



# The Police Commission

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## CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

January 16, 2020

Honorable Mayor London Breed  
City Hall, Room 200  
#1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Honorable Board of Supervisors  
City Hall, Room 244  
#1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Honorable Mayor Breed and Honorable Board of Supervisors:

At the meeting of the Police Commission on Wednesday, January 15, 2020, the following resolution was adopted:

### **RESOLUTION 20-5**

#### **ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION FOR EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS AND COMPLAINTS REGARDING PRESENCE OF HOMELESS PEOPLE**

WHEREAS, the roots of our local homelessness crisis can be traced, in part, to federal divestment from the funding of affordable housing, and local municipalities have been left to manage the problem without the tax base the federal government enjoys,

WHEREAS, local police departments have been placed by default at the front lines of the homelessness response. As homelessness continues to grow across the country, communities are increasingly turning to police to address the issue. Instead of helping people escape life on the streets, this creates a costly revolving door that circulates individuals experiencing homelessness from corner to corner,

WHEREAS, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness issued (USIAC) a report in August of 2015 outlining best practices for addressing the presence of encampments entitled "Ending Homelessness for People Living in Encampments: Advancing the Dialogue". This report includes guidelines on how to address homelessness and recommends that the linking of homeless people with an appropriate level of housing is the only lasting solution,

WHEREAS, the City and County of San Francisco received last year more than \$44 million in federal McKinney-Vento funding for projects addressing homelessness, and the Department of Housing

ROBERT HIRSCH  
President

DAMALI TAYLOR  
Vice President

PETRA DeJESUS  
Commissioner

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Commissioner

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Commissioner

CINDY ELIAS  
Commissioner

DION-JAY BROOKTER  
Commissioner

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Sergeant Stacy Youngblood  
Secretary

and Urban Development (HUD) has created funding incentives for communities to ensure that persons experiencing homelessness are not deemed criminals because of their use of public space for survival,

WHEREAS, The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals rejected an en banc petition by the City of Boise in *Martin v. Boise* (formerly *Bell v. Boise*), upholding its September 2018 ruling that homeless persons may not be punished for sleeping outside on public property in the absence of adequate alternatives,

WHEREAS, the 2019 San Francisco Homeless Count and Survey found 5,180 unsheltered individuals,

WHEREAS, the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in San Francisco far exceeds the number of available shelter beds,

WHEREAS, the number of police officers devoted to responding to homelessness has increased from 24 in 2017 to over 80 in 2019,

WHEREAS, when calls are made to the city expressing concern for unhoused people, SFPD remains the primary agency dispatched in response,

WHEREAS, a report issued by the Budget and Legislative Analyst's Office in May, 2016 found that police officers dispatched to incidents related to quality of life laws produced limited results given the increase in homelessness on the streets and recommended that the Board of Supervisors should consider implementing a new strategy to address these issues that shifts response to quality of life incidents from the Police Department to other City agencies, including the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing,

WHEREAS alternative models exist such as Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets or "CAHOOTS," a mobile crisis intervention response and support team located in Eugene, Oregon, in which health workers, instead of police, act as first responders,

RESOLVED, that the San Francisco Police Commission calls on the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor's Office to convene a current or new stakeholder group that should include the departments of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, Public Health, the Police Department, other related departments, community organizations and those personally impacted by homelessness tasked with developing alternatives to a police response to homelessness.

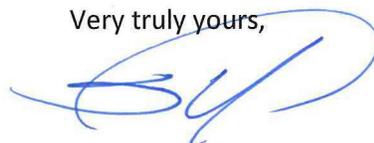
RESOLVED, that this stakeholders group explore alternatives to a police response that exist in the United States and other Countries and weigh the feasibility of implementation of such programs locally.

RESOLVED, that this stakeholders' group should identify funding sources, appropriate dispatch protocol, necessary system changes and appropriate service model to move from a police response to a more effective health and human services response to homelessness.

RESOLVED, that this stakeholders group should meet for a time limited period, and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, Mayor's Office, and appropriate commissions on how to transform our response to homelessness from one led by law enforcement into one led by trained health and human services workers.

AYES: Commissioners Hirsch, Taylor, DeJesus, Mazzucco, Elias, Brookter, Hamasaki

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'SY', enclosed within a large, loopy blue oval.

Sergeant Stacy Youngblood  
Secretary  
San Francisco Police Commission

cc: Chief William Scott