

TRACY HOMELESSNESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

August 22, 2022, 7:00 p.m.

Tracy City Hall, 333 Civic Center Plaza, Tracy

1. CALL TO ORDER – Council Member Arriola called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM
2. ROLL CALL – Roll call found Council Members Arriola and Davis present.
3. ITEMS FROM THE AUDIENCE – Nothing from the audience
4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

4A. ADOPTION OF APRIL 21, 2022 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

ACTION: Motion was made by Council Member Davis and seconded by Council Member Arriola to adopt April 21, 2022 special meeting minutes. Motion found all in favor; passed and so ordered.

4B. CONDUCT A “TOWN HALL” STYLE DISCUSSION TO ELICIT RESOURCES FOR POTENTIAL INTERIM SHELTER SOLUTIONS

Midori Lichtwardt, Assistant Manager and Michael Rogers, City Manager provided the staff report.

Council Member Arriola called for a 15-minute recess at 7:27 p.m. for the Town Hall resources sign-ups

Council Member Arriola called meeting to order at 7:49 p.m.

William Dean, Assistant Director of Planning reported community ideas on facilities. Legacy Fields was stated as an idea because it has access to water, land, kitchen facilities, not near any schools. Tracy Hills because of land where unsheltered population could be dispersed away from children, schools, parks, daycare facilities but should be near trees for shade. Also suggested existing Arbor Road site and empty lot on Larch Road and DVI. Another suggestion was located throughout the community parks with specific limitations as to the amounts of tents or the courthouse that is located near City Hall.

Kris Balaji, Director of Development Services reported community ideas on existing facilities including DVI, FEMA structures or modulars, tiny homes and foreclosed or abandoned hotels/apartments

Brian MacDonald, Director of Parks & Recreation reported community ideas on safe parking. Some of the suggestions were made regarding a good location with cameras. Suggestions included the West Valley Mall, Legacy Fields and the current site for the Temporary Housing Facility.

Thien Nguyen, Recreation Services Supervisor reported community ideas on transportation services such as, laundry services, transportation to and from medical appointments and resources such as AA Meetings or court, bus passes. Shared that San Mateo County has a good model where public transit that has specific shelter routes multiple times throughout the day. Bike racks, locker systems, and bicycles to those in need.

David Murphey, Public Works Superintendent reported community ideas on storage solutions. Henderson's Storage is looking to partner with the City on a discounted rate on storage containers. Secure bike racks like Caltrain or at bark, like a bike box that can also store some articles and DVI was also mentioned for storage. There was no input provided regarding animals and kennels.

Officer Robert Brandy, Tracy Police reported community ideas on security. Safe parking, barriers, and cameras. There were no solutions or avenues regarding local vendors as a possible source. Concerns on location of both Interim and Temporary Housing Facilities and the proximity to homes.

Vanessa Carrera, Assistant to the City Manager reported community ideas on ensuring that pets can be accommodated in the Interim and Temporary Housing Facilities, developing a planned approach for transitioning from street to shelter spaces and beyond. Further Affordable housing discussions are needed due to there bring too many barriers to low-income individuals to secure housing. Ensuring substance abuse resources to the unsheltered.

Public Comment – Andrea Brown shared her concerns for the children and asked that the unsheltered be removed as soon as possible from the parks and away from the schools. Stated that there has been an increase in crime, drugs, and assaults.

A local Pastor who is currently staying in Pescadero Park, shared that there needs to be a process the determination can be made who needs to go into a mental health program, medical programs, can go into a job training or directly into employment.

Brent Morris, homeowner near El Pescadero Park shared his experience regarding the unsheltered. Requested improved security in the park and something needs to be done now. Girls are being cat-called, kids are being harassed and charged to use the skate park. Encouraged staff and Committee Members to reach out to the neighbors surrounding El Pescadero Park.

Jenny Wood expressed appreciation to staff and Committee for the work being performed. Asked what the plan is for a long-term solution and stated that the developers should be building low-income housing in and among what they are already building.

Community Member expressed safety concerns at what is happening is laziness and that those that are in the park are those that should be in mental health facilities, these are not the face of homelessness. Shared that Legacy Fields is not a viable option, and that there must be a better solution to this. Politics is what is keeping these people where they are at.

Community Member shared that the people in El Pescadero Park are there by choice and that the City is continually giving them handouts and allowing them to live like that. Stated that the people that need help are not in the park.

Burnell Shull shared that some of these folks may have mental illness or just fell on hard times and that some. People should not be all grouped together but modulars should be set up quickly and make accommodations for their pets as well. Get things going as soon as possible.

Robert Tanner shared his frustration that buildings and homes were being erected but the Temporary Housing Shelter has still not gone up. Requested for the Police Department to confirm if DVI has reopened, if it has, it would not be an option. Requested that City Council get the job done.

Community Member that lives in a home neighboring El Pescadero Park shared that there are many children that have witnessed nudity, crime and prostitution in their neighborhood. Expressed frustration that the community is feeling over the situation at El Pescadero Park and the security of the surrounding neighborhood, that this was a great community and now its an embarrassment.

Community Member asked if any of the Committee Members have the ability to make changes to the law tomorrow, stated that if the committee has no power to change laws the meeting is a waste of time. Proposed that there funding should be cut whether it be from federal, state, or city. Their social security should be garnished and be put on a type of allowance. The area should be fenced, and food trucks would be there 24-hours a day and companies that need day laborers can show up and get workers.

Jennifer, a homeowner that lives near El Pescadero Park asked when the neighbors are going to see an end to the encampment and when will all the ideas that are being shared be implemented, neighbors want their park back, requested committee to think of residents rather than of the unhoused for a change.

Dan Evans shared that there have been multiple requests for temporary solutions to the housing issue but two months prior to the election it becomes a priority.

Community Member shared that she has lived in Tracy since she was an infant and has lived in the same home for over 55 years. Stated that she now has seven cameras around the house. Shared how a neighbor's home was burglarized while she was gone for less than 30 minutes. Expressed that her children went to North School and now the area is pathetic and shared her experience with her missionary work in the Dominican Republic.

Community Member shared how some homeless are targeting homeowners, she shared how she has missed out on family events because she has had to stay behind to take care of her property.

Alice English thanked City Manager for having this meeting and allowing the communities voice to be heard. Stated that the encampment is illegal, and it needs to be taken care of for the sake of the families in the surrounding neighborhoods. Situation is out of control, security nis needed there 24/7, more is

needed and feels that once rules are in place and enforced, most will leave, take care of Tracy residents first.

Community Member asked Committee if they would feel safe walking through El Pescadero Park, purchased his home across the street from the park and has not been able to go to the park in 3 years. Is concerned about his and his family's safety when he leaves for work every day. Thanked staff for getting the community together.

Joan Fell expressed that there are homeless throughout Tracy and it seems that the City can do nothing about it. Asked what will be done about the individuals that do not want to go to the shelter and how long can they stay in the shelter.

Burnell Shull thanked the City Manager and staff for holding this meeting. Shared that the solution is potentially in front of us and can maybe be taken care of right of way. Echoed the sentiments expressed by Ms. Alice English. Is disheartened and sad about the state of the City. There needs to be more affordable housing

William Muetzenberg echoed the sentiments of most of those that commented before him. Stated that community is demanding solutions and hoped that the modular project can be moved along quickly so that people can be put into housing as quickly as possible and that there be a safe parking location found soon.

Member of the community asked what the expected timeframe is to see a change in the encampment situation.

Member of the Community asked about the park bench in downtown that is currently occupied by a homeless individual, when there is a function downtown, he and all his stuff are cleared out. Stated that she was told that he would be put up in a hotel and then City pays for this and asked for clarification on this.

Bubba Paris shared those modular buildings can be there in 2 weeks to 30 days but that the infrastructure may not be ready until October. Asked for community volunteers to help with the undertaking of assisting the unsheltered. Stated that he has problems that he can't solve and is asking for the community's help and that we cannot go back to what happened three years ago, but we can move forward now.

Community Member stated that even though Mr. Paris is advocating for the homeless individuals and that there are programs available, but they are not taking advantage of it. She is there advocating for the neighbors.

Community Member stated that if there are programs that assist with addictions, why is this not being done while these individuals are in the park.

Mr. Michael Rogers addressed questions regarding the timeframe for the modular facilities and stated that the City is not providing payment for hotels but is aware that there are some organizations that are providing hotel vouchers.

Committee Comments followed.

ACTION Motion made by Council Member Arriola and seconded by Council Member Davis to support modular units as a temporary interim solution located at the ground that is either in phase 2 or 3 of the Arbor site property and that the comments from tonight and the six categories and continue to build upon that solution and it be done immediately.

Bijal Patel, City Attorney explained that this is not an action item and that there is not a formal action. Council Member Davis clarified that this was a committee recommendation to the Council.

4C. RECEIVE AND COMMENT ON A DRAFT ORDINANCE EFFECTUATING AN OMNIBUS AMENDMENT OF THE TRACY MUNICIPAL CODE TO (A) UPDATE CHAPTER 4.16, "REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO THE USE OF PARK AND RECREATION AREAS AND FACILITIES" AND CHAPTER 5.12, "CAMP CARS AND TRAILERS," AND (B) ADD PROVISIONS PROHIBITING CERTAIN ACTS, CAMPING, AND STORAGE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY IN PARKS AND PUBLIC AREAS.

Ana Contreras, Community Preservation Manager provided the staff report.

Council questions and comments followed.

Joan Fell asked if a hotel can be forced to take in a person if they are not suitable and is not sure if that would be feasible but that there needs to be a solution.

Robert Tanner asked if the shelter is full can they go back to sleeping in the park per the Boise law, but they can use a sleeping bag and sleep in the park between daylight hours and if the violations are being made misdemeanors come with fines, how are the homeless going to pay that fine or will they spend the night in jail, how will that be fixed. Asked what the is the time limit for keeping personal property and asked if that is 10, 30 or 60 days and how do people claim their items.

Community Member asked about items that are left around the neighborhood such as shopping carts and what can be done about it. Will the ordinance take effect once the Temporary Housing Facility goes into place or will this be effective sooner?

Alice English wanted to remind the committee about a City ordinance about shopping carts and that it needs to be enforced. Code Enforcement and Police should be enforcing those policies. Every time shopping carts are taken from grocery stores, the cost of those carts is passed onto the consumer. This ordinance should be a priority at the next council meeting.

Dan Evans wanted to caution on Project Home Key, City of San Francisco tried that, and it did not work out. Did not agree that Tracy should look at that as an option

Lieutenant Miguel Contreras and Ana Contreras, Community Preservation Manager addressed the shopping cart, storage, and questions.

ACTION Motion was made by Council Member Davis and seconded by Council Member Arriola to accept receive draft ordinance effectuating an Omnibus Amendment of

the Tracy Municipal Code to (A) update Chapter 4.16, "Regulations pertaining to the use of Park and Recreation Areas and Facilities" and Chapter 5.12, "Camp Cars and Trailers," and (B) add provisions prohibiting certain acts, camping, and storage of personal property in Parks and Public Areas

4D. UPDATE ON THE PARK TO SHELTER TRANSITION PLAN IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FAMILIAR FACES PROGRAM (VERBAL REPORT)

Virginia Carney, Homeless Services and Lieutenant Miguel Contreras, provided the staff report.

Committee questions and comments followed

Robert Tanner asked what the dollar value would be to reclaim/clean-up the park. Brian MacDonald, Director of Parks and Recreation clarified that there is a difference in cost to clean-up the park and renovation of the park. The five to ten million dollar estimates that had been made in the past were for renovation of the park.

ACTION Motion was made by Council Member Davis and seconded by Council Member Arriola to accept update on the park to shelter transition plan in conjunction with the Familiar Faced Program report

4E. UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN TO END AND PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

Midori Lichtwardt, Assistant City Manager provided the staff report.

No Public Comment.

5. STAFF ITEMS – No Staff items.

6. COMMITTEE ITEMS AND COMMENTS –

Council Member Arriola asked how to plan for maximum for capacity of the shelter, Council Member Davis seconded.

7. ADJOURNMENT – Time: 10:29 p.m.

ACTION: Motion was made by Council Member Davis and seconded by Council Member Arriola to adjourn. Motion found all in favor; passed and so ordered.

The agenda was posted at City Hall on August 19, 2022. The above are action minutes.

Chairperson

ATTEST:

Deputy City Clerk