

In regards to consent agenda item #F1 - Public Health contracts to help those that lack housing in our community who are COVID-19 positive or subject to the State Health Officer's isolation and quarantine order. On September 8th, the City Commission unanimously approved the Emergency Occupancy Agreement for those that do not have housing. At the same meeting, the Commission unanimously approved the acceptance of funding from the State COVID-19 Cares Act with the entire budget for these contracts for COVID-19 positive isolation and quarantine services for vulnerable populations, which included security/compliance officers and shelter management services. These two items are on the agenda tonight to provide contracts for what the Commission has agreed to expend on the Task Force's behalf with funding from the State.

These services have been provided from the State since early Spring through July. A young family with an infant who was quarantined due to COVID-19 and had nowhere to go has been sheltered under this program, as have been some chronic, transitional and some episodic homeless individuals. We have sheltered multiple individuals who have been discharged from local hospitals, positive with COVID-19, with nowhere to go. The local shelters will not accept anyone who is COVID-19 positive or that doesn't have a recent negative test. These contracts put in place formally what the State had been doing in Bismarck and 7 other cities since March but now turns that obligation to the local jurisdictions.

The State Health Officer has had orders for self-isolation in place for COVID-19 positive individuals and self-quarantine for household contacts since this spring. These individuals wish to follow those State orders but have unstable or no housing due to their vulnerable status. All sheltering locations have required security presence in order to allow the continuation of this program. These are individuals REQUESTING sheltering who also happen to have a COVID-19 situation that PROHIBITS them from existing homeless facilities.

This sheltering contract however, is clear that this is only for individuals with a COVID-19 situation that lack housing. The security contract references vulnerable populations to make clear the standard of care expected of their employees.

The need for security is the request of the motel. There were issues with other individuals going into isolation rooms. There were issues with illegal drugs, parties that were occurring, damage to motel property and other items. The security

services, which were in place this Spring throughout the State, are aware that they cannot forcibly keep anyone in their rooms. If a person leaves, this is reported by the security to let the Department of Health know. If an individual violates the State isolation or quarantine orders, the police are notified to write a report, which is forwarded to the county State's Attorney. Verified as of noon on Monday, no such charges have ever been forwarded in Burleigh County this year.

This contract and the city do not force members of the public to take any test. The need for housing is provided to the City by referral from a homeless shelter or other service provider when the individual is asking for assistance. The budget is approved, which is only through December 31, 2020. The contract is clear that if there is no funding, the services do not continue.

Here are the facts:

*There has not been any forced detainment of individuals served by the COVID 19 homeless sheltering program.

*Individuals served are reaching out for shelter, many as they leave the hospital.

*These services assist people who must isolate or quarantine but have no housing.

*The budget and plan was unanimously approved by the Commission at the September 8th, inclusive of all these items.

*There is no plan, nor does this contract provide, for forced detainment of anyone' nor does this extend to children, families or individuals picked up off the street, as falsely rumored on social media.

*The City cannot force any citizen to comply or to stay in their rooms.

*This is the way to provide people who want housing, who are subject to COVID-19 isolation and quarantine orders, shelter. If we do not get security to make sure damage is not done to rooms or having multiple individuals go into an isolated room, no motel will provide that shelter. Without this service, families, veterans and vulnerable individuals have nowhere to go, now as the weather becomes colder. That is what these contracts attempt to solve and nothing else.