



Legislation Text

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Fiscal Note

Several agencies, including the Madison Fire Department, the Madison Police Department and Public Health Madison and Dane County have allocated staff time to perform site inspections, coordinate and facilitate staff meetings, and respond to fires and emergency calls for service. The majority of these services have been provided during the normal course of business; however, while neither the appropriation of additional funds nor a budget amendment is currently anticipated, the need to reallocate services toward Occupy-related activities diminishes the provision of services elsewhere. Further, some agencies have indicated that there appears a trend such that the need to provide Occupy-related services is growing, and might continue to grow. As such, the activities have had and will continue to have an impact on staff and other projects while the site is occupied.

Title

That the City of Madison will continue its efforts in the short-term to provide additional time for interested parties to pursue creative and compassionate solutions for the current homeless population on the 800 block of E. Washington Avenue.

Body

SUBSTITUTE.WHEREAS, on November 29, 2011, the City of Madison Common Council unanimously voted to declare that the City of Madison recognizes housing is a human right and made a commitment that all people who desire a place of shelter and stable long-term housing be prioritized to have this basic need met both temporarily and permanently; and

WHEREAS, in the Housing as a Human Right resolution, the City of Madison committed to exploring creative uses of the public and private dollars; and

WHEREAS, When the Occupy protest moved to the 800 block of E Washington Ave it was a protest, but that has evolved over time to a tent city for the homeless and it has become a creative way for the City of Madison to support Housing as a Human Right for Madisonians with limited additional costs to the City of Madison for electricity.; and

WHEREAS, in a resolution on April 10, 2012, the City of Madison Common Council voted unanimously to thank the Occupy movement and the current Occupy Madison residents for their efforts to address important community needs during this recession, recognized their potential to be an important resource for this city, and applauded their creative response to the growing poverty and homelessness caused by the economic crisis; and

WHEREAS, the City of Madison recognizes that a tent city is not a permanent solution, nor is it the only solution to solve gaps in the homeless services system, but it has proven to be a viable temporary strategy and should continue to be a part of the solution; and

WHEREAS, lack of resources in 2011 forced the homeless services system in Dane County to turn away 2,003 individuals, while serving 3,079; and

WHEREAS, due to the lack of resources in the Dane County homeless services system, men are

limited to 60 days in shelter per year while families are limited to 180 days in shelter; and

WHEREAS, a tent city provides services for people who have used their limited time in shelter, have been turned away from shelter or whose individual needs are not adequately met by the current shelter program models; and

WHEREAS, we recognize the need for additional federal, state and local city and county funding for Housing First programs, more SRO units, and adequate shelter for those without housing, to eliminate waiting lists for mental health and AODA treatment, a better health care system for the uninsured, financial support for those unable to work, job training programs for those who lack the education or skills they need in our job market, a child care system that is affordable for all, a "wet shelter" that provides a safe environment for those whose addiction makes it impossible to function safely within our existing shelter system, and an end to the revolving door at our jail that currently substitutes for mental health and AODA treatment; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that the City of Madison played an important role in facilitating the provision of critical services in a time of great need by providing a campground permit for the 800 block of E. Washington Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the 800 block of E. Washington Avenue will not be needed for redevelopment prior to the extended deadline to leave; and

WHEREAS, the residents of the 800 block of E. Washington Avenue have maintained a positive relationship with the police during their tenure on the site; and

WHEREAS, several police departments across the nation have found that tent cities have no more crime than the rest of the community; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that the City of Madison is not the only entity that shares responsibility for the solution to this problem, but is a partner with Dane County, United Way, Community Shares of Wisconsin, the non-profit community, the faith community and the private sector;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Madison will continue its efforts in the short-term to provide additional time for interested parties to pursue creative and compassionate solutions for the current homeless population on the site as follows:

1. The City of Madison will allow Occupy Madison, in conjunction with an individual or organization, to apply to the State Department of Health for a new waiver and campground permit to allow the tent city to move to the 854 East Washington location and remain until June 30, 2012.

2. The City of Madison will ask Madison Urban Ministry to convene a committee to explore alternative public and/or private sites and to report back to the Common Council at the meeting of June 12, 2012.

3. Appoint a joint city-county committee on homeless issues to explore many of the issues that have been brought up such as restrooms, showers, laundry, third party complaint system, a place to store belongings during the day, the ability to utilize public spaces free from harassment and other issues identified by community members.

4. Allow the cars to stay on the current and the new site for the same amount of time as the tents will remain.

~~5. Ask the police to support enforcement of the good neighbor policy if called by residents on the site. Be it finally resolved that the City of Madison urges Dane County to form a Homeless Issues Committee which shall consist of three (3) members of the Homeless Services Consortium, two (2) alders, two (2) County Board supervisors, three (3) currently or formerly homeless persons who have used Dane County homeless services and one (1) member of the Madison Police Department and staffed by a representative of Dane County Human Services and a representative of the City of Madison Community Development Division.~~

~~NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Madison will continue its efforts to convene interested parties to pursue creative and compassionate solutions for the current homeless population; and~~

~~BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Madison will allow cars belonging to occupants stay on the current site until April 30, 2012; and~~

~~BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Madison urges Dane County to form a Homeless Issues Committee to explore issues of homelessness and their relationship to community service providers and resources within Dane County including, among other issues, public access to restrooms, showers, laundry, third party complaint systems, access to daytime storage of personal belongings, the ability to utilize public spaces free from harassment and other issues identified by community members, and this committee shall consist of three (3) members of the Homeless Services Consortium, ~~two three (23)~~ alders, ~~two four (24)~~ County Board supervisors, three (3) currently or formerly homeless persons who have used Dane County homeless services and one (1) member of the Madison Police Department and staffed by a representative of Dane County Human Services and a representative of the City of Madison Community Development Division; and,~~

~~BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Common Council directs staff to ask its community development division funded homeless service agencies to immediately begin working with Occupy residents to offer services & assist with their transition.~~

~~BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the City of Madison will allow Occupy Madison, in conjunction with an individual or organization, to apply to the State Department of Health for a new waiver and campground permit to allow the tent city to move to the 854 East Washington location and remain until June 30, 2012.~~

~~WHEREAS, on November 29, 2011, the City of Madison Common Council unanimously voted to declare that the City of Madison recognizes housing is a human right and made a commitment that all people who desire a place of shelter and stable long-term housing be prioritized to have this basic need met both temporarily and permanently; and~~

~~WHEREAS, in the Housing as a Human Right resolution, the City of Madison committed to exploring creative uses of the public and private dollars; and~~

~~WHEREAS, the Occupy protest that began on the 800 block of E. Washington Avenue site has evolved over time to a tent city for the homeless and has become a creative use of the City of Madison's limited dollars to implement Housing as a Human Right for Madisonians in need; and~~

WHEREAS, in a resolution on April 10, 2012, the City of Madison Common Council voted unanimously to thank the Occupy movement and the current Occupy Madison residents for their efforts to address important community needs during this recession, recognized their potential to be an important resource for this city, and applauded their creative response to the growing poverty and homelessness caused by the economic crisis; and

WHEREAS, the City of Madison recognizes that a tent city is not a permanent solution, nor is it the only solution to solve gaps in the homeless services system, but it has proven to be a viable temporary strategy and should continue to be a part of the solution; and

WHEREAS, lack of resources in 2011 forced the homeless services system in Dane County to turn away 2,003 individuals, while serving 3,079; and

WHEREAS, due to the lack of resources in the Dane County homeless services system, men are limited to 60 days in shelter per year while families are limited to 180 days in shelter; and

WHEREAS, a tent city provides services for people who have used their limited time in shelter, have been turned away from shelter or whose individual needs are not adequately met by the current shelter program models; and

WHEREAS, we recognize the need for additional federal, state and local city and county funding for Housing First programs, more SRO units, and adequate shelter for those without housing, to eliminate waiting lists for mental health and AODA treatment, a better health care system for the uninsured, financial support for those unable to work, job training programs for those who lack the education or skills they need in our job market, a child care system that is affordable for all, a "wet shelter" that provides a safe environment for those whose addiction makes it impossible to function safely within our existing shelter system, and an end to the revolving door at our jail that currently substitutes for mental health and AODA treatment; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that the City of Madison played an important role in facilitating the provision of critical services in a time of great need by providing a campground permit for the 800 block of E. Washington Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the 800 block of E. Washington Avenue will not be needed for redevelopment prior to the extended deadline to leave; and

WHEREAS, the residents of the 800 block of E. Washington Avenue have maintained a positive relationship with the police during their tenure on the site; and

WHEREAS, several police departments across the nation have found that tent cities have no more crime than the rest of the community; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that the City of Madison is not the only entity that shares responsibility for the solution to this problem, but is a partner with Dane County, United Way, Community Shares of Wisconsin, the non-profit community, the faith community and the private sector;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Madison will continue its efforts in the short-term to provide additional time for interested parties to pursue creative and compassionate solutions for the current homeless population on the site as follows:

1. The City of Madison will apply to the State Department of Administration for an extension of the waiver and continued campground permit to allow the tent city to remain until June 30, 2012.

~~2. The City of Madison will ask Madison Urban Ministry to convene a committee to explore alternative public and/or private sites and to report back to the Common Council at the meeting of June 12, 2012.~~

~~3. Appoint a joint city-county committee on homeless issues to explore many of the issues that have been brought up such as restrooms, showers, laundry, third party complaint system, a place to store belongings during the day, the ability to utilize public spaces free from harassment and other issues identified by community members.~~

~~4. Allow the cars to stay on site for the same amount of time as the tents will remain.~~

~~5. Ask the police to support enforcement of the good neighbor policy if called by residents on the site.~~

~~BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that a the Homeless Issues Committee shall consist of three (3) members of the Homeless Services Consortium, two (2) alders, two (2) County Board supervisors, three (3) currently or formerly homeless persons who have used Dane County homeless services and one (1) member of the Madison Police Department.~~