

Resolution 2021-6

Northeast Community Council (NECC)

November 18, 2021

Draft-Resolution of the Northeast Community Council Regarding Municipality Sanctioned Outdoor and Indoor Tent Camps For the Homeless.

Whereas, it is recognized that personal tents for individuals, couples, and families offer more privacy than mass shelters with multiple individual beds placed in open rooms.

Whereas, it is recognized that the climate of Alaska is especially unsuited for late Fall, Winter, and early Spring outdoor long term camping due to cold temperatures, reduced light, extreme weather events, and bugs. Resulting in the homeless struggling to find firewood in municipal parks and or propane tanks or gas for stoves to run heaters in their tents or to cook, risking fire and asphyxiation. Also resulting in theft of such items from local housed residents and businesses. And resulting in wet, damp, frozen, and unsanitary or unsafe conditions for anyone to sleep or dwell in.

Whereas, it is recognized that tents in any setting are not secure to theft, but even more so in outdoor settings.

Whereas, it is recognized that humans in tents have been bear attractants in the muni, resulting in unsafe situations for park users homeless and non homeless alike, especially in areas on the outskirts of town like Muldoon, that are located near vast wooded areas, as in the July 4, 2017, where a homeless woman illegally camping in a tent in Centennial Park had a bear attack her tent, rip through her tent, while she was in the tent, or an earlier event, also in Centennial Park, where a homeless person killed a bear with a makeshift spear while it was attempting to enter his tent. And the many cases where the Alaska Department of Fish and Game had to kill multiple bears that had become habituated to human camp areas as demonstrated in the Anchorage Daily News article dated July 19, 2018, where four bears were killed by Fish and Game after legal campers had their tents entered into by bears, in Centennial Campground.

Whereas, it is recognized that having folks camping in muni parks 24/7, transporting and possessing food, cooking, waste issues, and trash issues all serve to habituate bears to humans causing more bear problems for the housed and unhoused alike, both in and around muni parks. And that having food availability can cause bears to delay hibernation or even skip it.

Whereas, it is recognized that there are numerous places in the municipality where tents could be set up inside heated hallways with access to restrooms with hot and cold running water. Where said tents and their contents could be removed and stored in safe and secure locations during business hours and then reset up during off hours for homeless tenters to have secure heated places to sleep with hot and cold running water in the restrooms.

Whereas, having housed park users witness the homeless struggling to survive in our parks while we have heated houses and sometimes even heated garages and well fed dogs while the homeless often go hungry or walk unreasonable distances to use restrooms at gas stations, or relieve themselves in the parks, can be very unsettling for any park user that cannot just look the other way or exercise selective vision.

Whereas, many of the homeless that attempt to make it out in the woods overnight are often our most desperate and challenged community members, sometimes even special needs.

Whereas, some homeless folks attempting to sleep out end up with frostbite or are thought to be in possession of money, drugs, or alcohol and so are subject to robbery, especially by the underaged that cannot access such items.

Whereas, homeless tenting camps have been known to access water from private home's hose valves and car plug-ins to charge electronics, and to help themselves to other "available" items.

Now, therefore it be resolved, the Northeast Community Council does not support any outdoor muni sanctioned camp, but does recognize that an indoor place where homeless folks can set up their tents for night use in a heated location with hot and cold running water and restrooms in a secure location should be the least we can do for our homeless community members. Outdoor homeless camps are not ethical and cause too many problems for all involved in this climate and should not be sanctioned by the Municipality.

Votes for:

Votes Against:

Abstain:

Motion Passes / **Motion Does Not Pass**

President: _____

Secretary: _____