

Iraheta, Alba

From: Sonja Berndt <sonja.berndt19@gmail.com>
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To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT FOR JOINT SPECIAL MEETING 3/31/2021

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Dear Members of the City Council and Supervisor Barger:

I wish to submit public comments on two agenda items: Numbers 3 and 7. Unfortunately, the agenda lacks transparency and is obscure about the specific issues to be discussed within the stated general subject matter areas. Respectfully, this is a disservice to members of the public who wish to advocate for people in our City who have no voice, like our unhoused neighbors. Please consider that transparency and adequate notice to the public regarding meeting agendas are critical in order for the public to participate in matters of community concern.

#3. Update and Information on Mental Health Services Provided by LA County Department of Mental Health.

Pasadena is in critical need of crisis intervention teams composed of persons other than police officers to respond to calls involving our unhoused persons who also suffer from mental illness. The Pasadena Police Department publicly reports that it is sending uniformed police officers to respond to 9-1-1 calls dealing with persons officers know are mentally ill and also know respond defensively when approached by police officers. I understand that LA County has a pilot project with a CAHOOTS-type model sending teams of mental health professionals and outreach workers rather than uniformed police officers to respond to 9-1-1 calls involving unhoused persons with mentally illness or substance use disorders. The City of Pasadena needs funding for this type of safe and effective crisis intervention.

#7. Discussion Regarding Heritage Square South Application for LA County Affordable Housing Funds.

Pasadena has over 500 unhoused persons in our City, including many seniors who are vulnerable to severe and debilitating conditions, including COVID-19, due to their difficult life on the streets. The number of homeless seniors has increased 65% in the past three years. It is my understanding that LA County is not going to provide the necessary funding from its budget for the Heritage Square South development for our seniors experiencing homelessness. I urge the County Board of Supervisors to find the funds needed to make this project possible. The project received overwhelming support from the community. Further, the property is ideal for senior persons experiencing homelessness, many of whom are already living there unhoused. Please find and approve funding for this much-needed development. Thank you.

Sonja K. Berndt
Longtime Pasadena Resident

03/31/2021
Item 3 & 7