

From: noreply@cityofsalem.net on behalf of denaturner5@hotmail.com
To: citycouncil
Subject: Type the subject of the email-here
Date: Monday, May 24, 2021 3:20:29 PM
Attachments: [ATT00001.bin](#)

Your Name	Dena G. Turner
Your Email	denaturner5@hotmail.com
Your Phone	5035106375
Street	495 HORNET CT N
City	Keizer
State	OR
Zip	97303
Message	<p>Re: Resind the allowance for camping in Cascade Gateway and Wallace Marine Park. Dear City Council members and Mayor: I am a supporter of Church at the Park (C@P) which is a non-profit organization serving unsheltered individuals and families since 2007 in Marion County, located on Turner Road, right off Cascade Gateway Park and serve some 175 meals a day to the homeless in the area as well as providing additional services much needed in the homeless community. I am wondering where you plan to allow unsheltered individuals to camp if you close the camps at Cascade Gateway and Wallace Marine Park on June 1? This is an unrealistic expectation, especially when you know the public and businesses downtown did not appreciate when so many homeless people were lining the streets downtown last year. We need to give them a legal place to reside and I think the Church at the Park has a very good model. IF we can use part of Cascade Gateway park, dedicated to homeless, and fenced off from the rest of the park, it would help them live more securely and safely, with services close by. I am a lifelong Salem/Keizer native, born in Salem, OR. I am a public school teacher in Salem. My husband and I are eager to help find permanent solutions to our city's homeless situation. By allowing people a place to go, to get back on their feet, and be served by the non-profits eager to help serve, I think we have a fighting chance of getting on top of this. We've thought about the idea of a sort of "refugee camp" model, where services are provided in a safe area they can live. Please consider our thoughts on this matter and postpone the June 1st deadline. I also know there are neighbors out on Turner Road who are not happy with the camp and Church @ the Park's work. We need a liaison between those businesses, the City of Salem, and the Church @ the Park, to work towards a solution to be good neighbors. Aren't we all looking for the same things.... smart solutions, safety, kindness towards others. Thank you, Dena Turner</p>

This email was generated by the dynamic web forms contact us form on 5/24/2021.

From: Lynelle Wilcox
To: citycouncil; CityRecorder
Cc: Gretchen Bennett
Subject: PUBLIC TESTIMONY for May 24, 2021 City Council meeting
Date: Monday, May 24, 2021 3:08:18 PM

To: City Council

Please also consider what Portland is trying:

<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/toolkit/article/756745>

*"Protecting Health and Safety: Campsite Cleanup Changes June 2020
As Multnomah County begins to reopen, the City of Portland will adjust campsite cleanup procedures to protect health and safety – including yours. Sites that pose the highest risk to camp residents and fellow community members will be prioritized for posting, property removal and cleanup by the Homelessness and Urban Camping Impact Reduction Program.*

Which campsites will be prioritized for cleanup?

- 8 or more occupied structures
- Block public sidewalks, paths, transit stations, restrooms or building entrances
- Prevent 6 feet of physical distancing
- Significant garbage or debris
- Evidence of conspicuous drug use: uncapped, used hypodermic needles or other paraphernalia
- Credible reports of criminal behavior, verified by Portland Police or Multnomah County Sheriff

If your campsite meets some of these criteria, a warning may be posted. You will be given at least 24 hours to improve the situation before your site is posted for cleanup.

How can you avoid warning and cleanup?

- Limit campsites to fewer than 8 structures.
- Keep tents 12 feet apart from people not in your household.
- Make sure people can reasonably maintain 6 feet of distance from you and your property.
- Leave 10 feet of space from any doorway, transit stop, public restroom or other high-activity area.
- Keep your camp area free of soiled items, biohazards and garbage that could transmit disease."

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I understand the concerns about trees, water, neighbors' property and view, and the burden of two areas bearing an inordinate brunt of the burden. Yet more toilets and trash disposal can be arranged; patrolling could be done. We can better balance human lives and nature. Yet this humanitarian crisis was decades in the making. To scatter people within 6 months with nowhere for them to go will result in more deaths, and will lose support and connections to services that many service providers and advocates have worked hard to develop.

Evicting people without providing somewhere else for all people to go will harm hundreds of people, making it even harder for people to grow bootstraps out of thin air. Please let's not sabotage the very goals and progress we wish for.

When I was a new mom, I was overwhelmed by the detail that this little person is watching everything I do. I needed to be the very best me that I could be “for” that kid, even if I had not yet been able to do some of those very-best-me things for me. My kids are grown now, yet the concept still applies. Sheltered and unsheltered adults and kids in the city and county are watching how we will proceed in working through this humanitarian crisis. I’ve also asked Marion County to step up. Yet please let’s proceed with awareness of the numbers of people who will be displaced with nowhere to go; the huge risk of loss of the very connections that can help enable people to heal and move forward; the reality and science of trauma’s result on the brain, and please let’s proceed in ways that don’t sabotage the results we wish for.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lynelle Wilcox  
1785 Norway Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301  
[lynellex@comcast.net](mailto:lynellex@comcast.net)

**From:** [Lynelle Wilcox](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#); [CityRecorder](#)  
**Cc:** [Gretchen Bennett](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC TESTIMONY for May 24, 2021 City Council meeting  
**Date:** Monday, May 24, 2021 3:19:17 PM

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To: City Council

**Please implement park evictions and the camping ban only as there are real places for people to go.**

As a Program Manager at SafeSleep United, I have had the honor, blessing, and incredibly huge never-ending learning curve of managing a low barrier women's shelter.

Before I began volunteering at warming centers, I believed everyone has bootstraps, and at some point, we choose to let go of whatever bad nature and bad nurturing we may have experienced, and we choose to pull up our bootstraps and drive our own lives in pursuit of our happiness and dreams. Having known many people who had traumatic childhoods and went on to become healthy, happy, and productive members of society, I took their successes as proof that it can be done. The converse of that belief is that people who DON'T pull themselves up by their bootstraps are \*choosing\* not to do so. Even though I was going to treat people with respect, my beliefs reflected a moral failing on their end.

What I did not know then is that abuse and trauma are much, much, much more prevalent than I ever realized; nature and nurture will combine and there is no way to know which will prevail; some people receive horrifically shitty hands of both; just like some of us have innate talent for art or music or listening, some of us have more resiliency, more bootstraps in spite of what life deals to us; and I had no idea back then that brain science proves that living in survival mode disables the part of our brains that help us to think and plan and act on the future things we wish for.

That last bit of learning happened as a result of Stephen Goins' presentation on the Homeless Brain, and I've followed up to read more about how trauma affects the brain, and I'm seeing the results of trauma in so many of the ladies who are guests at SafeSleep United. In so many, many, many cases, what looks like someone \*won't\* do x,y,z is really a case of the person not being able to do x,y,z. When many people are actually "unable", instead of the "unwilling" I previously believed in, that changes every thing.

We have pretty consistently had multiple ladies who are very elderly and disabled, and we also have many more ladies struggling with intense mental illness than I ever would have suspected would be a thing. I used to think everyone has bootstraps and some nights of safe sleep can help stabilize people so they can heal a little bit, connect with resources for support, job and life skills, trauma coping strategies, and move forward. We're learning that was never a realistic expectation, so I hope that sharing some slices of shelter life might show what we're experiencing, and why the "just do x" ideas can rarely work, and why expecting people to just find someplace else to be is just not realistic or humane.

If i was to provide an occasional "slice" of shelter life and guests, during the last month or so, our slice would include...

A woman who is walking all day every day to find the people who are making her stay in this

country, even though she needs to go overseas to be with her military husband and her 8 kids. she needs to stay with us for 11 months, because THEN she can go to them. Because somehow, she will unravel the mystery of who is keeping her here by then, so she can finally leave. Meanwhile, her stepmom tells me that our guest has no husband or 8 kids; the last the stepmom heard, our guest was pregnant with twins (which is an oddly common belief among women experiencing mental illness), and they think she has schizophrenia. Yet when i suggest any medical help, the woman becomes hysterical that I might not believe her and she refuses any encouragement to seek a doctor, unless I keep it specific to a doctor that might help figure out her memory issue, which is the only barrier she conveys about herself.

A woman who cannot tell us where she's been or what she wants. Her eyes glaze over at any conversation. and even if she talks to you, she is side-whispering to multiple people I cannot see. She never heard of Arches or HOAP (or so she says?), and speaking about connecting just leads to her eyes glazing more, with more whispers to the invisible people.

A woman who is practically catatonic. She can't meet the criteria of following our rules, yet she is so vulnerable we've had her stay anyway. But we need people to shower once a week, and she seems unable to go to Arches or HOAP for a shower, and she refused to go past the Arches lobby when I personally drove her there and walked her in for the Covid screening, and told her I'd wait for her to shower and I'll take her back to SafeSleep afterwards. At the last minute, she bolted and ran off. And we can't keep her inside if she continues not to shower, and she's practically catatonic inside or out.

And so many more. Some, we had to 86 because their mental illness was too volatile to seem safe. After 86ing one older woman, she died on the streets, cold and alone. One is someone I used to see around often. I have not seen her for months now, and I have no idea if she is dead or alive - living or barely existing. I worry about her constantly.

One past SafeSleep United guest is currently sleeping under RiteAid's awning with her husband. She experienced a stroke and they both went to the hospital for doctors to check her out. While they were in the hospital, their tent and all of their things were stolen from their campsite at Wallace Marine Park. She was discharged from the hospital and when they found nothing at their campsite, they asked to be dropped off at Rite Aid instead. Then someone beat him up. His face is a bloody mess, and she is experiencing extreme incontinence, seizures, and facial ticks. She is barely able to walk, and has sores on her head, as he has sores all over his body. They are in their late 50s, in total despair, with nowhere to go. They are two of the many people who would be evicted from Wallace Marine Park if they had not already been robbed of that "home" by a robbery when they were dealing with a medical emergency. They are only two people, yet their level of disability with nowhere to go is a horrific and appallingly common theme.

Safe sleep seems valuable, and yet it does almost nothing to enable many extremely traumatized ladies to gain much ground. It's heart-wrenching.

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To be balanced, the shelter slice over the last month would also need to include the woman who came to us, shy and unable to even answer the question about whether she'd like salad with the dinner entree. Recently divorced and then befriending people in need, until two different guys and one woman were able to steal over her life savings from her. She slowly shared that story and her shame and embarrassment over being so naive and trusting, accepted the fiscal loss, started helping in the shelter kitchen, preparing dinners with our founder,

painstakingly slowly, and always with an Eeyore attitude that the food won't be enough, it won't fit in the pot, etc - everything was certain not to work out. And eventually being able to fill in when here and there on her own. Eventually speeding up a bit and being able to make a decision about her own salad and other things. Eventually making a slight joke now and then. Doing a sarcastic joke once. And when there was an opening at Hood House, we recommended this lady. And she is shy and slow-going there, and terrified to use the bus on her own. But she is venturing out with a housemate's help, and they all like her, and she likes Hood House's owners, and she likes her roommates and the house. And it seems like it WILL be a mutual fit. So she has a lovely place to live.

And one woman came to us with her very old cat. She wanted to work part time and rent a room. She filled out apps on line, went to multiple interviews, and after about a month, she got a job offer. She began work in the beginning of May 2021. She decided to accept the job even though it's full time, because even though she worries about her physical and mental health, she could use full time levels of income so she's giving it a try.

Yet circling back to the first women... **these are the women who were previously on the streets and camps until they found SafeSleep United.** There are hundreds like them, where even if there are open shelter beds, their mental health struggles, trauma and (lack of) cognitive abilities are not up to the task of finding us, and they are not able to make decisions and move forward even after they have some safe sleep with us. These are the women (and men) we say should find somewhere else to go. These are a huge part of the women (and men) we say should get a shelter bed, grow centeredness and stability, and find heir bootstraps and pull them up. These are reflections of so very many women (and men) who have no bootstraps.

Telling them to find somewhere else to go reflects our naiveté and ignorance if we don't yet know better. And it reflects inhumanity and cruelty if we do know better, and if we ignore brain and trauma science, and still expect bootstraps to materialize out of thin air. That will lead to a trail of death and tears.

We can do so much better. We have the chance to live up to the paraphrased Bible quote that says that whatever you do to the least of these, you do unto God. Please implement park evictions and the camping ban only as there are real places for people to go.

Thank you for your consideration.
Lynelle Wilcox
1785 Norway Street NE
Salem, Or 97301

From: [Lynelle Wilcox](#)
To: [citycouncil](#); [CityRecorder](#)
Cc: [Gretchen Bennett](#)
Subject: PUBLIC TESTIMONY for May 24, 2021 City Council meeting
Date: Monday, May 24, 2021 3:28:25 PM

To: City Council

Please implement park evictions and the camping ban only as there are real places for people to go.

A lady who struggles with mental health lives outside in the area by our shelter. She's shared about some of the extreme trauma she experienced since she was a very young child, and after earning her trust, she sometimes will talk openly about her multiple personalities. They each have different voices, different makeup, different styles of dressing, and different behaviors.

We tried very hard, for a long time, to have her stay inside with us. Yet her past haunts her so vividly, so loudly, so profanely. Almost every night, one or more personalities will be present, screaming at the top of her lungs, or crying - full bodied sobbing with yelling mixed in. And almost always extreme profanity, and conversations with people we can't see.

We tried very hard to have her inside, yet that much chaos and pain in high volume really doesn't enable other people to sleep well. So we had her leave, yet she's stayed in the area even though she can no longer come inside the shelter.

And because there is nowhere for someone in her condition to go, we don't condone her presence, yet we don't trespass her either. And because she is a fellow human being, a warrior surviving in spite of her past abuse and trauma, we make sure she isn't freezing, starving, or dying of thirst.

And sometimes she will ask for food and say we never feed her. And we've gotten to a relationship point where we can tell her that we may not have fed HER, but we did give dinner to someone else who lives inside her body. Yet if SHE is starving now, we'll feed her too.

And her nightly screaming fits...? It took a while to learn that this happens TO her; not BY her.

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And we had another guest inside last night - a woman new to us. And last night, the new woman was talking to people I can't see, and I asked her if she was ok?  
And she explained that the teeter totter room was tottering. And realizing she must live in alternate reality sometimes, I asked if there's anything I can do, and she said no thank you, and then she spoke more quietly to the people I cannot see.

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And tonight, our long time lady was outside screaming and crying, cursing and sobbing. And sobbing and wailing. As she loudly spoke and sobbed at people we don't see.
And she was so loud that our new lady could hear everything our long time lady was saying, and she heard our long time lady's desperate sobbing. And our new lady was set off by the trauma and the drama.

And my co-manager asked our new lady what's up? And our new lady shared that she is very upset because someone is sawing the outside lady in half, and that's why the lady outside is

crying and screaming so loudly and hard.

And my co-manager went outside and talked to our long term lady, and explained that she is setting someone else off, because she is being so loud. And my co-manager asked our long time lady to please move.

And our long term lady asked about that request, and my co-manager shared that the new lady is hearing her cry and sob so loudly, and our new lady cannot sleep because of the noise, and because our new lady thinks someone is sawing our long term lady in half.

And our long term lady said "Well YES! *She* is the one sawing me in half!" (And how do you not crack up at that moment?!)

And yet she moved.

It's a rare moment when alternate realities mesh like that.

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And a few months ago, our long term lady was having a hell of a time. Her different personalities were each in deep pain, so different people inside of her were yelling and cursing, screaming and talking.

And the person we know her as most came to our door in total tears. Explaining that she is exhausted and just wants to SLEEP. But "they" won't let her. They keep talking and screaming. And is it possible that I have earplugs she can use to try to finally get some SLEEP?

And of course we do, so I brought her some earplugs and a hot cocoa.

And the voices still loudly talked and cried, sobbed and screamed outside.

And the tortured person we know best finally came to the door, in complete exhaustion and total tears, and handed me back the earplugs. And told me they don't work.

And what can you say to that?

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These are just two of the many, many people who struggle significantly with mental health, and would be camped downtown, or in a neighborhood, or a strip mall, or in a park, with nowhere else to go.

Neither are a true fit for our shelter, yet we stretch entry criteria a bit sometimes, temporarily, when we can. And tell me, where are the bootstraps they are supposed to pull up?

And where CAN they be when camping bans are implemented, and shelter beds are filled or not a fit? I am so happy that some permanent supported housing options will be coming in 2023. In the meantime, where do they go if we tell them they can't be anywhere?

Thank you for your consideration.

Lynelle Wilcox
1785 Norway Street NE

Salem, Or 97301

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the highest art is the art of living an ordinary life in an extraordinary manner.

and...

with our thoughts, we make the world.

♥♥_..*''*..♥..** ♥*..* ♥*..*..*''*..♥*''*.._ _♥♥_..*''*..♥♥*''*.._ _♥♥



Salem City Council

May 24, 2021

Re: Agenda to Resind the allowance for camping in Cascade Gateway and Wallace Marine Park.

Mr. Mayor and City Councilors:

I am the Community Liaison for Church at the Park (C@P) which is a non-profit organization serving unsheltered individuals and families since 2007 in Marion County. As many of you know we are located right off Cascade Gateway Park and serve some 175 meals a day to the homeless in the area as well as providing additional services much needed in the homeless community.

Regarding the closure of the camps at Cascade Gateway and Wallace Marine Park, we appreciate the City Council's attempt to go slow and respectfully in the closure. Unfortunately, there is nowhere for the unhoused to go. You will be moving people from one area to another with the same outcomes. It is a difficult situation one way or the other. We suggest setting aside a portion of Cascade Gateway Park nearest the Church at the Park for a managed camp. We understand that the Council tried to set aside a portion of the Park before but were unable to corral people into a specific area. In setting a portion of the Park aside as a "managed camp" nearest C@P may help with compliance. We are willing to work with the City on this effort.

We understand the need to clean up the camps for sanitation reasons but that should not cause the closure of the camps. The City's support of C@P's "Trash for Cash" program has been a huge success though limited, but unfortunately is slated to be eliminated. C@P recommends extending the Cash for Trash program indefinitely to begin a regular clean-up of camps in the Salem area. Recently we surveyed our neighbors in the park how best to proceed with trash clean-up of the camp. Here are some of their comments:

- Prior to clean-up the homeless in the area request notification. That could be a flyer posted 2-weeks in advance. Afternoon clean-ups are best between 12:00 p.m. and 4 p.m.

- The homeless also suggested a meeting between themselves and the City Council and workers assigned to clean-up prior to closure or clean-up of the camp. C@P could assist in setting up the meeting. We serve dinner at 4 p.m. each day except Saturdays and could have a special event following dinner – 5:00 p.m. dessert and communion meeting.
- Some of the hurdles experienced by our homeless neighbors in clean-up of garbage:
 - Availability of free trash bags and trash receptacles. There is a need for more dumpsters and routine trash pick-up.
 - Recycling containers would help. There are none at this time.
 - The need for a cart or wagon to haul garbage to receptacles.
- The Cash for Trash is popular among residents. Many people's only option to earn money is can collection and the Cash for Trash gift card of \$10. It works, it just needs to happen more often and for an extended period.

We appreciate your consideration of extending the Cash for Trash program and creating a managed camp on the South end of Cascade Gateway Park. We stand available to brainstorm with the City and our homeless neighbors to come up with a reasonable and workable solution to the outright ban of camping in the Park. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mari Anne Gest
C@P Community Liaison
mgest@msn.com
503-851-8845
2410 Turner Rd. SE
Salem, OR 97302

From: [Mark wigg](#)
To: [citycouncil](#)
Subject: Item 5.a. End Camping in Wallace and Cascade Gateway parks
Date: Monday, May 24, 2021 4:54:15 PM

Dear Mayor and Councilors,

The staff report is incredibly myopic. If you sweep people out of the parks, does staff think they will disappear? The report does not describe the results of this action, probably because they do not want to put in writing what will happen. Hundreds of people will either move downtown or to other places in other parks or public lands. The homeless were not treated humanely while in the parks. The parks were not safe, secure places. Over 30 homeless people died last year because of our lack of care and inadequate facilities. Compare that to the average number of people killed in structure fires each year, one, or the number killed in traffic accidents each year, nine. If the overriding goal of the city is to provide safety, the budget does not reflect that need.

The city needs to acknowledge that it does not have money to house all of Salem's homeless people, but it could afford to build campgrounds for the homeless that have bathrooms, meeting rooms, Wi-Fi, garbage service, and security. You saw that by letting people camp at the Fair Grounds, they were able to make progress on getting jobs and other services. Having people scattered all over the city makes providing services extremely difficult.

Unmanaged camps are dangerous, unsanitary, and unsightly.

Please construct and manage campgrounds for homeless people. It is the only thing you can afford to do for most of them.

Respectfully,
Mark Wigg

From: [Mark wigg](#)
To: [CityRecorder](#)
Subject: Fw: Item 5.a. End Camping in Wallace and Cascade Gateway parks
Date: Monday, May 24, 2021 4:55:19 PM

comments for tonight's meeting.

From: Mark wigg
Sent: Monday, May 24, 2021 4:54 PM
To: salem city council <citycouncil@cityofsalem.net>
Subject: Item 5.a. End Camping in Wallace and Cascade Gateway parks

Dear Mayor and Councilors,

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Please construct and manage campgrounds for homeless people. It is the only thing you can afford to do for most of them.

Respectfully,
Mark Wigg