



The Traverse City Human Rights Commission

A Resolution Recognizing the Rights of Homeless Persons

- WHEREAS, the City recognizes the need for and has cooperated with local non-profits and other agencies for the purpose of providing supportive housing to people experiencing homelessness, through housing and services intended to help those at risk to live stable, productive lives including outreach, engagement, medical care, behavioral health care, case management and life skills training;
- WHEREAS, the City of Traverse City has recognized the severe shortage of and need for temporary emergency housing and affordable housing within the City;
- WHEREAS, the City has engaged in efforts to address the need for temporary housing and affordable housing by 1) approving a director's position within the Traverse City Housing Commission to address the affordable housing issue; 2) approving a SLUP (special land use permit) in 2014 to Safe Harbor to allow for those experiencing homelessness emergency shelter for within the City; and 3) approving the possible use of the 517 Wellington building in Traverse City to Safe Harbor for the use as a homeless shelter;
- WHEREAS, the Traverse City community's generous support for those experiencing homelessness, has been significant and has included, among other things, 1) the provision of food and shelter for those experiencing homeless by local churches and places of worship during winter months; 2) the provision of daily breakfast for those experiencing homelessness by the Central United Methodist Church; 3) the provision of monitoring and administrative services for Safe Harbor by Goodwill Industries; 4) the provision of volunteer support and services to Safe Harbor by more than 2,100 volunteers; 5) the provision by the Father Fred Foundation of free clothing, food and services for those experiencing homeless and persons needing assistance; 6) the provision of assistance to those experiencing homelessness by the Goodwill Inn 365 days a year including bed nights, case management, clothing, bus passes and food; and 7) the provision of supportive services such as showers, laundry and daytime protection from cold weather five days a week with 7,054 visits last year by Jubilee House/Grace Episcopal;
- WHEREAS, the purpose of the Traverse City Human Rights Commission is to foster understanding and respect among all groups, to discourage discriminatory practices and to ensure cooperation in eliminating prejudice and discrimination;
- WHEREAS, the rights, privacy and property of those experiencing homelessness shall be adequately safeguarded under the policies of the City of Traverse City; and

Please find enclosed a copy of the Resolution Recognizing the Rights of Homeless Persons passed by the Traverse City Human Rights Commission on July 13 2015.

The idea of such a Resolution was first considered by the Human Rights Commission several months ago. Subsequently the proposed Resolution was considered by the Commission at several meetings. The proposal was studied by a committee. The committee recommended approval of the Resolution.

Other jurisdictions have passed measures recognizing the rights of the homeless. These jurisdictions include the states of Connecticut, Illinois and, Rhode Island, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the cities of Duluth and Madison.

Here is the link to the Resolution apparently adopted by the House of Delegates of the American Bar Association on August 12-213, 2013, indicating "That the American Bar Association urges governments to promote the human right to adequate housing through increased funding, development and implementation of affordable housing strategies and to prevent infringement of that right."

http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/homelessness_poverty/resolution117.authcheckdam.pdf

Here is an informative overview article concerning "A Homeless Bill of Rights."

<http://poseidon01.ssrn.com/delivery.php?ID=658002065071096118104110066081072098030040014018086061111065125075071099018069093030030053038123014014001022067125074124099099046002025038074087127119067112084097029054017095006019004089098030110104029005064096070083114075065104113070122100121113084&EXT=pdf&TYPE=2>

The Human Rights Commission recommends that the City Commission give appropriate consideration to passing a Resolution Recognizing the Rights of Homeless Persons.

Your cooperation and courtesy are appreciated. If there are questions, please advise.

Very truly yours,

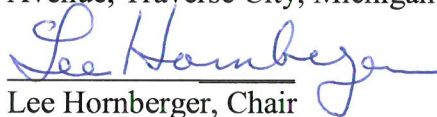

Lee Hornberger
Chair, Traverse City Human Rights Commission

THEREFORE, the Traverse City Human Rights Commission adopts this Resolution Recognizing the Rights of those experiencing homelessness for the purpose of ensuring the human dignity of and respect for all those experiencing homelessness in Traverse City by reiterating and recognizing the rights of those experiencing homelessness.

As such, each person who is experiencing homelessness has a right to:

1. Access basic requirements necessary for sustaining life, including shelter, sanitation, medical care, clothing and food;
2. Move freely in public places in the same manner as other persons without harassment or intimidation;
3. Have equal opportunities for employment;
4. Receive emergency medical care;
5. Exercise full civic privileges, including the right to register to vote and the right to vote;
6. Have personal information protected;
7. Have a reasonable expectation of privacy in his or her personal property;
8. Receive equal treatment by state, county and municipal agencies;
9. Have the right to have economic status not included in media reports; and
10. Allow for access to resources for housing and supportive housing.

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Traverse City Human Rights Commission at its regular meeting held July 13, 2015, in the County Committee Room, Governmental Center, 400 Boardman Avenue, Traverse City, Michigan 49684.


Lee Hornberger, Chair

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The Honorable Michael Estes
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The Honorable Barbara Budros
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The Honorable Jim Carruthers
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The Honorable Jeanine Easterday
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1011 Lake Ridge Dr. #102
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The Honorable Gary L. Howe
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The Honorable Ross Richardson
Commissioner
873 Washington Street
Traverse City, MI 49686

The Honorable Tim Werner
Commissioner
400 Boardman Avenue
Traverse City, MI 49684

Re: Resolution Recognizing the Rights of Homeless Persons

Dear Mayor Estes, Mayor Pro Tem Budros, and Commissioners: