

#1-C0014-22

Government Operations, Public Safety & Public Service Committee

CITY CLERKS OFFICE  
EVERETT, MA

February 7, 2022

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The Committee on Government Operations, Public Safety & Public Service met on Monday, February 7, 2022 at 6pm in City Council Chambers.

Members present were Councilor Richard DellIsola, presiding and Councilors Jimmy Le, Irene Cardillo and Stephanie Smith.

The Committee considered a Resolution offered by Councilors Anthony DiPierro, Alfred Lattanzi and Stephanie Smith: That a representative of ISD appear at this meeting to discuss the growing number of tents and homelessness at Santilli Circle.

Assistant City Solicitor Keith Slattery, ISD Director George Lane and Council Sponsors Anthony DiPierro and Alfred Lattanzi were also present.

Councilor Smith acknowledged that the people were gone from the tent encampment but questioned what was to happen with the debris left behind. Mr. Slattery explained that the City became aware of the situation about a month ago and had been sending City staff down there frequently to try to assist these individuals and ultimately utilized the services of Kim Russell of Elliot Housing Services who helped provide alternate housing. He noted that the debris left behind consisted of the tent, cookery items as well as some drug paraphernalia that was considered bio-hazard material so since this was State property the City was waiting for the State Contractor to remediate but the process was delayed due to the recent snowstorm. Councilor DiPierro stated that he had witnessed one of the individuals defecating in plain site with a school nearby and wondered if the City was seeing an increase in homeless individuals due to the City of Boston shutting down the homeless encampments on Massachusetts Avenue. Mr. Slattery responded that it was an interesting question but noted that these were familiar faces and that the City had not seen an influx from Boston. Councilor Le asked if the City had a drop in facility for homeless and Mr. Slattery responded that it did not but instead the City would help in finding temporary housing. Chairman Dell Isola asked if the City had any issues asking these individuals to leave the Santilli Circle tent encampment and Mr. Slattery responded not really. Chairman Dell Isola remarked that he was happy to see the City work together to get things done. Councilor Cardillo asked what the age of these individuals were and Mr. Slattery stated that they were between their late 30's and 40's.

The Committee voted: To report back to the City Council with a recommendation to refer back to Sponsor.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley  
Clerk of Committees

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Members present were Councilor Richard DellIsola, presiding and Councilors Jimmy Le, Irene Cardillo and Stephanie Smith.

The Committee considered a Resolution offered by Councilors Anthony DiPierro: That a representative of Cataldo Ambulance and a representative of the Administration appear at this meeting to discuss delayed response times and the contract between the two parties.

Mayor's Chief of Staff Erin Deveney, Cataldo Ambulance Representatives Dennis Cataldo and Ron Quaranto as well as City Council Sponsor Anthony DiPierro were also present.

Councilor DiPierro explained that he has heard of delayed ambulance response times within the community and wanted to invite the respective parties up to determine if this was exaggerated or not. Mr. Cataldo informed the Committee that his ambulance service has been providing service to the City of Everett for the past 43 years and that they have four ambulances stationed at the Everett facility with two of those ambulances dedicated to the City of Everett. He explained the process on how ambulances are dispatched based on whether it is a high priority or not. He acknowledged that COVID has had a major impact on service and as a result has created a critical staffing shortage with the Governor recently calling up the National Guard to assist with providing ambulance services throughout the State. He noted that Statewide that ambulance services was minimally understaffed by 30% with many ambulance providers also being hurt by poor reimbursement. Councilor DiPierro questioned the reality of the two ambulances being used for the City and Mr. Cataldo responded that yes they were unless they were performing mutual aid to a neighboring community. Ms. Deveney stated that Cataldo Ambulance has been a long standing partner in the City and noted that Cataldo works with Fire Department on 65% of their calls. She stated further that they have been very responsive to City concerns and that the City is working to assist them in trying to bring residents into training to become EMT's with Cataldo. Councilor DiPierro remarked that it was great to hear the collaboration and mentioned that the City's intent to provide ambulance service would be to supplement the service Cataldo currently provides. Councilor Le expressed concern about ambulances being dispatched based on priorities. Mr. Cataldo provided an overview of the severity of the patient as it related to priority of ambulance dispatch with the ambulance being dispatched within a minute. Councilor Le suggested that Cataldo place two ambulances at Encore. Mr. Cataldo acknowledged that they did a lot of work with Encore on medical coverage and that there have been situations where Encore has contracted with them for large events but he noted that they don't have the facilities to house ambulances. Councilor Smith also questioned if the two ambulances stay in the City as mentioned earlier since she had heard otherwise. Mr. Cataldo confirmed again that they do and noted that they respond to over 7,000 requests a year, but reiterated that the recent global burnout of EMT's has created a strain and he requested that the Committee call him with any concerns. Councilor Le concurred on his remark about EMT burnout and stated that the City should appreciate the work EMT's do. Councilor DiPierro responded that there was no lack of appreciation from him.

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Members present were Councilor Richard DellIsola, presiding and Councilors Jimmy Le, Irene Cardillo and Stephanie Smith.

The Committee considered a Resolution offered by Councilor Stephanie Martins: That a representative of the Police Department appear at this meeting to discuss the current policies and safety measures pertaining to sober homes in Everett.

Assistant City Solicitor Keith Slattery, Police Captain Paul Strong and City Council Sponsor Stephanie Martins were also present.

Councilor Smith asked the invited guests if they could update the Committee on complaints of these establishments. Mr. Slattery explained that there were three types of transitional housing – Sober homes, halfway houses and boarding-lodging homes. He explained that sober homes were for the treatment of alcoholism and drug addiction with residents protected through the American Disabilities Act and the homes itself certified by the State Department of Public Health that required daily drug and alcohol testing and counseling. Mr. Slattery noted that these types of places could appear anywhere and that the City wouldn't know who the residents are with the City unable to regulate the number of sober homes allowed throughout the City. Captain Strong acknowledged that the City currently has one Sober home that he is aware of on the corner of Shute and Greenhalge streets but noted that there use to be three. Councilor Le referenced several incidents that occurred at or around this location and Mr. Slattery responded that he was not aware of any of the incidents mentioned. Chairman Dell Isola expressed concern that the City was not notified and Mr. Slattery explained not until they were certified. Councilor Martins requested that these types of places need to be closely monitored and mentioned the complaints she had received that included breaking and entering. Councilor Martins referenced that she had heard that there were 30 similar type facilities throughout the City and questioned if they have regulations and curfews and wondered how they are monitored. Captain Strong referenced a former facility that had a good manager who ran a tight ship and if someone had a bad test result they were out. Captain Strong assured the Committee that the current sober home has been quiet down there for the most part. Mr. Slattery mentioned that there appeared to be some confusion between boarding and sober homes within the City. Councilor Le questioned the type of houses and Mr. Slattery explained that a sober home was for drug and alcohol treatment and required no regulations from City and was funded by the State, he noted a halfway house was for former prisoners and was also funded by State and lastly there were boarding homes which did require regulations from the City and must be approved by the City Council. Councilor Lattanzi referenced concerns he had with a halfway house on 33 Everett Street and requested that it be checked out with residents roaming around at night. He also asked Captain Strong to have another halfway house checked out on Bucknam Street too. Mr. Slattery indicated that the City is made aware of halfway houses.

The Committee voted: To report back to the City Council with a recommendation to refer back to Sponsor.

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Members present were Councilor Richard DellIsola, presiding and Councilors Jimmy Le, Irene Cardillo and Stephanie Smith.

The Committee considered a Resolution offered by Councilors Anthony DiPierro: That Fire Chief Scott Dalrymple appear at this meeting to discuss current fire apparatus and if there is a plan to acquire new equipment

Fire Chief Scott Dalrymple and City Council Sponsor Anthony DiPierro were also present.

Councilor DiPierro asked the Chief if he could provide an assessment of his current equipment. Chief Dalrymple responded that the City currently has 3 engines and 2 ladder trucks. The Chief noted that the 1995 ladder truck was currently being replaced and that he hoped to have the new ladder truck operational by this June. The Chief explained that Engine 3 was scheduled to be replaced in FY24 which would then allow Engine 4 to be utilized as a reserve. The Chief stated that the 2005 Rescue truck was still in good shape and that he expected a new ambulance to be delivered next month with a second ambulance ordered shortly thereafter. Councilor DiPierro asked if there were any issues on implementation of ambulance service. Chief Dalrymple responded that all has been worked out with the Union. Councilor DiPierro asked if the Chief had considered acquiring a tower ladder and the Chief responded that was worth exploring but noted that the cost was approximately \$1.7 million and that it would take up to two years to process an order. Councilor DiPierro informed the Chief that he would support in his efforts to obtain one. Chairman Dell Isola asked where the ambulance would be stationed and Chief Dalrymple explained that the plan would be to station one at Hancock Station with the other to be stationed at Central Station.

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Members present were Councilor Richard DellIsola, presiding and Councilors Jimmy Le, Irene Cardillo and Stephanie Smith.

The Committee considered a Resolution offered by Councilor Alfred Lattanzi: That a representative of ISD and EFD appear at this meeting to discuss complaints regarding the conduct of halfway houses.

Assistant City Solicitor Keith Slattery, Police Captain Paul Strong, Fire Chief Scott Dalrymple, ISD Director George Lane and City Council Sponsor Alfred Lattanzi were also present.

Councilor Smith asked the invited guests if they could update the Committee on complaints of these establishments. Mr. Slattery explained that there were three types of transitional housing – Sober homes, halfway houses and boarding-lodging homes. He explained that sober homes were for the treatment of alcoholism and drug addiction with residents protected through the American Disabilities Act and the homes itself certified by the State Department of Public Health that required daily drug and alcohol testing and counseling. Mr. Slattery noted that these types of places could appear anywhere and that the City wouldn't know who the residents are with the City unable to regulate the number of sober homes allowed throughout the City. Captain Strong acknowledged that the City currently has one Sober home that he is aware of on the corner of Shute and Greenhalge streets but noted that there use to be three. Councilor Le referenced several incidents that occurred at or around this location and Mr. Slattery responded that he was not aware of any of the incidents mentioned. Chairman Dell Isola expressed concern that the City was not notified and Mr. Slattery explained not until they were certified. Councilor Martins requested that these types of places need to be closely monitored and mentioned the complaints she had received that included breaking and entering. Councilor Martins referenced that she had heard that there were 30 similar type facilities throughout the City and questioned if they have regulations and curfews and wondered how they are monitored. Captain Strong referenced a former facility that had a good manager who ran a tight ship and if someone had a bad test result they were out. Captain Strong assured the Committee that the current sober home has been quiet down there for the most part. Mr. Slattery mentioned that there appeared to be some confusion between boarding and sober homes within the City. Councilor Le questioned the type of houses and Mr. Slattery explained that a sober home was for drug and alcohol treatment and required no regulations from City and was funded by the State, he noted a halfway house was for former prisoners and was also funded by State and lastly there were boarding homes which did require regulations from the City and must be approved by the City Council. Councilor Lattanzi referenced concerns he had with a halfway house on 33 Everett Street and requested that it be checked out with residents roaming around at night. He also asked Captain Strong to have another halfway house checked out on Bucknam Street too. Mr. Slattery indicated that the City is made aware of halfway houses.

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