

City Manager, Police Chief & Council,

The City of Sebastopol citizen survey last year clearly identified public safety as the most important focus for our city. While I can see the value in some of the work WCCS does for 'homeless' transients and indigents I am having a hard time believing their claims and data about their past and proposed future 'Homeless Outreach' efforts.

WCCS provided the following cumulative data claims since July 2022 for this agenda item, which I simply don't find credible:

- Number of individuals engaged: 407
- Referrals to Coordinated Entry: 100 (since 3/2023 – No data logged prior)
- Clients assisted with housing applications: 133
- Individuals connected to permanent or temporary housing: 1,384 (!)
- Number increased access to health services 377
- Volunteer events hosted: Not provided by WCCS for staff report
- Support provided at Safe Parking sites: Not provided by WCCS for staff report

I'm not a fan of bureaucracy, but I do think there should be far more significant success metrics and evidence based documentation of these types of activity by WCCS.

I was never able to connect with or see Rosie Perez in action when she was employed as WCCS's Homeless Outreach Coordinator, while the following extract from the Sebastopol Police Department gives pause for thought in comparison :

...officers attached to the Sebastopol Police Department have intimate knowledge of the unhoused people within the city, connecting with them daily on routine patrols and calls for service and in doing so, have established direct relationships with them. In some cases, these fostered relationships have provided critical partnerships in identifying the supply of drugs within the city, or identifying other criminal matters, promoting local and joint investigations with allied law enforcement agencies to successfully identify the respective involved parties.

In a recent night shift patrol of the city by Chief McDonagh, several unhoused residents who have been residing in Sebastopol for a number of years were contacted and they advised that they have not been approached or contacted by any Outreach Service provider associated with WCCS, with one of those individuals stating that he had reached out to WCCS on several occasions, never receiving any return contact.

Based on these assertions it seems most cost effective to use the funds to train the City of Sebastopol police in homeless outreach going forward, particularly given that

WCCS's request would only fund 50% of their proposed position, with little prospect of the county or state matching our taxpayer funds in the current economy.

We've had several years of a steady uptick in transients choosing to live on the streets of the city and in the Laguna, arguably in part due to encouragements by local non profits and religious organizations, which has compounded the problem of looking after genuinely local people who have hit hard times.

We know that at least 50% of the Sebastopol Police Department's workload is around the homeless, so given their constant contacts and in some cases criminal investigations, it seems entirely logical that they can provide positive outreach during these relationships to help people find appropriate resources.

It is a disgrace that our [county homeless services](#) performance has been so inept and unengaged during their bungled launch of the latest iteration of placing people in their former Sebastopol Inn at Gravenstein Station hotel project.

As we have recently heard, this specific project has stressed both WCCS and the CoS Police department due to both the county picking people they consider 'most deserving' of housing being completely inappropriate, and these character's homeless friends being allowed to congregate around and in the site.

These types of sometimes dangerous scenarios are public safety police work and not the types of encounters a WCCS 'homeless coordinator' should be involved in.

In conclusion I recommend using the budgeted funds to train the City of Sebastopol police in homeless outreach and ending that aspect of the city's relationship with WCCS, who may well realize the situation is now sufficiently serious that they should withdraw from this aspect of their efforts.

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