



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Roberts and City Councilmembers

FROM: Jessica Simulcik Smith, City Clerk

DATE: May 10, 2016

RE: Documents received at 5/9/16 Council Meeting

CC: Debbie Tarry, City Manager
John Norris, Assistant City Manager

Attached hereto are documents received from the public at your May 9, 2016 City Council Business Meeting.

- 1) Written comments regarding homelessness submitted by Brad Lancaster.

COUNCIL TALK
5.9.16

My name is Brad Lancaster. I live in Shoreline.

I have been suggesting a series of changes to Shoreline law and policy that might make Shoreline more hospitable to homeless persons. Tonight, I suggest that the Council could form a volunteer citizen's advisory board to address homelessness in Shoreline. The group could offer reports to the Council and make proposals for needful changes to Shoreline policies. There are several reasons why the Council should take this step:

First, the citizens of Shoreline have shown great compassion and support for homeless people this last long, gray winter. Formalizing that voice within city government could give those concerned citizens a venue for translating their concerns into action.

Second, the homelessness crisis shows no sign of abating. Summers camping in Seattle are generally easier than winter outside. We can expect to see difficult circumstances for families once again as winter settles in. Shoreline should not be the sort of town where children live on the streets.

Third, and perhaps most important, we as Americans have become more and more disconnected from one another over the last fifty years. Our isolation has made us rich, but not made us better. As our social connections have waned, so too our spirits have shriveled. We have become misers, dwelling with our televisions and pets behind locked doors. When in public, we tint our windows, and avert our eyes. We rush about in our little imported cars. Some of us have become moral midgets. The point of a citizen advisory council on homelessness is to care about others. Such committees swim against America's tide of isolation. They pry open our hearts toward one another, toward our homeless neighbors.

I encourage the Council to establish a volunteer citizen's advisory board on issues relating to homelessness. Show that board some respect. Give them a place to meet here in the City's building. Invite them in to report to the Council every quarter. Take their recommendations, when well-conceived, to heart.

Maybe it will make us better people.