

October 3, 2021

Margaret Schroeder
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TO: Chris Hladick, City Manager
Mayor Alice Ruby
Dillingham City Council: Chris Napoli, Bill Rodawalt, Aksel Buholm, Curt Armstrong, Andy Anderson and Gregg Marxmiller

RE: Homelessness

Dear City Manager, Mayor and Council Members;

I believe the issue of homelessness should be under the umbrella of the City of Dillingham. I understand that the belief is that the volunteers and organizations in Dillingham are handling the situation. This is not an accurate assumption. Yes, the volunteers and organizations are a tremendous asset to have, but the actual overseeing of the issue needs to be under the City of Dillingham. We are citizens of Dillingham and I believe it is the City's responsibility to ensure that all citizens of Dillingham or people who enter the city limits must be treated with professionalism and respect. The City has the power to instate rules and regulations to handle this atrocious and deadly issue. I've heard a lot of the reasons why others should handle this. To name a few; no money, no staff to handle another issue or the volunteers are doing a good job in handling this. The City must have the courage and determination to find ways to obtain funding and maintain staff to oversee this issue. Once a person is hired for this position, then it's feasible to incorporate organizations and volunteers in a committee to meet, formulate and discuss ideas AND come up with a solution.

As we all know, numerous meetings have been conducted by volunteers, who have graciously contributed their time to oversee the meetings. A lot of groundwork, wonderful ideas and research has been shared by these volunteers and organizations. Unfortunately what I've noticed is that a lot of ideas are discussed but we are lacking the City of Dillingham's input. It is imperative that the City become involved and take the leading role. Once the City commits to this, they can then focus on funding through grants or appropriated monies for this department. There may already be one organization that has set aside monies to contribute.

As was discussed in the last meeting, which unfortunately many interested parties did not attend because of prior commitments or being the first meeting after the summer, I believe it was constructive. A couple feasible, short term ideas were brought up and need to be discussed further.

In conclusion, I am writing this letter to request the City of Dillingham put the homelessness issue on their Agenda at the next City Council Meeting. It's obvious this issue is not going away and the City must step up to their duty to the citizens of Dillingham.

Thank you for your action on the matter.