

RESOLUTION NO. 2021- 35

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN BENITO TO EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO HOMELESSNESS

WHEREAS, homelessness is a national, state, regional and local issue affecting all of San Benito County including our local cities; and

WHEREAS, homelessness has devastating effects on human lives and has severe health, safety, social, economic, and environmental impacts on cities, towns, neighborhoods, families, schools, businesses, healthcare facilities and social services agencies; and

WHEREAS, point in time counts conducted in 2019 reported 283 homeless individuals in San Benito County; and

WHEREAS, the point in time census reveals that at any given night large numbers of people, including families, experience homelessness and can be found sleeping on the streets and in parks, cars, abandoned buildings, under bridges, and other places not meant for human habitation; and

WHEREAS, homeless encampments occur without appropriate sanitation facilities or proper trash receptacles and often become contaminated with garbage, human waste, used needles, and dirty dressings, resulting in occupants facing serious health and sanitation issues; and

WHEREAS, conditions in homeless encampments that are dangerous to human health include: garbage that becomes a food source for vermin; vectors (organisms that transmit diseases or parasites) and related pathogens; lack of proper food storage and clean dishes that can facilitate the spread of food-borne disease; lack of sanitary facilities to dispose of human and animal fecal waste, which can lead to contamination of ground and surface water supplies and transmittal of disease; improper disposal of discarded medical and sharps waste; accumulation of combustible materials that can ignite; lack of poor hygiene which contributes to dental and skin problems; and the victimization of homeless persons by both sheltered and non-sheltered persons; and

WHEREAS, on April 2, 2021, an early morning fire engulfed local homeless encampments and caused damage to communication lines and infrastructure under the San Juan Road bridge; and

WHEREAS, the County of San Benito finds that it is in the best interest of the community for the County to exercise its governing power to effectively address the homelessness crisis in San Benito County; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Benito hereby directs staff to immediately prepare a regional plan and collaborate with local jurisdictions to effectively respond to and address the homelessness crisis in San Benito County.


PASSED AND ADOPTED by the San Benito County Board of Supervisors, State of California, at the meeting of said Board held on April 13, 2021, by the following vote:


AYES: SUPERVISORS
NOES: SUPERVISORS
ABSTAIN: SUPERVISORS
ABSENT: SUPERVISORS

Medina, Gonzales, Kosmicki, Hernandez, Tiffany
None
None
None

BY: _____


Mark Medina
Chair of San Benito County Board of Supervisors


APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM:
Barbara Thompson, County Counsel


ATTEST:
Jennifer Frechette, Clerk of the Board