

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From:
Sent: Saturday, February 25, 2023 4:06 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Item # 6: Motel vouchers for unhoused residents of our city

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Dear Mayor Gordo and City Council members,

I am glad that you are considering allocating an additional \$100,000 for motel vouchers to house our unsheltered neighbors during inclement weather, and urge you to do so, but this isn't nearly enough to meet the dire need, as Rabbi Grater, director of Friends In Deed, pointed out in his message this week:

With this massive storm hitting us right now, our Bad Weather Supplies distribution and emergency motel programs are working overtime. At the current moment, we have rented 81 rooms in 5 different motels, and we have occupants in every single room that we have available to us. Folks have been in since Tuesday, and are currently able to stay until next Thursday. If the weather continues with rain or cold, we will extend again. As I have shared before, this is a very expensive program to operate. A few weeks ago, the city council authorized an additional \$100K for motels. As of this writing, that funding has already been exhausted.

According to Rabbi Grater, 81 people received vouchers, but according to the most recent homeless count, there are at least 280 people sleeping on the street so 200 people have to endure this chilling, wet weather. Many of them are elderly and some are women. More funding is needed but Rabbi Grater goes on to say that there are not enough motels willing to provide space to meet the need even if there were unlimited funding. See [Rabbi Grater's Weekly Message](#). Motel vouchers are expensive and inadequate to meet the scale and scope of the need. As Rick Cole says in his recent op ed, we need a comprehensive homelessness plan with the goal of ending, not simply reducing, homelessness. We at MHCH agree that this needs to be our city's goal. Let's treat the homelessness crisis as if it were a dire emergency and allocate resources accordingly.

Respectfully,

Anthony Manousos

Co-founder of Making Housing and Community Happen

2/27/2023
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