

Public Comment for #10

Reading agenda item #10 I believe it is time to give the police tools to help the homeless in Sebastopol.

The outreach coordinators employed by WCCS might be well intentioned but not one ever attended city council meetings and shared her activities with the public. At times it seemed like her approach to providing information on services available in our churches was more successful than getting homeless off our streets and into some kind of housing. During the time WCCS has been providing outreach the population of unhoused homeless reported in Sebastopol increased from 40 in 2022 to 108 in 2024. At the same time the homeless count in Sonoma County decreased by 25%. It's obvious what they are doing seems to be doing the exact opposite! Most taxpayers feel like Sebastopol is becoming a destination for the homeless.

I believe this can be changed.

The proposed contract .45 or .5 FTE with the capacity to case manage 35 individuals over the year seems like not enough given we may have up to 100 homeless living on our streets, along our trails and in our parks. Our police have the reach to contact all the homeless on a regular basis. At this point they have limited tools to deal with the homeless. Investing in training has the potential to help more homeless and actually get them off the street.

I support giving \$40,000 to our police department for training in how to deal with drug addicted and mentally ill individuals, the services available and how to connect the homeless to health care and housing resources.

Thank you,

Mary Cone

Sebastopol