

RECEIVED

**Regular Council Meeting
January 27, 2022**

2022 JAN 31 P 1:40

CITY OF FRESNO
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

FRESNO CITY COUNCIL



Email / eComment Report

The Following item(s) were commented on:

File ID 22-70, 3-D

WORKSHOP - Homeless Assistance Response Team (HART)

Total number of emails: 2

Item(s)

Supplemental Information:

Any agenda related public documents received and distributed to a majority of the City Council after the Agenda Packet is printed are included in Supplemental Packets. Supplemental Packets are produced as needed. The Supplemental Packet is available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office, 2600 Fresno Street, during normal business hours (main location pursuant to the Brown Act, G.C. 54957.5(2)). In addition, Supplemental Packets are available for public review at the City Council meeting in the City Council Chambers, 2600 Fresno Street. Supplemental Packets are also available on-line on the City Clerk's website.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

The meeting room is accessible to the physically disabled, and the services of a translator can be made available. Requests for additional accommodations for the disabled, sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, or translators should be made one week prior to the meeting. Please call City Clerk's Office at 621-7650. Please keep the doorways, aisles and wheelchair seating areas open and accessible. If you need assistance with seating because of a disability, please see Security.

Amanda Martin

From: Don Plumley
Sent: Monday, January 24, 2022 9:27 PM
To: Clerk
Subject: Homeless

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

I'm a former houseless person and for the last 6-8 years now I've been living on the streets and the H.T.F. or as I like to call them "The Brutality Force" because they like to use excessive force on the homeless whenever they can (no cameras rolling). I know from personal experience that they use batons on unarmed people who pose no threat to them or their partners. They also determine what is stored and what is thrown away. They take and do whatever they want because they have carte blanche, meaning that they can do whatever they want and nobody can do nothing to make them stop and the local lawyers act like they want nothing to do with suing them to get them to stop.

Amanda Martin

From: Brandi Nuse-Villegas
Sent: Wednesday, January 26, 2022 9:28 AM
To: Clerk
Subject: Public Comment 3-D

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

There is a statement that Spees made that confused and concerned me last meeting while talking about the HART team. He said, ""By the way, a tip of the hat to Councilmember Soria, she mentioned the CAHOOTS model. I think you heard in Sara Mizrahi's presentation that we've adopting the CAHOOTS model in everything that we do and you'll see this two weeks from now in our HART presentation that is led by outreach."

The CAHOOTS model is not being used in HART, as I read on their website:

"The CAHOOTS model has been in the spotlight recently as our nation struggles to reimagine public safety. The program mobilizes two-person teams consisting of a medic (a nurse, paramedic, or EMT) and a crisis worker who has substantial training and experience in the mental health field. The CAHOOTS teams deal with a wide range of mental health-related crises, including conflict resolution, welfare checks, substance abuse, suicide threats, and more, relying on trauma-informed de-escalation and harm reduction techniques. CAHOOTS staff are not law enforcement officers and do not carry weapons; their training and experience are the tools they use to ensure a non-violent resolution of crisis situations. They also handle non-emergent medical issues, avoiding costly ambulance transport and emergency room treatment."

Community members have been asking for CAHOOTS. And we have been asking for a homeless response that doesn't include law enforcement nor code enforcement. Nor is it needed, as they can call for backup as needed, and in 32 years, according to the founder, they have not had a safety incident. As well, social workers I know who work with the unhoused and advocates operate without law enforcement. The statement on the City of Fresno video stated that law enforcement is on the team for the protection of the homeless and for back up of code enforcement and outreach workers. These other teams, like CAHOOTS, don't need that back-up to be present when they are out (and very rarely need to be called). If CAHOOTS is dealing with crisis situations and can do so without law enforcement present, then regular outreach can as well. It also doesn't make sense why our unhoused need the protection, especially if there were trained mental and medical care workers and even simply with outreach workers.

CAHOOTS isn't for all homeless response, rather what I quoted above, but we do need a team that includes a crisis worker who has substantial training and experience in the mental health field and other outreach workers, who are also well trained in mental health as laypersons, who can provide what the unhoused need, without law and code enforcement on this team. Homelessness is not a crime. I wrote this two days ago before it was on the City of Fresno website, but those who are homeless still are being treated like they are in many instances.

The city of Fresno says that HART is a compassionate team, but we have had incidents where law enforcement and staff have not been kind or compassionate and have caused harm.

I would add that, in speaking to some of the unhoused in the last 24 hours regarding community needs, they mentioned mental health needs; that they need 1. Mental health services to go out to them and support, 2. People trained in grief and loss 3. For all people who go out to be trained in mental health. Speak to the unhoused about what they need. Listen to their experiences.

Continue your efforts to provide more shelters, affordable housing (congratulation on Annadale), and other services. Please press to get CAHOOTS in Fresno. Our community as a whole, including our unhoused, will be healthier for it, and focus on outreach without law and code enforcement.

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/apr/29/san-francisco-homelessness-police>