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Agenda Date: 4/22/2021
Council Meeting

2021 APR 22 P 2:11

CITY OF FRESNO
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

FRESNO CITY COUNCIL



Email / eComment Report

The Following item(s) were commented on:

Unscheduled Communication

Homeless Safe Camp

Total number of emails / eComments: 5

Bernard Canez

From: Mary Ann Quann <maryannquann@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, April 19, 2021 2:07 PM
To: Clerk
Subject: for City council meeting, discussion of homeless encampments

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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I believe the City of Fresno should, at a minimum, provide on-site toilets and hand-washing stations as well as garbage pick-up at organized encampments. Using "unsanitary conditions" as an excuse to clear camps accomplishes nothing. The unsheltered just move to other areas. I think that tax payers expect the basic sanitation needs to be met by our city government.

Mary Ann Quann M.D.

Bernard Canez

From: Susan Schmale <sschmale@rocketmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 5:09 PM
To: Clerk
Subject: FYI Homeless Safe Campo (WANI)
Attachments: Homeless Safe Camp.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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4/22/21

Re: Safe Camp for Homeless Crisis

I am writing to you in regards to the Council Meeting and discussion of funding for the Safe Camp and Fresno's homeless crisis. Although I reside in Sanger currently, my family lives in Fresno and I spend a great deal of time there.

In 2008 the city issued a 10 year plan to end homelessness using a "Housing First" Approach. This approach is also mandated by much of the State/Federal funding, yet we still, in 2021 have no plan. Why?

Mayor Dyer is using a permanent housing plan (i.e. Spending \$100, 000 to remodel ONE hotel room). This same type of plan, implemented in Los Angeles, isn't working and the U.S. District Court has now ordered L.A. city/county to offer shelter to everyone on "skid row" by October. Does Fresno have money/time to waste like this?

Immediate needs of homeless people must be met NOW! You must sanction/support the WE ARE NOT INVISIBLE Safe Camp before anymore time and money is wasted on approaches that are not thought-out and cohesive. Basic needs of these residents must be met (bathrooms, cleaning stations, safety etc.) while other options are explored.

The homeless crisis (Nationwide) needs to use different models for different sectors at different costs. The goal is sustainability and must be based the on dignity, respect and input of these fellow human beings. The Covid pandemic, which continues to this day, has made this crisis dire at this point.

Fresno's homeless crisis isn't new, although the numbers of these residents have increased dramatically. I taught in Fresno's inner city schools for almost 40 years, and I know the horrendous conditions in which people in poverty live. I had homeless students living with their families in cars 30 YEARS ago!

Fresno has always been a big town, with a small town mentality.

City Councils have given free reign to greedy developers, expanding north, to the detriment of everywhere else. Please realize the importance of supporting this WANI Safe Camp now, if we are ever to make a dent in our homeless situation. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Susan Schmale

sschmale@rocketmail.com

Bernard Canez

From: Jessie Kanter <jkanter68@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 8:43 PM
To: Clerk
Subject: public comment for safe camp

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Hello,

I am writing in defense of the Safe Camp run by Dez Martinez of We Are Not Invisible. I personally work out out there, helping to maintain the community garden they have. I cannot express how important this camp is to those who are staying there. It is incredibly organized, well managed, and the residents are respectful. They deserve all the respect and safety that any resident of Fresno does. I demand that the city works with We Are Not Invisible to serve the unhoused community and provides the safe camp with resources and protection. All human beings deserve a right to life. Please work with the community to provide the best one possible for ALL residents of Fresno.

Thank you,
Jessie Kanter

Bernard Canez

From: Anoush Ekparian <ekparian@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 8:45 PM
To: Clerk
Subject: Thursday meeting please discuss this issue!

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Given the lack of shelters to place all our homeless community members, the Safe Camp is an expedient, humane, and viable way to provide at least basic needs for many of these folks and reduces deaths, injuries, health risks, public health problems and the need for emergency services.. Estimates indicate there are over 1,000 plus people who became homeless during the pandemic and that number is expected to grow to another 1,000.

The Safe Camp has proven to be a safe, temporary "home" for people to decompress and stabilize from the harsh street conditions, and helps them prepare to enter into more permanent shelters/housing, and potential employment.

The WANI Safe Camp, volunteers and community supporters ensure basic human rights are met for the residents, which contributes to their well-being and ability to make positive self improvement. The residents themselves contribute to the overall function and benefits of the camp community. Below are a list of basic features and functions of the camp:

Sanitation and hygiene resources, like portable toilets, wash stations, trash cans, hygiene items, etc.

Clean tents, cots, sleeping bags

A common kitchen area with a pantry for safe, hygienic food preparation and community dining area for social interaction Garden area, recreation space, quiet tent, and other amenities for rest and healthy activities.

Sharing chores to ensure the camp is clean, safe, and well run. This has helped residents feel useful and productive and gives them a sense of belonging Access to resources via partners, donors volunteers (e.g clothing, hot meals, assistance with laundry, connection to medical and other resources) Relational support and space for healthy relationships with fellow residents and volunteers.

Request that the City sanction the camp &/or identifies surplus City land to lease (and sanction) to WANI: for \$1.00 a year, with the option of granting the land to WANI if the year project is determined to be of benefit to the City. This may seem like a big ask, but keep in mind that a similar lease is in place with the Chaffee Zoo and in our case, the cost savings to the City for services provided is estimated to be at a minimum of \$500,000 per year.

It appears that the City does not want to enter into an MOU (Memorandum Of Understanding) with the State of California (current camp is on CalTrans property) which would formalize the arrangement of the camp in the current location. Without such agreement, it is not possible for us to obtain Security services. By their refusal, the city is fermenting the increase of crime affecting camp and contributes to police hesitation to intervene when issues arise, as they question the legitimacy of our residence. The only other solution is for the City to designate a city-owned property for our use (and potential to purchase) that we would need them to sanction, as mentioned above.

Bernard Canez

From: Ron Camacho <roncamacho4@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 22, 2021 8:40 AM
To: Clerk
Subject: Public Comment for Safe Camp, April 22

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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The city of Fresno must do more to assist our homeless community members, and the WANI safe camp is a step in the right direction. With an estimated 1,000 more people forced to live on the streets since the beginning of the pandemic, all while Fresno lacks affordable housing, the City of Fresno must Support the WANI Safe camp however it can. Doing so would help reduce public health problems, need for emergency services, and most importantly, prevent deaths. It is also simply the right thing to do. I ask that the Fresno City council support the WANI Safe camp By identifying land for the camp to use and sanctioning it's lease for \$1 a year.

Thank you,
Concerned Fresno Resident Ron Camacho