MINUTES
City Council Public Safety Committee

Monday, April 28, 2025 – 3:30pm
City Hall Council Chambers

Members Present:	Aaron Baker, Chair, Council Member Mac Morrow, Vice Chair, Council Member Mayor Maureen Copelof, Ex-Officio Member
Members Absent:	Kevin Gallo, Citizen Member
Staff Present	Wilson Hooper, City Manager David Todd, Assistant City Manager Tom Jordan, Police Department Bradley Elmore, Interim Fire Chief Becky McCann, Communications Coordinator Denise Hodsdon, City Clerk Aaron Bland, Assistant Planning Director

A. Welcome & Call to Order

Committee Chair Aaron Baker welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:32pm.

B. Certification of Quorum

Assistant to the City Manager Selena Coffey certified that a quorum was present.

C. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Vice Chair Morrow, seconded by Mr. Baker to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried.

D. Approval of Minutes -February 24, 2025

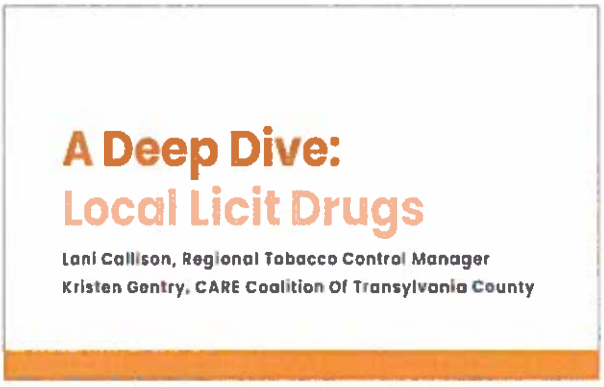
Mr. Baker asked for approval of the minutes. There was discussion of the minutes and Mr. Gallo's request for more detail-oriented minutes. Following a brief discussion by Mr. Morrow and Mr. Baker that, from their recollection of the meeting, the minutes were accurate, Mr. Morrow made a motion to approve the February 24, 2025 minutes and the motion was seconded by Mr. Baker. Both voted in favor of the motion.

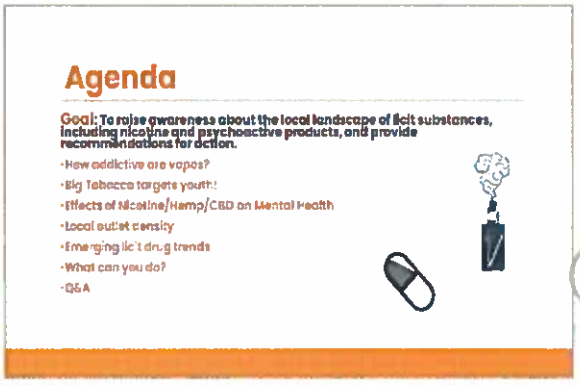
E. Approval of Minutes – March 24, 2025

Mr. Morrow made a motion to approve the minutes for the March 24, 2025 meeting and this motion was seconded by Mr. Baker. The motion to approve the minutes carried.

F. Presentation by CARE Coalition on Emerging Drug Trends by Lani Callison

Lani Callison, Regional Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Manager and Tobacco Treatment Specialist with the Division of Public Health, Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, was present to present the following Powerpoint on the stated subject. Kristen Gentry, Ms. Callison's colleague, was also present to assist with information shared with the committee.



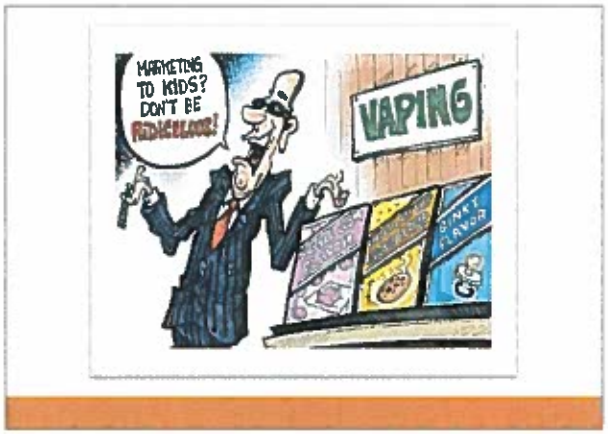


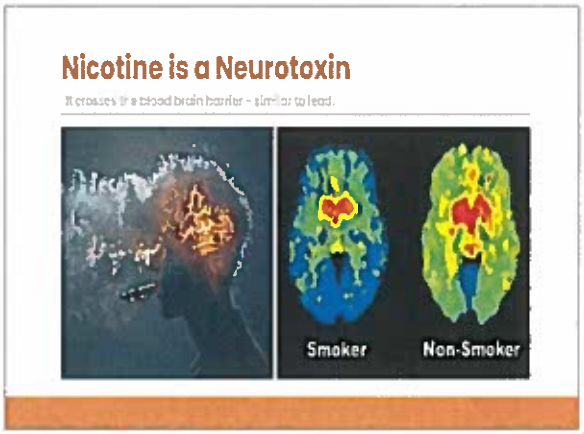


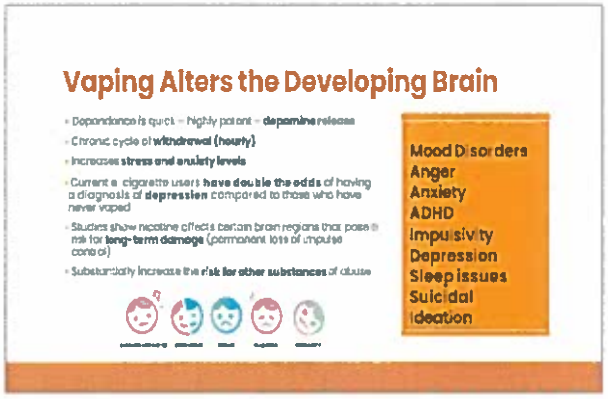



...IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK IN SCHOOL...
NICOTINE ADDICTION


Very Easy to Start, Very Hard to Quit
Hard to get through school day without vaping
• 25% High School
• 33% Middle School
• 8000 Flavors/Harshness removed
Want to quit, tried to quit
• 64% High School
• 68% Middle School
• Endless cycle of addiction

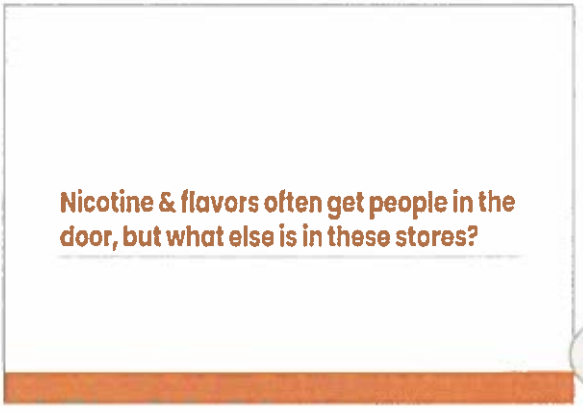

MARKETING TO KIDS? DON'T BE RIDICULOUS!
VAPING


Nicotine is a Neurotoxin
Smoker
Non-Smoker


Vaping Alters the Developing Brain
Dependence is quick – highly potent – dopamine release
Chronic cycle of withdrawal (hourly)
Increases stress and anxiety levels
Current e-cigarette users have double the odds of having a diagnosis of depression compared to those who have never vaped
Studies show nicotine affects certain brain regions that pose a risk for long-term damage (permanent loss of impulse control)
Substantially increase the risk for other substances of abuse
Mood Disorders
Anger
Anxiety
ADHD
Impulsivity
Depression
Sleep issues
Suicidal ideation


ZYN
ZYN


CHINESE IMPORTS: FLOODING OUR PORTS
Chinese single-use disposable vapes pouring into our ports
Teen favorite Elf Bar among these
CHINA BANS flavored disposable vapes "to protect Chinese children"
Chinese factories can change packaging and names of products seemingly overnight to avoid regulations at borders
FDA seized 1.4M units of illegal e-cigs at LAX in Dec. 2023
FDA must continue to act


Nicotine & flavors often get people in the door, but what else is in these stores?



Access Points for Nicotine and Psychoactive Drugs in Our Community



As of April 2025, there are 12 vape/hemp shops within Brevard City limits

* We does not include commercial centers or gas stations/ markets, like grocery, etc.)

Equating to approximately 1 shop per 0.4 square miles and 1 shop per 645 Brevard City residents

Additionally, each outlet is within at least 0.5 miles of a school, college, or day care facility

Student survey data and anecdotal reports suggest that youth can purchase products at these stores

Highlighted Substances Sold in Brevard

Delta 8 THC: main psychoactive compound in cannabis. Illegal in North Carolina, retailers exploit legal loopholes by selling low-THC or chemically altered products like THCA, Delta 8 (distillate) – **No product regulation or age restriction**

Nicotine Vapes/E-cigarettes: delivers **high** concentrations of addictive nicotine in aerosolized form along with harmful substances like formaldehyde & heavy metals. **Federally the purchase age is 21, but NC still allows sales to those 18+**

Smokeless Tobacco/Nicotine: these products, like chew and pouches, are consumed orally and linked to oral health problems such as gum disease and tooth decay. **Very few brands are regulated. Federally the purchase age is 21, but NC still allows sales to those 18+**

Kratom: is an herbal extract with stimulant effects at low doses and sedative, opioid-like effects at higher doses, often sold in tea, **capsules**, or food products. **Causes dependence, withdrawal, and overdose,** and 7-hydroxy – 10-fold greater potency than kratom. **No product regulation and minimum purchase age in North Carolina is 18.**

Amanita: is a mushroom that can cause vomiting, confusion, altered perception, and in high doses, seizures or death. It is sold as teas or edibles with **no product regulation or age restriction**

Xylazine: is a drug with opioid-like effects, often sold as "Tranq" or **"gas station heroin,"** and can lead to **confusion, coma, or death**. As of December 2024, it is illegal to sell or possess without a prescription due to its classification as a Schedule III substance.

Phenibut: potentiator dependent with sedative & mood-altering effects that lead to dependence and cognitive impairment. **No product regulation or age restriction**



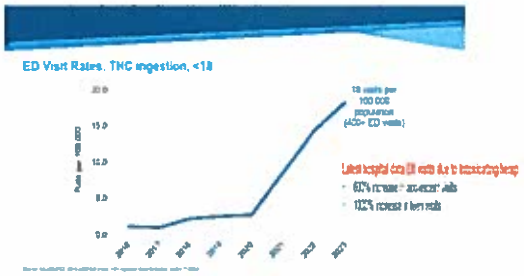


Unregulated "Wild, Wild West"





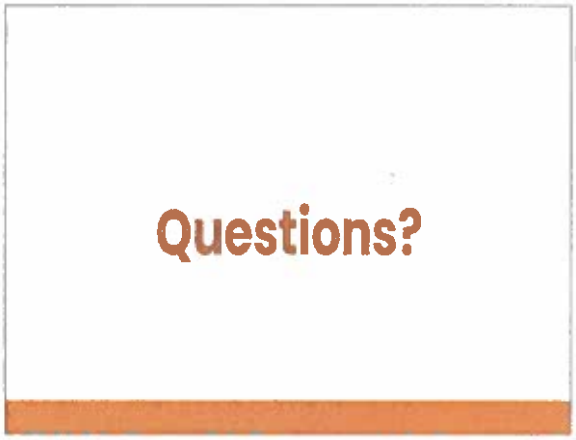
North Carolina ED Data



Let's ask ourselves some tough questions

- Do our behaviors match our values?
- Are we cultivating a healthy environment for our youth?
- Is our community making the healthy choice the easy choice? Or the opposite?
- Will downstream economic costs outweigh tax revenues?





During and following Ms. Callison's presentation, committee members discussed the prevalence and addictive aspects of nicotine in the form of vapes and pouches and how these products are being marketed to society's youth.

While the presentation did not necessitate action and was being presented to the committee for its information, Police Chief Jordan and Planning Director Paul Ray agreed that he would check in with businesses in the city who sell the aforementioned products to ensure that these businesses are following all rules and regulations to attempt to prevent the marketing and sale of these products to the city's youth.

G. Fire Department Quarterly Incident Report

Interim Fire Chief Bradley Elmore reported that the Brevard Fire Department has had 5 incidents this first quarter of 2025. These are detailed below:

Date	Location	Details
1/5/2025	N. Broad and Old Hendersonville Hwy.	Car vs. bicycle, no injury, canceled
3/18/2025	S. Broad and W. Morgan	Car vs pedestrian, minor injury
3/18/2025	Fisher Road/Bike Path	Bicycle crash, head injury
3/18/2025	Avery's Creek Road	Bicycle crash, minor injury
3/18/2025	Whitmire and N Caldwell	Car vs. pedestrian, minor injury

H. Police Department Workplace Culture Study Update

Mr. Hooper reported the Berry Dunn will begin their work on collecting data and initiating the "trust building phase" in individual meetings with the department's employees the following day, April 29, 2025. He reported that the firm will also meet with 8 former employees after meeting with current employees and will meet with committee members in August. Mr. Hooper shared that Lieutenants and those ranked above, along with himself and the Human Resources Director are also involved in a beneficial book review process as part of the process. He briefly

outlined the remaining steps for the study. Ms. Copelof asked when the committee and/or city council will receive the final analysis and Mr. Hooper responded November or December. Mr. Baker indicated that he would like a regular update on the study progress and Mr. Hooper agreed to update the committee monthly.

I. Update on Traffic Calming Measures

Probart Street

Mr. Todd reported that all 11 speed bumps have now been installed on Probart Street. He indicated that staff has received mixed results from the public regarding these speed bumps.

McLean and Railroad Intersection

Mr. Todd reported that McAdams traffic consultant has again reviewed this intersection and made some suggested changes that the city will implement to make the intersection safer. He is working to identify some additional funding for new flashing lights to make these improvements.

Carver and Oaklawn Intersection

Hooper reminded the committee that this is challenging intersection with limited sightlines complicated further by the need for pedestrian crossings. He reported that the staff team is working with the city's traffic consultants, McAdams, to review multiple scenarios for this intersection to provide traffic calming and address the pedestrian safety concerns. Hooper did acknowledge that staff and McAdams agree that the intersection does need to become a four way stop, but safe implementation will be challenging. The committee will receive an update on this intersection once McAdams traffic consultants have made a final recommendation.

Carolina and Shipman Intersection

Hooper indicated that some data had been collected for Carolina Avenue using the radar sign. Chief Jordan indicated further data collection would occur with the new less obtrusive data recorders instead of the radar sign, to ensure we have the best data on hand. Hooper also indicated that the data collected to date did not fully support some of the options the city has been considering for traffic calming in this area but he was hopeful but that the additional data collected by the new devices would be substantial enough to support more options for traffic calming. Hooper also stated that NCDOT has said that they will consider this southern portion of Carolina Avenue to be a city street. He shared that this would provide the city with more opportunities to address safety concerns on Carolina Avenue. The city's traffic consultant, McAdams, remains reluctant to agree to a three-way stop at this intersection because the streets are so dissimilar that installing a three-way stop on Shipman could have the opposite effect, meaning that a vehicle on Shipman waiting to turn left on a narrow road with little traffic may not see the stop sign, which could cause accidents. Hooper noted that staff and the traffic consultants will continue to seek resolutions for this intersection's safety.

Baker asked Jordan questions about potential for new bike-pedestrian lanes. Hooper noted that this has not been added to the MUTCD yet, but some cities have been testing this approach. Hooper shared that the State would likely need to approve the addition of new bike-pedestrian lanes since the MUTCD had not yet been updated.

Chief Jordan shared that the Police Department will be removing the speed detection devices off McLean and Fisher to deploy them in other locations. He stated that 1,334 vehicles were noted to use McLean for one week studied and that 2,412 using Fisher. He noted that the average speed was 24 mph on Fisher and 21 mph on McLean, with the highest speed on McLean being 37 mph and highest speed on Fisher was 50 mph. He also shared thoughts about potential monitoring of speed enforcement on Neily Road.

Mr. Baker raised the potential for the installation of no turn on reds signs when the turn would impact the multi-use path. The committee discussed this, and Mr. Hooper shared that NCDOT had spoken with staff to look at redesigns to R5800 to try to accommodate the trail more. He noted that he will ask that NCDOT try to incorporate some improvements in this area as well. Ms. Copelof noted that she agreed with the need, but this could also impact the Deer Lake neighborhood traffic. This intersection was discussed at length and staff agreed to review options, along with issues of faded markers on North Broad Street.

J. Public Comment

Jonnie Beth Ping spoke about her daughter requesting a speed bump to be installed on Oakdale Street, up from the Sharing House, to protect children and pedestrians from speeding traffic.

Mr. Baker asked for staff to investigate the sightline on Carver and Oakdale.

Ms. Copelof stated that the Superintendent of Transylvania County Public Schools, Dr. Fletcher, asked the city to investigate the potential of improving the crosswalk for students who park in the overflow lot at the high school. Dr. Fletcher requested a "rumble strip" specifically. Mr. Hooper noted that this is an NCDOT road and staff would bring this request to their attention.

Kellyn Haight spoke regarding her continued concerns about speeding on Carolina Avenue and again requested that a stop sign be installed to prevent this. Staff had previously shared that installing a stop sign on this street would be difficult because the roads are too dissimilar. Staff will continue to look for treatments to address speeding on Carolina Avenue.

K. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, May 27, 2025, at 3:30pm.

L. Adjourn

There being no further business, Mr. Morrow made the motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Baker. The vote carried and the meeting was adjourned at 5:08pm.

Minutes Approved: May 27, 2025

X _____
Aaron Baker, Chair, Council Member or
Mac Morrow, Vice Chair, Council Member

X _____
Selena D. Coffey
Assistant to the City Manager