



CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF:

Date: January 20, 2026

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**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers  
**From:** Stephen Zollman, Councilmember  
**Responsible Department:** Public Works Department  
**Subject:** Consideration of Approval to Co-sponsor with Micah’s Hugs to install a Repurposed Newspaper Stand with Narcan Supplies Downtown.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the City Council approve to co-sponsor with Micah’s Hugs on the installation of a repurposed newspaper stand to dispense free Narcan supplies downtown.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The City of Sebastopol supports and works with nonprofit organizations that provide services and programs that benefit the culture and health of its residents. Micah’s Hugs is a nonprofit dedicated to preventing substance abuse and fentanyl poisoning through education, awareness, and stigma reduction. They would like to provide a repurposed newspaper stand as a dispensary and stock it with Narcan supplies in the downtown area to help people in crisis. Breanna Christenson, of BC Therapeutics, has agreed to have it located in front of her business at 207 N Main St. She will keep the dispensary unit stocked with supplies as needed. Micha’s Hugs will provide the supplies and provide the upkeep of the dispenser’s appearance.

The city will work with Caltrans to see if an encroachment permit is required and if so, will take the lead on getting that obtained. The City’s annual maintenance permit does indicate that installation and maintenance of newspaper stands does not require an additional permit, but the Public Works office will obtain clarification if repurposing of a newspaper stand would still fit within those guidelines.

**BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:**

At the council meeting on September 16<sup>th</sup> the founders of the organization, Micah Sawyer, Sr., and his wife, Michelle Sawyer, made a presentation about their history and purpose. Micha’s Hugs was started in the honor of their son, Micah Hamlow-Sawyer Jr., who was lost to fentanyl poisoning six years ago. Their purpose is dedicated to educating youth and the broader community about the dangers of substance abuse and fentanyl poisoning. This includes Narcan training, school-based education, and a partnership with the Press Democrat to convert newspaper stands into Narcan distribution centers.

The group has developed innovative community outreach programs, including Narcan training sessions on a large scale. Their work has expanded through partnerships with local schools and community organizations.

The City requested feedback from their risk pool, CIRA, to evaluate the risks associated with a Narcan box. They responded with the following statement:

*“Barring any laws that prevent the distribution in this manner, we believe the risk can be transferred. We would recommend treating this situation similarly to a restaurant placing tables outside its business in the City’s right of way, where the City would require indemnification and insurance as part of an encroachment/license agreement. While we understand that it’s difficult to overdose on*



*Narcan, we would recommend requesting coverage limits as required by the City's encroachment permit. This way, if an incident occurs, the non-profit would be potentially liable.*

*If the City opts to deploy Narcan itself, there is currently no exclusion to the CIRA or PRISM MOC. We have heard that some cities are making Narcan available within their facilities so they can monitor its use. We are unaware of any that has placed a dispenser outside that is always available to the public. If the City chooses this option, it may be liable in the event of an incident."*

After discussions with Micah's Hugs and other jurisdictions who have Narcan boxes, the boxes were placed on private property and insurance coverage was not required.

**STAFF ANALYSIS:**

Staff is recommending that we partner with Micah's Hugs as a co-sponsor to facilitate the installation of a repurposed newspaper stand as Narcan distribution center downtown. The program will rely on the Press Democrat authorizing the use of a repurposed newspaper stand, or the use of an abandoned newspaper standard after the City adopts a planned newspaper rack ordinance.

The City's partnership will make the City partially responsible for the Narcan distribution center. The City Attorney has indicated that this partnership will not create significant liability risk for City.

Staff request that the City Council provide direction on whether the City's participation should be contingent on the adjacent property owner indemnifying the City and providing insurance.

**GOALS/ PRIORTIES STATEMENT:**

Goal 2 Public Safety – Strengthen the public safety and improve the quality of life. Includes supporting our first responders (police, fire, public works), responding to emergencies, protecting people, property, and business and engaging in emergency preparedness, community outreach, public education and prevention activities.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

No fiscal impact other than staff time.

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH:**

This item has been noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was made available for public review at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting date. The City has also promoted the Council meeting and agenda items through its social media platforms.

As of the writing of this report, the City has not received any public comments. If comments are received after publication, they will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials prior to or at the meeting.

**RESTATED RECOMMENDATION:**

That the City Council approve to co-sponsor with Micah's Hugs on the installation of a repurposed newspaper stand to dispense free Narcan supplies downtown.

**OPTIONS:**

1. Approve the recommendation.
2. Not approve and give staff further directions.



**ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1) Pictures of dispenser.

**APPROVALS:**

Department Head Approval: Approval Date: 1/8/26

CEQA Determination (Planning): Approval Date: 1/8/26

The proposed action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

General Plan Goal (Planning): Approval Date: N/A

Administrative Services (Financial) Approval Date: 1/8/26

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget:  Yes  No  N/A

Account Code (if applicable)

City Attorney Approval: Approval Date: 1/13/2026

City Manager Approval: Approval Date: 1/15/2026

### Pictures of a dispenser



