

BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE ON THE HOMELESS Minutes 4-18-2011

Attending: David Wright, Frank Ploof, Cynthia Hamilton, Vanessa Czopek, Steve Madison, Brad Wilson, Joe Muratore and Darryl Fair.

- 1) Invited public comment. No responders.
- 2) Darryl motioned to nominate J. David Wright, Jr. as chairperson. 2nd by Brad. Motion passed with all present consenting.
- 3) Julie Hannon, Director of City of Modesto Parks & Recreation along with her associates, Steve Lumpkin & Hugo Ramirez spoke about how the homeless population is affecting their department. They stated they are seeing the problem spread out further into more parks. Not as centralized as it used to be. Their department is spending over \$500K in vandalism and graffiti abatement per year. They did not have any recommendations to changes in the city codes and did not think creating an authorized camping area would solve any of the problems they are seeing. Julie stressed that positive activity is the best solution to drive out negative activity. They do feel the food donations in the parks are contributing to their problems. Their workload has more the doubled because of the feedings. Most volunteers drop off the food without staying to be sure area is cleaned up. Some drop off spots do not have toilet facilities. If the park feedings stop they feel many of the homeless would move on or move closer to services and their workload would decrease.
- 4) Larry Johnson – Chairman of the Ralston Towers spoke about the problems his residents are having with the loiterers around their building. Many of the residents feel threatened when outside in the park area surrounding the building. They have reports of items missing and vehicles being broken into. They want the city to deed the public park area back to them so they can restrict access.
- 5) David suggested the committee members reach out to their contacts at other cities to see what they are doing to combat the homeless problem.
- 6) Darryl suggested most of the homeless issues could be solved with providing adequate housing, having access to a day resource center and stopping the feeding in the parks.
- 7) Frank suggested to have the city review the 10 Year Plan.
- 8) Steve suggested that we recommend the creation of a special parks enforcement division made up of safety officers that would patrol the parks.
- 9) Committee members were tasked to bring information to the next meeting.

Brad & Joe will be researching laws and city ordinances.

Darryl & Steve will be contacting the city for an accounting of financial resources the city receives and spends for the homeless.

Vanessa will be researching Public Health Code.

Frank will look into community outreach.

Cynthia & David will research educational issues.

10) Next meeting is schedule for May 9th, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at Tenth Street Place. Room to be determined.