Patterson; H Tom Anderson; sen.katelieber@oregonlegislature.gov; Gretchen Bennett; Irma Coleman; Treven Upkes; Debra Aguilar; commissioners@co.marion.or.us; Stephen Goins; Gina Cepeda; Krishna Namburi; Kristin Retherford; jimmy.jones@mwwcaa.org; Cara Kaser; lorrie walker; DJ Vincent; Dennie Brooks
Subject: Safety and Livability

Mayor Julie Hoy, All,

It seems to me that someone in the city has decided to gather information from the loudest, most vocal to fit someone's personal narrative.

I am concerned that cherry picking information from 2 "Business Forums" is not the way Salem city council should be addressing issues.

The North Lancaster Business Forum I attended was appalling.

For the city to hold public forums that allow people to lump all Unsheltered as criminals, thieves, addicts, who had no opportunity to speak up, refused to allow attendees who quietly listened to vitriol to speak is just plain wrong.

Bias, untrue, hateful comments were not only permitted, they weren't stopped.

That type of forum promotes hate, bias, and stigma against poor people trying to survive, mentally ill battling their own brains and others.

It is not illegal to be poor. It is not illegal to be mentally ill. We need to come together and review what the city worked on in the past without hate. Shame on us. We can't allow that.

We all live here. We need solutions for businesses, neighbors in homes & without homes. We are all people. We can't forget that. They are us. They are children, parents, siblings, etc.

At the end I spoke up without permission.

Agencies providing services were not on panel. No Mental health response. So very much was lacking. No one who was being talked about was invited. No forum that was inclusive.

We need to do better. Thankfully our police chief and fire chief promote inclusion of mental health.

Respectfully,

Lorrie Walker

Advocate for Unsheltered & Mentally ill

Legal Guardian

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Amy Johnson

From: Lynelle Wilcox <lynellx@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, August 11, 2025 4:33 PM
To: CityRecorder
Cc: Julie Hoy; Vanessa Nordyke; Paul Tigan; Linda Nishioka; Shane Matthews; Deanna Gwyn; Dr. Irvin M Brown; Mai Vang; Micki Varney
Subject: LW Public comment for City Council meeting 081125 Agenda item 5a - Business forum

Business forum

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Mayor Hoy and City Councilors

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

I'm confused about the July 30th Business Forum. The invitation pasted below was shared widely by the City on Facebook, the City's website, with Neighborhood Association (NA) Chairs, and possibly other avenues.

The invitation has no mention of the Salem Chamber of Commerce or other co-hosting agencies. I'm not sure how a **City-sponsored, City-hosted event can only allow attendance and/or input from businesses and NA Chairs. Yet input was only allowed from those individuals.**

While I fully understand that meeting facilitators have a responsibility to ensure that conversations stay on topic, content regulation beyond that seems to violate freedom of speech. Business representative or not, we were all there to hear about and share input about Salem livability and safety, so we'd all be on topic.

With this forum as an avenue for the City to hear input, and to plan options to recommend for City Council consideration tonight, seeking input from businesses only is an imbalanced approach that doesn't enable City Council to balance for making more fully informed decisions.

Any future forums may be appreciated, yet if the recommendations are already prepared, discussed, and decided on during the 8/11/25 City Council meeting, then future forums don't have equitable opportunities for the input to shape the recommendations and city decisions.

The city opening statements included the goal of not being divisive. On the surface, that is a nice ideal to share if it was reflecting how we want input to be conveyed. Yet as some businesses conveyed homeless individuals as addicts, violent, and criminals, there were no requests to please not characterize homelessness with such a broad and negative paintbrush.

One business representative shared that "some people FEED them" as if homeless service providers and advocates are attracting stray cats on purpose, by offering food and other basic human needs to keep people alive.

This city meeting perpetuated negative stereotypes about homeless people. Community leaders have an obligation to "temper passions and avoid inflammatory rhetoric." (Jimmy Jones' words.) This responsibility seems especially true when city staff are directing us to NOT be divisive.

The city's summary of the business forum does not accurately reflect the overall input and negative vibe of the meeting. The Salem Reporter article at least reflected that "People used most of the hour-long event to complain about people living and using drugs on the streets,..."

When the city cherry-picks the target audience, misrepresents the meeting discussion, and says that we can't afford to be divisive on

this topic, while accepting inaccurate, disparaging, broad-paintbrush input with no comment, trust and credibility are compromised. Besides the loss of trust and credibility, the one-sided representation and input doesn't enable balanced and informed recommendations and decisions.

We have city staff and people with money shaping recommendations for people living in poverty - with nothing, with no effort to invite people experiencing homelessness and their service providers, families, guardians, and advocates to share their experiences about safety and livability **prior to** developing recommendations that will affect people experiencing homelessness. As we have Salem boards, commissions, and website narratives reflecting values about safety, livability, welcomeness, and inclusiveness of all.

What if we lived up to that?

I agree with Lorrie Walker that the city of Salem can't solve this alone. Yet we can at least start with balance on our end.

Respectfully,  
Lynelle Wilcox

## City report of the 7/30/25 business forum:

*"Feedback from the July 30, 2025 Northeast Salem Business Forum event*

*Approximately 30 people representing businesses, property owners, and community-based organizations gathered on July 30, 2025 to learn more about the City's progress on safety and livability within Salem. Staff shared an update on the City Council's conversation at the July 21, 2025 Work Session, and provided updates on Police and Fire activities. Marion County Sheri Nick Hunter was in attendance and offered responses to questions from participants. Former Councilor Jose Gonzalez served as emcee and Councilor Brown shared some remarks to lead off the conversation. Chairs of both Northgate Neighborhood Association and North Lancaster Neighborhood Association (NOLA) were present.*

*Staff shared key dates for future Council conversations about safety and livability. Chief Trevor Womack spoke to the immediate increase in Police presence in downtown and northeast Salem, and introduced Sargeant assigned to this work. He also addressed the proposal to add*

more Homeless Services Team outreach, and longer-term proposal for re-instating downtown bike patrol. Chief Dave Gerboth discussed the proposal for a January 2026 medical and behavioral health coresponse pilot, and automatic aid for closest agency to respond to fire or medical need.

The majority of those present sought opportunities to work collaboratively with the City on a broader solution, incorporating a variety of perspectives. Questions and comments from the group were focused on how to balance limited resources and capacity to respond to the day-to-day experience of business owners. Ideas and suggestions ranged from changing parking or traffic patterns to protecting property with no trespassing program.

Staff plan another conversation with northeast businesses, property owners, and residents in September 2025."



## NORTHEAST SALEM BUSINESS FORUM

The City of Salem invites businesses from the northeast area to participate in a special meeting.

**JULY 30**  **1 PM** 

Interim City Manager Krishna Namburi, Salem Police Chief Trevor Womack, and Salem Fire Chief Dave Gerboth will be present to share information and listen to concerns about safety and livability in this area of our community.

**CHEMEKETA COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
AG HUB BUILDING** 

USE THE ENTRANCE AT 45TH AV OFF SILVERTON RD NE

FOR MORE INFO CALL 503 763 3465



Salem City Council  
555 Liberty Street SE  
Salem, OR 97301

Mayor Hoy and Council Members,

On behalf of the Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency (MWVCAA), I want to express our deep appreciation for your ongoing service to the people of Salem and your commitment to creating a safe, healthy, and thriving community for all residents.

Public safety is an essential part of that vision, and our community relies on effective partnerships between city leadership, law enforcement, service providers, and residents. MWVCAA works every day with individuals and families experiencing homelessness, and we understand both the challenges our neighbors face and the importance of maintaining a safe and orderly community for everyone.

We believe that strong public safety efforts can and must be balanced with a steadfast respect for the rights, dignity, and humanity of the unhoused. The City of Salem has an opportunity to model approaches that address the root causes of homelessness, reduce harm, and foster trust between public safety personnel and the people they serve. This includes ensuring that policies, practices, and training emphasize compassion, trauma-informed care, and cultural responsiveness.

MWVCAA stands ready to continue collaborating with the Salem Police Department, city staff, and other partners to ensure that our community is both safe and just. Together, we can build solutions that protect public safety while also affirming that every person — regardless of housing status — deserves respect and the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for your leadership and your dedication to making Salem a place where all can live with dignity and security.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jimmy Jones", is positioned above the printed name.

Jimmy Jones  
Executive Director

## Amy Johnson

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**From:** Pennie Morley <penlu48@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 11, 2025 4:59 PM  
**To:** citycouncil  
**Subject:** Salem does not feel safe

Thank you for listening to the citizens of Salem. As I have lived here the majority of my life which is almost 71 years I have never felt so disappointed and disillusioned by the current conditions we are experiencing.

Piles of trash everywhere, illegal camping in our parks and so many reports of folks being attacked and vandalized. Something must be done NOW!

Pennie Morley  
NG Neighborhood Association Member  
Hayesville/Jan Ree Neighborhood Group member