

Huntington Beach City Council

Taskforce on Homelessness

Police Sub-Committee

Members: Bill Blair, Ron Kupferstein, Hector Valdez

Recommendations:

As part of the combined efforts to mitigate homelessness and establish effective strategies to address the needs of the Huntington Beach, residents, business and the homeless, members of the police sub-committee met with key staff from the Police Department to review the current state.

The Police Department estimates 50% of the existing homeless population in Huntington Beach as being chronically homeless, and suffering from some combination of substance abuse and or mental illness. This population results in the highest use of police service and are comprised of repeat offenders involved in quality of life violations.

In order to better enable the capability of the Police Department, and provide opportunity for long term compliance, the following recommendations are presented for consideration;

- Review of existing City of Huntington Beach municipal code for opportunities to enhance, or develop, best practice ordinance addressing quality of life issues.
- Authorize the Chief of Police and City Attorney to explore the concept of a community prosecutor position to develop a Chronic Offender Program to best handle local misdemeanor violations related to quality of life offenses.
- Re-evaluate the implementation of a downtown ambassador program and or other private security staffing to aid law enforcement efforts in the downtown business district as well as other major HB retail centers
- Review opportunities to re-establish a Park Ranger program for visibility in City parks and to aid law enforcement efforts to regulate illegal camping.
- Provide dedicated outreach funding support, for discretionary allocation by Police Department to aid in emergency circumstances.
- Develop a process (homeless index system) to provide communication and coordination between City departments, government agencies, non-profits, faith based providers and other key stakeholders to maximize resources. Thereby transferring non-criminal and/or emergent hospital (medical/psych) to other available resources to reduce Police time/labor involvement.