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- 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

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Colantuono, Highsmith & Whatley, PC 790 E. Colorado Blvd., Suite 850 Pasadena, CA 91101 SONOMA CA 054774

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 BOULWARE; CARRIE HEALON, LISA NICOLE JOHNSON; DONALD HOBBS; DEBORAH ANN MIROMONTES; LISA JOHNSON: CHARLES TALBOT; BETHANY

19 ALLEN; MICHELANGELO MONTEZ; **DEBORAH ANN MIRAMONTES:**

KALANI WELSCH, and other similarly situated homeless persons including current residents of Camp Compassion 21

homeless encampment,

Plaintiffs,

V.

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24 CITY OF NOVATO; CITY MANAGER 25 ADAM MCGILL, MAYOR PAT EKLUND, MAYOR PRO TEM ERIC LUCAN. CHIEF OF POLICE 26

MATHEW MCCAFFREY, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR CHRIS BLUNK. 27

Defendants.

CASE NO.: 4:21-cv-05401-YGR

[Assigned to the Hon. Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers

DECLARATION OF POLICE OFFICER JOSHUA WAX IN SUPPORT OF DEFENDANT'S OPPOSITION TO THE ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE REGARDING PRELIMINARY INJUNTION

Hearing Date: August 9, 2021 Time: 12:00 p.m. Ctrm:

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

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DECLARATION OF JOSHUA WAX

I, JOSHUA WAX, declare as follows:

- 1. I am a police officer in the City of Novato Police Department. I began working at the Novato Police Department ("NPD") in August of 2015 and began work as a police officer at the NPD in December of 2016. I was assigned to the Novato Response Team ("NRT") in July 2019 and have been there since. Unless otherwise stated, I have personal knowledge of the matters set forth herein and if called upon as a witness, I could competently testify thereto.
- 2. I make this declaration in support of Defendants' opposition to the order to show cause regarding the preliminary injunction.

Background of the Novato Response Team

- 3. As part of the NRT, I am one of the "Homeless Liaisons" for the Novato Police Department (as designated by the NRT Sergeant). In my duties as a Homeless Liaison, I connect with unhoused individuals across the City of Novato to provide them with assistance and services. I also work in partnership with many different organizations, social workers, behavioral health specialists, recovery coaches, and outreach workers to provide a wide variety of services to unhoused subjects in the City of Novato. Some of the resources we provide and coordinate to provide include resources for food, income, employment, mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, and housing.
- 4. I conduct outreach almost daily with the unhoused community at encampments throughout the City of Novato. I conduct outreach alone, with my partner Officer Alejandro Muller, and with social services, in collaborative efforts to provide housing and other services to our unhoused community members.

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Officer Wax's Training

- 5. In July of 2019, I attended a POST-certified De-escalation and Tactical Communication (ICAT) training. This training consisted of approximately 16 hours of instruction in communication, defensive tactics, and de-escalation tools.
- 6. In December of 2019, I attended a POST-certified Field Training Officer training. This training consisted of approximately 40 hours of instruction on training other Police Officers on how to function in their capacity as a Field Training Officer.
- 7. In April of 2020, I attended a POST-certified LGBT Awareness for Law Enforcement training. This training consisted of approximately four hours of instruction about LGBT community awareness.
- 8. In April of 2021, I attended a POST-certified Crisis Intervention Training. This training consisted of approximately 32 hours of instruction on interacting with subjects in crisis, mental health issues, substance abuse issues, and communication skills.
- 9. In May of 2021, I attended a POST-certified Basic Peer Support Counseling for Law Enforcement training. This training consisted of approximately 24 hours of instruction about trauma, Post Traumatic Stress, self-care, and providing support to law-enforcement peers.
- 10. I have attended multiple homeless-related webinars and online trainings during my career.

Overview of Outreach Efforts

- 11. As an Officer assigned to the NRT, I work with several organizations to provide aid (such as housing opportunities) to unhoused individuals in Novato.
- 12. I meet with a variety of social workers on a weekly basis to come up with action plans for unhoused individuals. I work daily with two social workers who participate in daily outreach efforts for our unhoused population. Community Action Marin/CARE Team III Social Worker Debra Walker focuses on assistance such as

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finding housing, job opportunities and obtaining benefits. Librado Garcia, the social worker assigned to NRT on behalf of the Marin Multi-Cultural Center and Behavior Health and Recovery Services, has a similar focus but is also a Case Manager and Behavioral Health and Recovery Coach. Mr. Garcia's position is funded via Proposition 47.

- Approximately 20% of my work week is utilized to connect with social 13. service providers to provide our unhoused community with pathways to housing and other solutions. Specifically, through these meetings we learn about homelessness, coordinate resources for our unhoused community, and create action plans to assist our unhoused community to housing solutions. We use an individualized approach. I know all members of unhoused communities have different struggles, hardships, and needs. Therefore, I treat each person individually and work with social workers to come up with individualized plans that will suit each person.
- As a team (NRT and social services), we have offered every unhoused 14. person we have contacted an opportunity to receive some sort of assistance. The housing services we have offered to unhoused community members include but are not limited to the Kerner Shelter, the New Beginnings Center (Homeward Bound), Salvation Army programs (San Francisco, Napa, Las Vegas), faith-based organizations in Santa Rosa, the Helen Vine Detoxification facility, the Center Point residential treatment facility, Job Corps, various rehabilitation programs, motels, family reconnections, and more.
- Approximately 60% of my work week is comprised of conducting 15. outreach with our unhoused community members.
- 16. I use my legal discretion to assist the unhoused community. During my hundreds of outreach efforts at Lee Gerner Park, I have witnessed dozens and dozens of Novato Municipal Code violations and infractions such as littering, dogs off leash, consuming alcohol in parks, smoking in parks, and more. Rather than issuing citations

- 17. My primary outreach goal has been and continues to be to provide the unhoused community with housing solutions, not citations. The citations and arrests I made involving the unhoused community were conducted due to a legal or moral need, or because the individual had been warned several times of the violation(s) and continued to commit the violation(s).
- and example of the discretion I used to better assist the unhoused community involved unhoused camper and Plaintiff Jason Sarris. Plaintiff Sarris, the self-proclaimed leader of the encampment at Lee Gerner Park, had an outstanding bench warrant issued for his arrest due to a felony drug possession case. Plaintiff Sarris had voluntarily left Lee Gerner Park and was staying at the Courtyard Marriott hotel in Novato. He was planning on using the hotel stay to get back on his feet in preparation to move into a housing unit in Petaluma and wanted a job. Rather than booking Plaintiff Sarris into the Marin County Jail pursuant to this warrant (which may have delayed his housing plan), I elected to issue Plaintiff Sarris a citation for his felony warrant which is not a common practice at NPD (NP20-2169). Further, NRT Officer Muller assisted with contacting the Safeway in Novato—located on Nave Drive next to Sarris' hotel—and spoke with a manager about employment for Plaintiff Sarris. Plaintiff Sarris left the hotel, apparently did not follow-up with Safeway, and became angry with me.

Difficulties with Unhoused Campers Rejecting Assistance

19. In my experience as a Homeless Liaison for the NPD, my greatest difficulty has been trying to convince members of the unhoused community to accept any sort of shelter option. I have "thought outside the box" by not limiting solutions to shelters. The NRT has assisted unhoused subjects to reconnect with family, enter mental health treatment and substance abuse treatment, seek out faith-based communities, seek job programs, and more. As I am an ordained Minister, I have

spoken with social workers about my willingness to facilitate the marriage of some of our unhoused couples if they were interested and if it would assist them with housing vouchers. It is my respectful opinion that if unhoused individual(s) is willing to accept services from NRT and/or our social services partners, some sort of housing solution for the unhoused individual(s) will be achieved.

- 20. Since I started with the NRT, we have used an individualized approach to house members of our unhoused community. In approximately September of 2020, the NRT started keeping records of the number of occupants at the Lee Gerner Park encampment. Since September of 2020, approximately 70 different unhoused individuals at some point occupied the Lee Gerner Park encampment. Out of those 70 individuals, approximately 50 individuals have left Lee Gerner Park and approximately 20 remain as of July 22, 2021.
- 21. As of July 22[,] 2021, the Lee Gerner Park encampment had 20 known occupants: Abraham Jenkins, Aimee Phillips, Calvin Franklin, Carrie Healon, Charles Talbot, Chris Parra, Deborah Miramontes, an unidentified subject, Jamie Rising, Jason Sarris, Kalani Welch, Lanisa Rapley, Leah DeAngelo, Michael Tierney, Michaelangelo Montes, Naeema Hassan, Natalie Fleet, Steve Bealert, Zachary Boulware, and Zackary Wood.

Condition of the Lee Gerner Park Encampment

- 22. Since March of 2020, I have spent nearly every day in the field conducting outreach with our unhoused community. Approximately 70% of my outreach in the field is conducted at Lee Gerner Park due to the number of calls for service at this park.
- 23. Around March of 2020, there were only a few tents at Lee Gerner Park and trash was minimal. As time went on, I noticed the condition of the park deteriorate rapidly. Trash on the ground, including alcohol bottles and cigarettes, increased as more tents arrived and the encampment population grew. The grass appeared ruined in some areas. The land leading into the Novato Creek embankment was intentionally

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manipulated and flattened. I observed feces throughout the park and stepped in feces on numerous occasions.

- 24. Plaintiff Sarris, the self-proclaimed leader of the encampment, expressed his anger and frustration toward the NRT because he felt there were not enough trash cans at Lee Gerner Park. Plaintiff Sarris stated this caused him to illegally dump trash in the CVS dumpster north of Lee Gerner Park.
- 25. In response to complaints about the trash cans, the NRT worked with the City of Novato Department of Public Works to deploy additional trash cans at Lee Gerner Park. After more trash cans were deployed throughout Lee Gerner Park, I still observed and photographed excess trash throughout the grounds of the park on a regular basis. Even after the Department of Public Works deployed a large dumpster at the Lee Gerner Park encampment, I still observed excess trash throughout the grounds of Lee Gerner Park.
- 26. To address the diminishing condition of Lee Gerner Park, the NRT met with environmental impact personnel from the Marin Resource Conservation District, the Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program, and Urban Forestry Associates, Inc. These agencies agreed that the encampment at Lee Gerner Park had a negative impact on the Novato Creek (which contains protected species).

Community Concerns Relating to the Encampment

27. I have communicated with several community members and business owners regarding the encampment at Lee Gerner Park. I have fielded dozens and dozens of complaints about the encampment causing environmental issues, negative impacts to surrounding businesses, safety concerns, and fire danger. I have responded to verbal altercations, physical altercations, an unlawful fire, a drug overdose, drug activity, a weapon brandishing incident, and more. I have been threatened with physical harm while at Lee Gerner Park and have been called numerous derogatory words.

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- 28. I have also been involved in investigations around Lee Gerner Park (some of which involved the encampment campers) dealing with robberies, weapons possessions, weapons brandishing, and an unlawful fire. I arrested Plaintiff Sarris for a warrant at Lee Gerner Park in September 2019 and recovered just under one ounce of Methamphetamine in his backpack (NP19-4651).
- On June 29, 2021, I was made aware of an email by Sergeant Bates. The 29. email notified me that the Novato Library (located at 1720 Novato Boulevard next to the Lee Gerner Park encampment) was supposed to have a children's summer reading event on the grass area west of their building. The event was apparently cancelled by Novato Library staff due to one of the unhoused campers erecting a tent where the event was supposed to take place.
- 30. I have received multiple emails, telephone calls, and emails from community members and business owners who have stated their quality of life, level of business and income, and employee recruitment have all diminished significantly since the Lee Gerner Park encampment grew. With businesses already struggling due to Covid-19, business owners close to the encampment expressed additional hardships to their business caused by this encampment and the campers.

Covid-19 and the Encampment

- 31. I also received or responded to dozens of concerns from the community about the occupants of the Lee Gerner Park encampment not adhering to Covid-19 mask mandates and social distancing protocols.
- During the Covid-19 Shelter-in-Place orders, some unhoused subjects at 32. Lee Gerner Park told me they needed to shelter in place at Lee Gerner Park. However, their behavior with regards to following Covid-19 safety guidelines (masking and social distancing mandates) was reckless. I observed the following individuals leaving the encampment on a regular basis, and/or observed them not adhering to mask/social distancing requirements on a regular basis:

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33. I observed unhoused camper and Plaintiff Jason Sarris' social media posts of him traveling to encampments in other cities during the shelter-in-place order period.

- 34. Plaintiff Sarris moved from the Lee Gerner Park encampment to the Novato Bachelor Officers Quarters in the Hamilton area of Novato, despite the shelter-in-place order. He recruited other unhoused subjects to move to the Bachelor Officers Quarters, essentially trying to convince other unhoused subjects to violate the shelter-in-place order.
- 35. Plaintiff Sarris was observed going to and coming from Lee Gerner Park and the Hamilton area around the time he erected a tent at the Bachelor Officer Quarters in the Hamilton area of Novato. Plaintiff Sarris also mentioned to me that he suffered from a skin condition. However, he frequently participated in outdoor marches and protests in Petaluma, Sausalito, and Oakland during Covid-19 shelter in place order periods.
- 36. Plaintiff Sarris frequently told me he did not have to leave the encampment due to the shelter-in-place order. However, my observations of Plaintiff Sarris contradicted this. Plaintiff Sarris moved into a new tent at the Bachelor Officer Quarters around December 2020. Plaintiff Sarris appeared to frequently leave Lee Gerner Park to attend protests, demonstrations, and events outside of the City of Novato and the County of Marin- contradicting his apparent concern of Covid-19 and the shelter-in-place order.
- 37. I observed unhoused camper and Plaintiff DeAngelo in various areas of the downtown Novato district on multiple occasions during the shelter-in-place order. Out of the dozens of contacts I have had with Plaintiff DeAngelo, I cannot recall her wearing a mask. I observed Plaintiff DeAngelo not adhering to social distancing requirements at Lee Gerner Park. I offered her housing solutions in the form of the Kerner shelter and the Salvation Army programs in San Francisco and Las Vegas. Furthermore, I organized an hour-long conference call with a Salvation Army Captain

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stationed in Napa to discuss Salvation Army programs which would best suit Plaintiff DeAngelo. I also connected with a coordinator of a Salvation Army Las Vegas program. The Las Vegas program specializes in assisting the LGBTQ community, which Plaintiff DeAngelo had told me she was a part of. Plaintiff DeAngelo completed an application for Salvation Army San Francisco but ultimately decided not to enroll in these programs.

- 38. I also offered to reconnect Plaintiff DeAngelo with her family, per her request. She then refused to proceed with a plan to reconnect with her family.
- 39. Plaintiff DeAngelo made unreasonable requests and demands, such as demanding that the City of Novato build her a 'cabin' on the Novato Creek within Lee Gerner Park.
- I have reviewed Plaintiff DeAngelo's Declaration and am aware that she 40. alleges her vehicle was towed. I was unable to locate any information about Plaintiff DeAngelo's vehicle being towed in NPD's database. Furthermore, I used discretion by not towing the vehicle so Plaintiff DeAngelo could have the opportunity to fix her vehicle. Plaintiff DeAngelo has previously told me her vehicle was taken to a repair shop, but her vehicle would not be fixed because the battery she needed to replace was too expensive.
- 41. Plaintiff DeAngelo made sexual assault allegations against a parolee who frequently visits Lee Gerner Park. However, investigation revealed no crime was committed (NP20-2866). Plaintiff DeAngelo still returned to the Lee Gerner Park encampment.
- 42. During Plaintiff DeAngelo's time at the Lee Gerner Park encampment, she was cited for littering within 150 feet of the waterway.
- Plaintiff DeAngelo constantly disobeyed my demands to not smoke 43. within Lee Gerner Park because she argued it was her home.
- 44. Plaintiff DeAngelo refused services on grounds of not wanting to have a Covid-19 test because it makes her sick.

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- 45. Plaintiff DeAngelo also prevented a street crew from conducting construction in the 1700 block of Novato Boulevard after she armed herself with a wooden paddle and sat on their construction equipment until Officer Muller and I arrived on-scene.
- 46. Throughout the Covid-19 shelter-in-place order, I observed unhoused campers and Plaintiffs Boulware and Healon outside of the Lee Gerner Park encampment on several occasions. I observed Plaintiff Boulware skateboarding and Plaintiff Healon walking down Novato Boulevard multiple times.
- Plaintiff Healon had notified me of a foot injury she sustained at an 47. unknown time. She stated her foot injury made it difficult or nearly impossible to be mobile. However, I consistently observed Plaintiff Healon walking in the 1600 block on Novato Boulevard. I offered to call an ambulance for Plaintiff Healon on multiple different occasions, but she continuously declined medical assistance in my presence. On one occasion, she accepted an ambulance response but then declined medical assistance upon arrival.
- 48. Although I have inferred that Plaintiff Boulware suffers from a drug abuse issue due to his prior drug arrests by NPD in 2019 and 2021, he has ultimately refused any housing or treatment assistance I have mentioned to him. Plaintiff Boulware frequently stated he did not want to accept these services because he did not want to be apart from Plaintiff Healon. However, there were multiple occasions in which I contacted Plaintiff Healon while she was by herself at Lee Gerner Park. Plaintiff Healon has told me on several occasions that Plaintiff Boulware was sleeping at a relative's residence without her and had slept there without her for multiple days. Plaintiff Healon has also cited similar reasons for not accepted housing services.
- I have discussed programs with Plaintiffs Boulware and Healon such as 49. Salvation Army programs. They have ultimately declined the offers I have provided to them.

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- 50. Plaintiffs Boulware and Healon's tents were, in my opinion, the tents with the worst conditions. They filled their tent with debris and then would fill the outside surrounding areas of their tent with more debris. I frequently and consistently observed cat food, spoiled food and miscellaneous trash outside of Plaintiff Boulware and Healon's tent.
- Plaintiffs Boulware and Healon collected so many items that some of 51. their debris descended the embankment toward the Novato Creek. I have given them several warnings about littering into the waterway due to the debris at their first tent. These warnings afforded Plaintiffs Boulware and Healon several weeks to clean up their tent area.
- Plaintiffs Boulware and Healon's first tent was in such messy conditions 52. that they requested a new tent from the NRT and the CARE Team and the City of Novato Department of Public Works discarded their tent with their permission.
- At their most recent tent, I observed that Plaintiffs Boulware and Healon 53. still had debris overflowing out of and surrounding their tent. I provided them with several of the same warnings about littering into the Novato Creek, but the conditions had not appeared to improve.
- 54. During various conversations with unhoused camper and Plaintiff Welch throughout the Covid-19 shelter-in-place period, he stated that he had traveled to San Francisco to purchase narcotics.
- Plaintiff Welch frequently was visited by his child and his child's 55. mother. These contacts would occur in an environment which did not adhere to social distancing requirements.
- 56. I observed unhoused camper and Plaintiff Charles Talbot not following social distancing requirements while interacting with others at the Lee Gerner Park encampment.

- 57. I observed unhoused camper and Plaintiff Bethany Allen not following social distancing or mask requirements while interacting with others at the Lee Gerner Park encampment.
- 58. During the shelter-in-place order, Plaintiff Allen admitted to visiting her family who live nearby.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on July 27, 2021, at Novato, California.

JOSHUA WAX

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 27, 2021, I served the document(s) described as DECLARATION OF POLICE OFFICER JOSHUA WAX IN SUPPORT OF DEFENDANT'S OPPOSITION TO THE ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE REGARDING PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION 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 27, 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 27, 2021, at Pasadena, California.

/s/McCall Williams
McCall L. Williams

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