



MONROE THIS WEEK

March 31, 2023



Earlier this week, I joined Councilmembers Heather Fulcher, Tami Kinney, and Kyle Fischer in Washington DC to learn, network, and lobby for the City of Monroe, WA at the [National League of Cities](#) Conference (Thank you, NLC for supporting cities and thank you Tacoma Mayor Victoria Woodards for your work as President of the NLC).



Sessions we attended included updates in the following areas: education and workforce development, community engagement and inclusion, rail safety, law enforcement services, precedent setting court cases, land use planning and zoning reform, climate change, infrastructure development and preservation, federal budget, housing affordability, chemical dependency, and human services crisis response. The sessions included speakers and panelists from federal agency and City staff, federal and city elected officials, and associations associated with local government. There was a diverse representation of cities from across our nation allowing for different perspectives and ideas to address many of the issues that cities have in common.

In addition to learning in these sessions, Councilmembers and I networked with colleagues from other attendees. This allowed us to compare notes and share approaches and experiences with other cities. While my conversations with colleagues included many of the issues listed above, common themes we discussed were related to general governance and relationships, housing affordability, rail safety, general infrastructure, and responses to incidents where residents are in crisis. It was valuable to learn how well the City of Monroe is doing in a lot of these spaces. In short, our City has been proactive at adjusting policies and budgets to respond to especially emergent issues, such as those issues that continue to be re-informed by federal court cases.

A significant part of our work in DC was advocating and lobbying for policies and funding with a federal nexus. Included in these are adopting stronger federal rail safety laws and regulations and seeking federal funds to support projects in Monroe including: installing safer quad-gate rail crossings, addressing road capacity issues on US2 and to #Finish522, planning for a local grade separated crossing (e.g. local bridge connecting the south and north sides of the rails/US2), funding for our community therapeutic court, and other projects.

We met with Federal Railroad Agency staff, Senator Maria Cantwell's staff, and Congresswoman Suzan DelBene. We received updates directly from Senator Maria Cantwell and Senator Patty Murray in a presentation coordinated by the [Association of Washington Cities](#) (thank you, AWC) to cities from the State of Washington. I am thankful for these opportunities and for the conversations around our community's needs – thank you Senator Maria Cantwell, Senator Patty Murray, and Congresswoman Suzan DelBene. I also appreciated the coordination and support from our government advocacy team in DC at [Strategies 360](#). I've debriefed with our City staff and we will continue moving forward with our part of the work for these requests.

As in past advocacy efforts, we anticipate that our federal representatives will be successful in supporting us in some of these projects. These funding partnerships demonstrate a shared commitment between the City and our federal representatives to address shared issues while improving safety, accessibility, and service delivery in and lowering costs to our community.

I hope you all enjoy this week's edition of Monroe This Week which features details on:

- *A volunteer opportunity at the upcoming Community Egg Hunt*
- *The announcement of Kid's Fishing Day*
- *A community summit for #Finish522*
- *An RFP for SHB1406 funds*
- *How you can reserve a City picnic shelter*
- *Where to get the FAQs*

Please reach out to me with what may be on your mind about and for Monroe. I can be contacted at GThomas@MonroeWA.gov.

Yours in Service,

Mayor Geoffrey Thomas

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR COMMUNITY EGG HUNT

Are you interested in a volunteer opportunity? The City is in need of a few more volunteers for our Community Egg Hunt on April 8. Volunteers will be asked to be on-site from 7:00 a.m. to about 12:00 p.m. and help with a variety of tasks including:



- Distributing eggs on the appropriate designated fields
- Moving/Placing Republic Services totes around park
- Helping vendors move their booth items from their cars to their booth location
- During the egg hunt, monitor the fields so that the kids don't start before their field is announced
- Post hunt help to pick up candy wrappers from the fields, consolidate totes to the pick-up location, and help vendors with move out

If you are interested in volunteering for this fun community event, please email KDarrow@MonroeWA.gov.

SAVE THE DATE: KID'S FISHING DAY

There's no better time to introduce your kids to fishing or to enjoy a day at the lake with your family than the annual Kid's Fishing Day. Set for April 30 at Lake Tye, kids 12 and under can begin fishing at 8:00 a.m. with the adults beginning at 1:00 p.m. All kids under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. There will be 4 prize fish released for the kids at 8:00 a.m. on Sunday. Supplies will be provided if you aren't able to bring your own, and a fish washing table will be available on-site. New to the event this year, kids can fish at any time, and on any part of the lake. There will be no more waiting in line for your spot on the beach.

Insider Tip: The fish will be released on the South end of the Lake and may congregate more near the beach/south lake area.



COMMUNITY SUMMIT: #FINISH522

As I've mentioned in recent editions of *Monroe This Week*, the City is excited to continue its efforts to #Finish522. We invite you to a public informational meeting at City Hall (806 W Main St) on April 12 from 4:00 - 5:00 pm. The meeting will also be available as a hybrid meeting to enable remote participation. The Washington State Department of Transportation will give an update on State Route 522 and local leaders and community members will discuss how completing SR-522 will positively impact the region.



Join Zoom Meeting [here](#)
Dial in: (253) 215-8782
Meeting ID: 814 9433 1511
Meeting Passcode: 048675

ADMINISTERING RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR RESIDENTS

I am pleased to announce that the City of Monroe is seeking an organization to administer SHB1406 funds to assist Monroe residents with rental assistance. These funds are restricted to residents at or below 60% of the median income and are aimed at overcoming the barriers of first and last months' rent and deposit, or preventing eviction.



The City has a total of \$120,792 available as of December 31st, 2022, with yearly receipts capped at \$45,540. To ensure the success of this program, we are seeking to partner with a capable organization for a three-year contract to distribute \$70,000 per year.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) application process will begin on March 29, 2023, and we encourage all interested parties to visit the bid posting on our [website](#) to find out more information. As a City, we remain committed to facilitating and coordinating human service programs in Monroe, and this is another way that we can support our community.

ONLINE PICNIC SHELTER RESERVATION SOFTWARE

Looking to book a picnic shelter? Our Parks Department recently launched an online picnic shelter reservation software, CivicRec. The program can be accessed through the department's page on our [website](#), and allows users to create accounts, make reservations, and pay online all within a few steps from the ease of your own home!



GET THE FAQs!

Are you thinking of building a deck and not sure if a permit is required? Wanting to host a community event and not sure if you need a permit from the City? Are you wondering if you need a license to run a business out of your home? You have questions; we have answers. The most frequently asked questions (FAQs) for several City departments are posted on our website. Get the facts on our FAQs page [here](#).



UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

The City Council will next meet in a Regular Study Session Meeting on Tuesday, April 4. The meeting will be held in a hybrid format; members of the public may participate in Monroe City Council meetings either in-person at City Hall or remotely via the Zoom remote meeting platform. Participation information will be posted with the April 4 agenda, which can be accessed by clicking the button below.

[Council Agendas/Minutes](#)

CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS



Councilmember
Kevin Hanford



Councilmember
Ed Davis



Councilmember
Jason Gamble



Councilmember
Kirk Scarboro



Councilmember
Heather Fulcher



Councilmember
Tami Kinney



Councilmember
Kyle Fisher

Have a question for your Councilmembers?
Contact them at Councilmembers@MonroeWA.gov



City of Monroe | (360) 794-7400 | 806 West Main Street, Monroe, WA 98272

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