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- City of Novato, City Manager Adam McGill, Mayor Pat Eklund, Mayor Pro
- Tem Eric Lucan, Chief of Police Mathew McCaffrey, Public Works Director Chris Blunk

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

MARIN COUNTY HOMELESS UNION, a local affiliate of the CALIFORNIA HOMELESSNESS UNION, on behalf of itself and those it represents; CAMP COMPASSION, a Homeless Union-affiliated encampment in Lee Gerner Park; Individual Plaintiffs JASON SARRIS; LEA DEANGELO; ZACH BOULWÂRE; CARRIE

HEALON, LISA NICOLE JOHNSON; DONALD HOBBS; DEBORAH ANN MIROMONTES; LISA JOHNSON;

CHARLES TALBOT: BETHANY

ALLEN; MICHELANGELO MONTEZ; DEBORAH ANN MIRAMONTES;

KALANI WELSCH, and other similarly situated homeless persons including

23 current residents of Camp Compassion homeless encampment,

Plaintiffs,

V.

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26 CITY OF NOVATO; CITY MANAGER ADAM MCGILL, MAYOR PAT 27 EKLUND, MAYOR PRO TEM ERIC 28

LUCAN, CHIEF OF POLICE MATHEW MCCAFFREY, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR CHŔIS BLUNK. CASE NO.: 4:21-cv-05401-YGR

[Assigned to the Hon. Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers |

DEFENDANT CITY OF NOVATO'S MOTION TO MODIFY TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER UNDER FRCP 65(B)(4)

Hearing Date: July 26, 2021 Time: 1:30 p.m. Ctrm:

Case No. 4:21-cv-05401-YGR

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Defendants.

NOTICE OF MOTION

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on July 26, 2021, at 1:30 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, in the courtroom of the Honorable Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers, United States District Court for the Northern District of California, Courtroom 1 on the 4th Floor of the United States Courthouse, 1301 Clay Street, Oakland, CA 94612, Defendant City of Novato ("City") will, and hereby does, move pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. Proc. 65 to modify the temporary restraining order this Court entered on July 15, 2021. The hearing will be held by Zoom Webinar.

This motion is based on this Notice of Motion and Motion, the Memorandum of Points and Authorities, the Declaration of Adam McGill and exhibits thereto, the Declaration of Mary Kay Sweeney and exhibits thereto, the Declaration of Jeffrey Walter and exhibits thereto, the concurrently filed [Proposed] Order, the documents on file with the Court, all other matters judicially noticeable, and such further evidence and argument as the Court may permit.

DATED: July 23, 2021

COLANTUONO, HIGHSMITH & WHATLEY, PC

/s/ Liliane M. Wyckoff

RMEN A. BROCK MELA K. GRAHAM IANE M. WYCKOFF ttorney for Defendants City of Novato, City Manager Adam

McGill, Mayor Pat Eklund, Mayor Pro Tem Eric Lucan, Chief of Police Mathew McCaffrey, Public Works Director Chris

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MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES

I. INTRODUCTION

Plaintiffs filed this lawsuit and ex parte application on July 14, 2021 seeking to enjoin the City of Novato ("City") from enforcing its recently enacted ordinances limiting camping within the City to specified locations and times. Although Plaintiffs' counsel spoke with the City Attorney on July 14, 2021, and again on July 15, 2021, counsel failed to tell the City Attorney that Plaintiffs intended to have their ex parte application for a temporary restraining order heard the next day on July 15, 2021, and none of the papers delivered to the City on July 14, 2021, indicated that such an order would be sought from the Court the following or any other day. Walter Decl., ¶¶ 2–3. Thus, the TRO was issued on July 15, 2021 without opportunity for the City to appear, present evidence, or otherwise oppose the application. The one-sided nature of the TRO proceedings also deprived this Court of necessary information relevant to the scope of the TRO, as Plaintiffs failed to inform the Court of the City's recently enacted program reserving additional shelter beds at a local homeless shelter that could be made available to those currently camping at Lee Gerner Park.¹

The City makes this motion in order to clarify and define the scope of the restriction on the City's ability to "remove" persons camping at Lee Gerner Park. Again, this omission stems from Plaintiffs' failure to inform the Court that the City was in the process of ensuring additional shelter space for Plaintiffs and other homeless persons. It was anticipated that some or all of the persons illegally camping at the Park would take advantage of the opportunity to re-locate to the local homeless shelters, including the City's offer of transportation. It is uncertain whether moving and transporting such homeless persons from the Park violates the TRO. The concentration of people living at the Park has generated thousands of pounds of garbage and debris, polluted the

¹ Plaintiffs' Complaint describes the encampment at Lee Gerner Park as "Camp Compassion." The Complaint does not define the boundaries of this "Camp" nor does it specify whether all the persons currently camping in Lee Gerner Park are alleged to be members of the camp, know that they are alleged to members of the camp, or have consented to be represented by the Plaintiffs in this lawsuit.

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environment, created health and safety problems and killed some of the plants and flora that once thrived in the Park. McGill Decl. ¶ 8, Exh. 3. There are serious concerns about the persons living in the Park using fires or open flames. McGill Decl. ¶¶ 11–12. The fire danger is real, but the TRO prevents the City from taking action to remove persons living in the Park who refuse to desist from lighting fires while living there. In addition, there are those who are part of Plaintiffs' group who may commit crimes unassociated with sitting, lying or sleeping at the Park, such as theft, assault or other crimes. The TRO precludes the City from arresting and removing such persons from the Park.

Finally, by this motion, the City is requesting that if it is permitted to offer beds in and transportation to local homeless shelters to Plaintiffs and others, and such offers are accepted, the City be authorized (i) to prevent other persons from coming onto the Park to live and (ii) to remove persons who first began living at the Park after July 15, 2021, and who refuse to accept offers of shelter at local homeless shelters. This will operate to reduce the likelihood that the adverse impacts of the encampment on the Park are exacerbated over time and afford the City the opportunity to restore the Park to usable form for all members of the public.

II. **BACKGROUND**

The City disputes many of the allegations made in Plaintiffs' Complaint, as well as many of the factual assertions in Plaintiffs' ex parte application for a temporary restraining order. Those disputed facts will be addressed more fully in the City's response to this Court's Order to Show Cause for Preliminary Injunction, due July 27, 2021. This motion briefly addresses only those background matters relevant to the City's instant request for modification of the TRO.

Homeward Bound of Marin ("Homeward Bound") is the main provider of emergency shelter and supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness in Marin County. Sweeney Decl., ¶ 2. Since 2000, Homeward Bound has operated an 80bed emergency shelter for the homeless in the City called the New Beginnings Center. Sweeney Decl., ¶ 5. The New Beginnings Center provides intensive support services,

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individualized counseling, daily meals, transit assistance, and links to community resources to help people overcome their barriers to housing and move out of homelessness for good. Sweeney Decl., ¶ 7. It also offers on-site programs for employment skills training, including an award-winning 10-week intensive course in culinary basics and paid apprenticeships in Janitorial and Building Maintenance as well as Landscaping and Garden Maintenance. Sweeney Decl. ¶ 8.

The New Beginnings Center has implemented protocols for COVID-19 and bedbugs to ensure the safety of its residents. All individuals admitted to the New Beginnings Center are tested for COVID-19, dormitory beds and dining tables are spaced to ensure social distancing, and clinicians conduct regular vaccination clinics on site offering all residents COVID-19 vaccines. Sweeney Decl., ¶¶ 11–14. The New Beginnings Center has never experienced a single resident testing positive for the COVID-19 virus. Sweeney Decl., ¶ 18. All new clients are required to shower and launder clothing, and their personal belongings are treated at intake to kill any bed-bugs. Sweeney Decl., ¶ 22. When bedbugs are found onsite, they are immediately treated by in-house maintenance staff, with professional pest control companies brought in as necessary. Sweeney Decl. ¶ 23.

On July 13, 2021, the Novato City Council authorized the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") with Homeward Bound to provide immediate placement at the New Beginnings Center of up to 15 homeless individuals in Novato. McGill Decl. ¶ 2, Exh. 1, at pp.1–2. The services associated with this placement include housing, food, case management assistance, medical coordination services, job placement and training, and transitional/permanent housing referrals. McGill Decl., Exh. 2 at p. 1. If more than 15 individuals experiencing homelessness in Novato are willing to accept the placement offer, the City has made arrangements to refer those individuals to Homeward Bound's Kerner shelter in the City of San Rafael. McGill Decl., ¶ 3, Exh. 1 at p. 2. Any person who accepts a placement offer will additionally be offered free storage (paid by the City) of any personal property in excess

of that permitted at the New Beginnings Center (sometimes referred to as "New Beginnings") or the Kerner shelter (sometimes referred to as "Kerner") for 90 days. McGill Decl., ¶ 4, Exh. 1 at p. 2.

III. ARGUMENT

A. Legal Standard

As the Supreme Court recognizes, "our entire jurisprudence runs counter to the notion of court action taken before reasonable notice and an opportunity to be heard has been granted both sides of a dispute." *Granny Goose Foods, Inc. v. Bhd. Of Teamsters & Auto Truck Drivers*, 415 U.S. 423, 438-39 (1974). The Ninth Circuit has held that there are "very few circumstances justifying the issuance of an ex parte TRO." *Reno Air Racing Ass'n, Inc. v. McCord*, 452 F.3d 1126, 1131 (9th Cir. 2006). They are permitted only when notice is impossible or when notice would "render fruitless the further prosecution of the action." *Id.* (quoting *Am. Can Co. v. Mansukhani*, 742 F.2d 314, 322 (7th Cir. 1984)).

Rule 65 expressly authorizes a party subject to a temporary restraining order issued ex parte to "move to dissolve or modify the order" on 2 days' notice to the opposing party. Fed. R. Civ. P. 65(b)(4).

B. Modification is Appropriate Because the TRO was Issued Without Notice

As detailed in the Declaration of Jeffery Walter, the City was not advised by Plaintiffs or their counsel that they intended to request this Court issue a TRO on July 15, 2021. Plaintiffs' counsel and the City Attorney spoke on the phone twice before the TRO was issued, and yet Plaintiffs' counsel failed to provide him or any other city official the notice required by FRCP 65 and Local Rule 65-1. Walter Decl., ¶ 2–3. In its TRO, this Court states Plaintiffs' proof of service indicated that on July 14, 2021, six City officials were electronically and personally served with Plaintiffs' Complaint and supporting materials. In truth and in fact, none of those City officials were personally served at any time. Only the City Manager and City Attorney were electronically served,

and were so served after 5:00 p.m. on July 14, 2021. Walter Decl., ¶ 5. Such failures constitute grounds to dissolve the TRO entirely. See *Reno Air*, *supra*, 452 F.3d at p. 1132.

Plaintiffs' ex parte application and Complaint neglect to inform the Court of the existence of the Homeward Bound MOU and the City's intentions to offer homeless persons camping at Lee Gerner Park the opportunity to move to Homeward Bound's emergency shelter facilities. This omission is significant because the leading Ninth Circuit precedent holds "as long as there is **no option of sleeping indoors**, the government cannot criminalize indigent, homeless people for sleeping outdoors, on public property, on the false premise they had a choice in the matter." *Martin v. City of Boise*, (9th Cir. 2019) 920 F.3d 584, 617 (emphasis added). Explaining further, the Ninth Circuit stated "we in no way dictate to the City that it must provide sufficient shelter for the homeless, or allow anyone who wishes to sit, lie, or sleep on the streets...at any time and at any place." *Id.* Equally importantly, the *Boise* court left the door open for local jurisdictions to regulate how, when, and where homeless persons may occupy public property.

Our holding does not cover individuals who do have access to adequate temporary shelter, whether because they have the means to pay for it or because it is realistically available to them for free, but who choose not to use it. Nor do we suggest that a jurisdiction with insufficient shelter can never criminalize the act of sleeping outside. Even where shelter is unavailable, an ordinance prohibiting sitting, lying, or sleeping outside at particular times or in particular locations might well be constitutionally permissible. So, too, might an ordinance barring the obstruction of public rights of way or the erection of certain structures. Whether some other ordinance is consistent with the Eighth Amendment will depend, as here, on whether it punishes a person for lacking the means to live out the "universal and unavoidable consequences of being human" in the way the ordinance prescribes.

Id. at 617, n. 8. Thus, *Martin v. Boise* allows cities to prohibit camping when individuals have access to adequate temporary shelter, and to impose reasonable time and place

restrictions on daytime camping.

The City will establish in its opposition to the Order to Show Cause that its method of enforcing the City's camping restrictions complies with *Martin v. Boise*. In the meantime, the City respectfully requests this Court consider the several narrow modifications requested by the City here. These modifications will allow the City to provide the contracted housing services to the homeless living at the Park and also provide the City and the community some assurance that the adverse impacts the encampment is causing the Park can be ameliorated to some degree.

C. The TRO Should be Modified to Permit the City to Offer Shelter Beds to Current Campers in Lee Gerner Park

The July 15, 2021 TRO prohibits the City from "closing Camp Compassion at Lee Gerner Park or otherwise removing those encamped therein." The terms of the order are unclear as to whether an offer to relocate a person currently camping at Lee Gerner Park to the New Beginnings Center or the Kerner facility and assisting that person to move to those facilities would constitute "removing" that person in violation of the TRO. The City therefore seeks clarification and, if necessary, modification of the TRO to address this issue.

The City's MOU with Homeward Bound guarantees that Homeward Bound will reserve 15 beds at the New Beginnings Center for persons directly referred by the City. McGill Decl., Exh. 2. The City desires to make some or all of these 15 beds available to those persons currently camping in Lee Gerner Park. If a Lee Gerner Park camper were to accept this offer, that person would be offered transportation to the shelter, and asked to remove all his/her possessions from Lee Gerner Park. Any possessions that could not be taken with the person to New Beginnings Center would be stored at the City's expense for 90 days. McGill Decl. ¶ 4. It is unclear whether extending this offer to persons currently camping at Lee Gerner Park, removing their possessions and, where needed, transporting those persons to New Beginnings or Kerner would constitute "removal" of that person in violation of the TRO.

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The City is informed and believes that Plaintiffs will not be prejudiced by a modification of the TRO to allow the City to extend placement offers to those persons currently camping in Lee Gerner Park. In a letter to the City, Plaintiffs' counsel indicated his belief that the TRO would not prevent the City from offering placement at New Beginnings Center. Walter Decl. Exh. 8. Moreover, access to shelter and the other services offered by New Beginnings Center can only benefit any person who accepts the City's offer.

D. The TRO Should be Modified to Permit the City to Restrict New Occupants from Moving to Lee Gerner Park

Rule 65(d) requires that any injunction or restraining order be "specific in terms" and describe "in reasonable detail, and not by reference to the complaint or other document, the act or acts sought to be restrained." FRCP 65(d). The TRO does not define the scope of the term "those encamped therein" when prohibiting the City from closing "Camp Compassion." Camp Compassion is merely a label Plaintiffs have attached to an undefined and changing group of people assembled within an undefined area of land. The TRO's reliance on this label leaves the City to guess at who is and who is not covered by the TRO's interdictions. Too, the Complaint alleges that the camp consists of about 30 persons. Complaint at ¶1. But the named Plaintiffs comprise only thirteen persons. And, the City's records show that as of July 22, 2021, eighteen persons were camping within Lee Gerner Park. There are no facts alleged that the persons living at the Park but not named as Plaintiffs consider themselves living in or part of this so-called "Camp Compassion."

Furthermore, it is unclear whether the TRO was intended to prevent the City from removing any person camped at "Camp Compassion" or elsewhere at the Park at the time the TRO was issued, or if the TRO was intended to prevent the City from removing any person who at any time begins camping in Lee Gerner Park during the term of the TRO. The City respectfully requests the Court modify the TRO to clarify that the City is restrained from removing only those persons who were encamped within Lee Gerner

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Park as of July 15, 2021. The City should not be restrained from taking action to prevent persons who wish to come to and live at the Park and/or remove persons who began camping in Lee Gerner Park after the effective date of the TRO and decline housing offers at the Homeward Bound shelters.

As detailed above, the City wishes to offer placement at the New Beginnings Center to persons currently camping at Lee Gerner Park, including those who consider themselves part of "Camp Compassion." Should this Court permit the City to do so, there will likely be additional space available within "Camp Compassion" as campers vacate the park for the shelter. The City reasonably believes based on past experience with the Lee Gerner Park encampment that if any space within the encampment becomes available, more persons will be recruited to move to the park. McGill Decl., ¶¶ 14-15. The park has already suffered a significant amount of environmental damage which will cost the City between \$200,000 and \$250,000 to remediate. McGill Decl., \P 8. A carte blanche TRO that allows any person to establish a campsite in Lee Gerner Park and thereby be protected from removal will almost certainly lead to an expansion of the encampment, which in turn will damage more of the park and increase remediation costs that must be borne by the City's taxpayers.

Thus, the City requests a modification of the TRO that expressly limits the restriction on removal to those persons encamped in Lee Gerner Park on July 15, 2021, and which permits the City to take reasonable enforcement efforts to prevent any person who was not encamped in Lee Gerner Park on that date from establishing a new campsite within Lee Gerner Park.

E. The TRO Should be Modified to Permit the City to Enforce its Fire Safety Laws

The TRO prohibits the City from enforcing Novato Municipal Code section 14-20.5. This code section prohibits the lighting and maintaining of a fire on public property, except in an apparatus or receptacle (such as a BBQ) owned by the City. Under the current language of the TRO, therefore, the City cannot cite any person anywhere

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in the City for lighting a fire on public property. If the City is restrained from enforcing this code section during the pendency of the TRO, it will create a significant risk of fire danger within the City.

The City, like the rest of California, is currently experiencing a heightened risk of fire. It is imperative that the City be allowed to use all resources at its disposal, including public nuisance citations, to protect the public from fire danger. As shown in the images attached to the Complaint, the campers in Lee Gerner Park use propane grills to cook within the park. Dkt 1-1 at p. 15 [Sarris Decl.]; McGill Decl., ¶ 11. This practice poses a significant fire risk to the City, as Novato is currently on the California Communities at Risk List and has 45,992 burnable acres. McGill Decl., ¶ 12. The City has already been subject to two Red Flag warnings this summer, on May 7, 2021 and July 18, 2021. McGill Decl., ¶ 13.

The City therefore requests the Court modify the TRO to permit the City to enforce Novato Municipal Code section 14-20.5 throughout the City, including at Lee Gerner Park. At a minimum, the City must be allowed to issue citations for violation of Municipal Code section 14-20.5 to persons camping in Lee Gerner Park. In light of the significant fire risk posed by the use of propane grills in the Park, the City further requests that the Court permit the City to remove any camper who receives two or more citations for violation of Municipal Code section 14-20.5 from Lee Gerner Park.

F. The TRO Should be Modified to Expressly Permit the City to **Enforce Public Safety Laws within Lee Gerner Park**

Finally, under a strict reading of the TRO, the City cannot arrest or detain any person covered by the TRO even if that person commits a crime unrelated to camping in the park because doing so could constitute a "removal." The City has received multiple reports that the persons camping in Lee Gerner Park are engaging in unlawful activity such as public urination and defecation, harassment of community members attempting to enjoy the park, harassment of staff at the businesses abutting the park, and package theft. McGill Decl., ¶¶ 9–10. The City must have the power to address these

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public safety issues if and when they arise. The public good is not served by preventing the City from enforcing its laws within the boundary of Lee Gerner Park.

The City respectfully requests that the Court modify its TRO to clarify that the City is permitted to arrest and thereby remove any person camping at Lee Gerner Park who commits a crime unrelated to camping, sitting, lying, or sleeping at the Park.

IV. CONCLUSION

The ex parte TRO issued on July 15, 2021 fails to account for the availability of shelter beds within the City, and fails to specifically define the scope of the restriction of the removal of persons encamped at Lee Gerner Park. Pursuant to FRCP 65(b)(4), the City respectfully requests the Court modify the TRO as follows:

- (1) Permit the City to offer voluntary placement at the New Beginnings Center, (or at Kerner if more than 15 people accept the New Beginnings Offer) to persons currently encamped at Lee Gerner Park, including offering transportation and storage of personal property;
- (2) Clarify that the restriction on removal applies only to those persons encamped in Lee Gerner Park on July 15, 2021;
- (3) Permit the City to take reasonable enforcement efforts to prevent any person who was not encamped in Lee Gerner Park as of July 15, 2021 from establishing a new campsite within the park;
- (4) Permit the City to remove any person who was not encamped in Lee Gerner Park as of July 15, 2021 and who does not accept an offer of shelter from the City;
- (5) Permit the City to enforce Municipal Code section 14-20.5 throughout the City, and to remove any person who receives two or more citations under Municipal Code section 14-20.5 from Lee Gerner Park; and
- (6) Clarify that the City may arrest or detain and thereby remove any person within Lee Gerner Park who commits a crime unrelated to camping, sitting, lying, or sleeping at the Park.

	1	DATED: July 23, 2021	COLANTUONO, HIGHSMITH & WHATLEY, PC
	2		WHATLET, TC
	3		/s/ Liliane M. Wyckoff
	4		JEFFREY A. WALTER
	5		CARMEN A. BROCK PAMELA K. GRAHAM LILLANE M. WYCKOFF
	6		PAMELA K. GRAHAM LILIANE M. WYCKOFF Attorney for Defendants City of Novato et al.
	7		City of Novato et al.
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Marin County Homeless Union v. City of Novato, et al. United States District Court, Northern District Case No. 4:21-cv-05401-YGR

I, McCall L. Williams, declare:

I am employed in the County of Los Angeles, State of California. I am over the age of 18 and not a party to the within action. My business address is 790 East Colorado Boulevard, Suite 850, Pasadena, California 91101. My email address is: MWilliams@chwlaw.us. On July 23, 2021, I served the document(s) described as **DEFENDANT CITY OF NOVATO'S MOTION TO MODIFY TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER UNDER FRCP 65(B)(4),** on the interested parties in this action as follows:

BY ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION: I hereby certify that I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of the Court for the United States District Court, Northern District by using the CM/ECF system on July 23, 2021. I certify that all participants in the case are registered CM/ECF users and that service will be accomplished by the USDC, Northern District CM/ECF system.

I declare that I am employed in the offices of a member of the State Bar of this Court at whose direction the service was made. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the above is true and correct.

Executed on July 23, 2021, at Pasadena, California.

/s/McCall Williams
McCall L. Williams

Case No. 4:21-cv-05401-YGR