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# STREET SHEET

REST IN POWER JEFF ADACHI	3	CITIES ATTACK HOMELESS PEOPLE'S AUTONOMY	4	THE RUNAROUND AT DPW'S BAG AND TAG YARD	6	CITATION DEFENSE RULES JUST UPDATED	7	COMIC ISSUE SUBMISSIONS DUE MARCH 20TH	8
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## CITIES ACROSS US ARE STRIPPING HOMELESS PEOPLE OF THEIR AUTONOMY



Toshio Meronek And Tory Becker

*This article was originally published by Truthout on February 10th and is republished here with permission.*

One of the world’s richest cities is waging war on disabled and homeless people.

In February 2018, an unsigned flyer was posted in San Francisco’s Mission District, warning the homeless: “If you are still here after dark tonight, the hunters will become the hunted. We will pound you, burn you, beat you, and fuck you up if you are within a 100 yards of this park starting after sun down tonight.”

The flyer was eventually tied to Jason Perkins, a local club owner. In its everyday practice, the government of San Francisco sides with Perkins as it routinely dumpsters homeless peoples’ tents (famously reprimanding a city worker who refused to throw them away); builds “hostile” architecture to discourage poor people from spending time in public spaces; and uses water hoses on those who don’t move along quickly enough.

The city’s latest weapon against the homeless is a law that recalls the era of insane asylums. In San Francisco and other major metro areas across the country, governments are pressing pause on disabled and homeless peoples’ ability to make the most basic of decisions,

through a scheme called “conservatorship.”

Conservatorship, also known as “guardianship,” puts decision-making for “conserved” people in the hands of strangers who are assigned to them by the courts, or sometimes in the hands of relatives with whom they may or may not have good relationships. The process takes away their self-determination and often leaves them locked up in jail-like facilities, allegedly for their own protection.

Susan Mizner is a San Francisco-based lawyer who helped create the ACLU’s Disability Rights Program in 2012 and previously headed up the San Francisco government’s Office on Disability. At an October meeting of a coalition

of California civil and disability rights groups called Voluntary Services First,

*Image credit to Lauren Walker / Truthout*  
*Image description: silhouettes of cops surround a sleeping person wrapped in a blanket, lying on the ground in front of a spiky fence. The shadow from the fence’s bars streak the person’s form.*

Mizner called “conservatorship the biggest deprivation of civil rights aside from the death penalty.”

Imade Borha works at the Mental Health Association of San Francisco, a nonprofit that connects people with mental health issues with peer mentors. Borha was a graduate student in New York when she began to experience continued on page 4....

**SHELTER WAITLIST UPDATE:** As of February 15th there are 1,134 people on the waitlist for shelter in San Francisco.



# NEWSFLASH

HOMELESSNESS HEADLINES YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

NO PLACE LEFT TO GO: BUSINESS DISTRICTS KEEP HOMELESS POPULATIONS ON THE MOVE

“I visited Denver to report on the conflict bubbling up in many cities, between homeless advocates and business improvement districts. At its core, it’s a debate about the degree of influence that private interests, as represented by BIDs, should exercise over the management of public space. A provocative report last year from the Policy Advocacy Clinic of the University of California, Berkeley School of Law contends that BIDs, now operating in 200 California cities, use their influence to “exclude homeless people from public spaces in their districts through policy advocacy and policing practices.”

Next City, reporting on 02/18/19

SF TO EXPUNGE 9,000 MARIJUANA CONVICTIONS DATING BACK 40 YEARS

San Francisco is going to be the first city in the nation to expunge decades worth of marijuana-related convictions following the legalization of recreational cannabis. District Attorney George Gascon announced Monday that he’s presenting a collection of 9,362 eligible cases dating back to 1975 for resentencing or complete expungement by a county judge in the coming weeks.

SFist reporting on 02/25/19

CITY FALLING SHORT ON PLAN TO HOUSE HOMELESS YOUTH, COMMISSION SAYS

“San Francisco continues to fall short of a 2015 goal to build hundreds of supportive housing units for transitional age youth and has yet to deliver on a more recent promise to open a Navigation Center for young residents, the Youth Commission highlighted last week.

The commission also called for mandatory training of police officers to improve interactions with youth.”

SF Examiner, reporting on 02/18/19

## THE IDEAL WORLD

Rodney McClain

The ideal world is to put GOD first.  
Then we are caretakers of one another.  
Then take care of the land.  
Every woman and every child should be treated with the utmost respect and Love.  
Come on, people — stop the shenanigans and get in the ideal world and be examples  
For generations to come.  
We owe it to each other.  
If we lived like my poem that was used in a church in Santa Rosa after the big Fire,  
GOD is going to give us warning after warning.  
It’s up to us to heed the warning.

Next is the beginning of my story ...

## ASK US ANYTHING

HAVE A QUESTION YOU WANT US TO ANSWER ABOUT HOMELESSNESS OR HOUSING IN THE BAY AREA? ASK US AT STREETSHEET@COHSF.ORG OR (415) 346-3740 AND IT COULD BE ANSWERED IN THE NEXT ISSUE!

## COALITION ON HOMELESSNESS

The STREET SHEET is a project of the Coalition on Homelessness. The Coalition on Homelessness organizes poor and homeless people to create permanent solutions to poverty while protecting the civil and human rights of those forced to remain on the streets.

Our organizing is based on extensive peer outreach, and the information gathered directly drives the Coalition’s work. We do not bring our agenda to poor and homeless people: they bring their agenda to us.

## WORKGROUP MEETINGS

AT 468 TURK STREET

HOUSING JUSTICE WORK GROUP

Every Tuesday at noon  
The Housing Justice Workgroup is working toward a San Francisco in which every human being can have and maintain decent, habitable, safe, and secure housing. This meeting is in English and Spanish and open to everyone!

HUMAN RIGHTS WORK GROUP

Every Wednesday at 12:30 p.m.  
The Human Rights Workgroup has been doing some serious heavy lifting on these issues: conducting direct research, outreach to people on the streets, running multiple campaigns, developing policy, staging direct actions, capturing media attention, and so much more. All those down for the cause are welcome to join!

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO OUR WORK GROUP MEETINGS. Unfortunately our space is not wheelchair accessible, but we will move our meeting location to accomodate people who cannot make it up the stairs. For access needs contact development@cohsf.org

To learn more about COH workgroup meetings, contact us at : 415-346-3740, or go at : www.cohsf.org

## VOLUNTEER WITH US!

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COMIC ARTISTS  
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## CONTACT:

STREETSHEET@COHSF.ORG

## STREET SHEET STAFF

The Street Sheet is a publication of the Coalition on Homelessness. Some stories are collectively written, and some stories have individual authors. But whoever sets fingers to keyboard, all stories are formed by the collective work of dozens of volunteers, and our outreach to hundreds of homeless people.

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## SUBMIT YOUR WRITING

STREET SHEET publishes news and perspective stories about poverty and homelessness. We prioritize submissions from currently or formerly homeless writers but gratefully accept all submissions.

send submission to [qwatts@cohsf.org](mailto:qwatts@cohsf.org)

# REST IN POWER JEFF ADACHI

Jennifer Friedenbach

PAGE 3

MAR 1, 2019

STREET  
SHOTS

Jeff Adachi, the only elected public defender in California, passed away February 22nd. He was a great and true San Francisco hero, who fought for the accused, for victims of police misconduct. We owe countless lives and the correction of injustices to Jeff Adachi. The man sacrificed - time with his daughter, his wife, time for himself, his health and his creative pursuits - to fight for the most disempowered San Franciscans who had a brilliant ally in him. He did it well. He did it with courage. He stood with the people, steadfast and graceful. He had fortitude and he had vision.

“Jeff Adachi saved my life. There was an arrest order for me 1996, and he suggested I get 300 letters of support from the community. I did so and he was able to get the arrest order dropped and my record expunged,” reflected Miguel Carrera, housing justice organizer with the Coalition on Homelessness. “He stood up for me, and without him, I would never have been able to give back to the community in the way I have for the past two decades. He had a vision for what my true nature was, and was able to communicate that, comparing me to a character in Les Misérables.” Miguel went on to work hard for housing for homeless families, and his work has resulted in the housing of countless families. Thus exemplifies the ripple effect of the work Jeff Adachi.

Part of Adachi’s legacy was calling out our corruption and police misconduct. He was wildly unpopular with many agencies connected to what he liked to call the “hall of injustice”. Whether that be the police, who he caught illegally entering rooms in SRO hotels which led to the uncovering of racist texts, or the drug labs whose lax practices he exposed, leading dozens of cases to be dropped. He called out SFPD’s brutality when Jessica Williams was shot and the officer was let off the hook, arguing the shooting was entirely unjustifiable.

When Adachi moved around the city, people knew him. He was the upbeat and thoughtful man who always took the time to listen to folks. Everywhere he went, someone was touched by his work, and people, most often people of color, would approach him and thank him for helping a cousin out, or thank him for standing up for an injustice that had touched them.

Mr. Adachi was always courageous and he took stands and stuck by what he believed in, be that pension reform or getting rid of the bail system. He had no problem calling out racist judges – something taboo in a system that asks for constant kissing up to the unbounded power of the magistrate.

On a lighter note, Mr. Adachi’s great looks were much appreciated around town. At a recent event at

Glide Memorial he appeared in a tight white t-shirt, and made even the eyes of straight old cis-gendered men get a bit misty.

Jeff grew up in Sacramento, and after attending city college there, he transferred to UC Berkeley, and then UC Hastings for his law degree. He started off in the public defender’s office, then eventually ran against Kimiko Burton, daughter of John Burton for the Public Defender seat and won.

Jeff was known as a great litigator, and often stepped into the courtroom to handle particularly tricky cases. For example, he won an acquittal for Carlos Argueta, the Eviction Defense Collaborative lawyer who was charged with murder after fatally injuring a man in self defense. Adachi stood by him during a three year battle to clear his name.

Adachi also defended the man involved in the case that served as a lightning rod for anti-immigrant vitriol during the Trump election. José Inez García Zárate was charged with the murder of Kate Steinle, in a tragic gun accident that took place at the piers. Zárate had picked up a gun that had been stolen out of the car of a government employee and then ditched, and shot Steinle, a shooting Adachi argued was accidental. On November 30, 2017, after five days of deliberations, a jury acquitted García Zárate of murder and

manslaughter, but convicted him of being a felon in possession of a firearm. Trump and his supporters frequently used Zárate as an example of the need to block immigrants from entering the country, and blasted the sanctuary policy in San Francisco. Zárate was repeatedly called a felon that was allowed to have Sanctuary in SF on Fox news, but failed to mention his felony charges were for possession of marijuana, and felony entering the country illegally.

There is now an investigation into the response to his death. Police took three hours to get to his apartment, and then leaked the police report. There is also concern that the Medical Examiner who is conducting the autopsy is the same one that Adachi tried to get fired just months ago. We hope the truth about this death comes out quickly so that his family and the people of San Francisco can get closure.

The loss of Adachi has reverberated across San Francisco. All over San Francisco in the corners of poverty and the shadows of greed are people who are standing taller, who are liberated from incarceration, who have opportunities to thrive due to this man’s work. And he worked exceptionally hard. While his handprints on our city will live on, there are few losses San Francisco can’t replace and can’t recover from. This is one of them. ■



## PURE ACTIVIST

Darnell Boyd

To all my fellow activists: it’s time to get back to the purity of activism. What do I mean by this statement? I’m talking about using our minds, body and souls to fight for the underprivileged, the impoverished, and the people with mental health issues. They need our help and we must accept the challenge. It’s a tough challenge but somebody has to do it. We have to go back to vigorously campaigning to bring about political and social change to stop our elected officials from criminalizing the poor. We must stop them from using laws like the SB 1045 to take away people’s rights. We must stop them from harassing the homeless. So I would like to invite pure activists back in the trenches to fight for the people. ■



# Cities Across US Are Homeless People of

continued from front page....

bouts of chronic depression that led to two stints in psychiatric wards. After graduating from Columbia with a degree in creative writing and working for two years at a Maryland newspaper, Borha moved into a role in communications for a mental health organization. She changed paths because, she said, “Your voice doesn’t matter in [many psychiatric institutions], and I don’t want anyone else to feel that way.”

Borha described the “chaotic” upper floors of the Weill Cornell Medical Center where she was conserved: On “any given day, people were getting restrained; there was always yelling, and I was afraid I was going to get sexually assaulted.” She protested her mandated “rehabilitative treatment,” telling anyone who would listen — psych staff, case workers — “This is making me worse; I need to be in a safer environment.” Frustrated, she raised her voice — after which point Borha was restrained, threatened with injection and put in an isolation room.

SB 1045 and similar laws could lead to an expansion of the prison industrial complex.

“We don’t call it ‘solitary confinement’ in the hospital; we call it the ‘isolation room,’ but it’s the same practice of placing the most distressed people into silos where they’re not heard,” Borha said. “There’s nothing therapeutic about that.”

## THE “UGLY” PAST

Involuntary holds for people who have disabilities or drug use issues aren’t new. Notorious “ugly laws,” which made it legal to imprison people with visible disabilities simply for being out in public, existed in the US for more than a century. In 1867, San Francisco was the first city to institute such laws. At a November 30, 2018, forum on conservatorship, the director of the Coalition on Homelessness, Jennifer Friedenbach, described renewed calls for conservatorship as “a return to the ugly laws.”

Most conservatorship laws include some language around civil rights, often in the form of the right to regular court hearings where a judge decides whether or not a person should be allowed to make their own decisions. In 2017, states throughout the US enacted 49 guardianship-related laws, including some reforms to strengthen oversight of the conditions experienced by people who are conserved.

Certain states, though, are expanding laws that confine people with psychiatric disabilities and deprive them of their rights. Several have recently lengthened the amount of time that psychiatrically disabled people and/or drug users can be held against their will. For example, Florida recently extended its base involuntary hold period for people who use substances from 60 days to 90. In California, homeless people and their advocates are mobilizing against a state law that is the brainchild of San Francisco legislator Scott Wiener. Adopted in September 2018, SB 1045 broadens current conservatorship laws, allowing three counties with high homeless populations — Los Angeles, San Diego and San Francisco — to indefinitely confine people with disabilities and/or drug users who have been detained by law enforcement eight times within the last year. It could serve as a national prototype for taking away the civil rights of homeless people, especially those who are disabled and/or use drugs, according to advocacy groups.

A letter sent to politicians by a coalition of California civil rights groups opposing SB 1045 notes that back in 1959, over 36,000 Californians were held involuntarily in state-run institutions, some for their entire lives. Meanwhile, in California, treatments included forced sterilization, barbaric treatments such as lobotomies and prison-like environments that have inspired many horror films. The work of disability justice activists in the 1970s helped to liberate disabled people from asylums and allowed them greater self-determination. But after California closed down many of these institutions, there was one big problem, according to the Coalition: “promised community-based services and housing never materialized.”

So it goes with SB 1045, which presupposes that people living on the streets don’t want housing and services, and includes no clause guaranteeing clothing, food, housing or health care for the conserved. In legislator Wiener’s own San Francisco, there are more than 1,000 people on the shelter waiting list, at least 8,000 families waiting for public housing (the waitlist has been closed since 2015), and 500 people requesting substance abuse treatment that isn’t available.

“That’s beyond belief — that you have to lose your rights in order to get services,” said Terezie Bohrer, a commissioner on San Francisco’s mental health board, referring to SB 1045. Most politicians seem more concerned with emptying the streets of disabled, low-income

people than with providing services for them. The SF Examiner reported that after one of the city’s biggest one-day homeless sweeps in the Mission District in April 2018, 126 homeless peoples’ tents were forcibly removed — often thrown into dumpsters and carted off to a landfill. After losing what amounted to their only homes, only six people were placed in shelters following the raid that day. Officials like San Francisco’s homelessness czar, Jeff Kositsky, and the city’s mayor, London Breed, are clearing encampments en masse ahead of Breed’s re-election bid (in November 2019), attempting to implement SB 1045 under a system that relies heavily on the local police and sheriff’s departments.

As advocacy groups have pointed out, SB 1045 and similar laws could lead to an expansion of the prison industrial complex, multiplying medical jail wards across the state, and “mental health services” within jails. As Borha emphasizes, police and sheriffs’ oversight of such programs could easily lead to more life-threatening and traumatic situations like the ones she experienced herself.

## PICK ONE: FREEDOM OR HEALTH CARE

Another SB 1045 opponent, Yakira Teitel, is a medical student in her last year in a residency studying family medicine at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). In 2016, when five San Franciscans went on hunger strike outside a local police station to protest a string of killings by police, Teitel was moved by the anti-violence message of the strikers, and joined other UCSF students in informally providing around-the-clock health care support to the strikers for more than two weeks. After the strike ended, they formed the Do No Harm Coalition, which melds principles of medical well-being with social justice issues.

Twice, cops handcuffed homeless people and made them watch while the officers set fire to their possessions.

SB 1045 is “scary to me as a physician,” Teitel says. Working at the county’s largest public hospital, San Francisco General, she comes across conservatorship cases more often than the average doctor. While SB 1045 was pitched as a way to help people who can’t help themselves, Teitel sees it as a way for a “really marginalized group of people” to become even more criminalized.

Until now, in California, it’s been “really hard” to get someone conserved, and that’s the way it should be, according to Teitel. “You’re taking away all of their medical decision-making, ... and putting them in the hands of someone

who is essentially a state bureaucrat” — someone who is paid to be a professional conservator for multiple people who “try to act with the patients’ best interests in mind,” but typically have little contact with them — and sometimes no contact at all. In some cases, conserved people may be placed under the care of family members — but relatives may not have the best interests of someone in mind either: For example, many who end up on the street are there due to domestic violence. LGBTQ youth leave home in large part because they were forced out or abused by their families.

That’s why Teitel describes conservatorship via the medical system as “the most extreme way we take away someone’s autonomy,” adding that the idea that we may be “making it easier to do that is scary” and dangerous because the US doesn’t “have a system to deal with serious mental health conditions and disabilities,” nor many community-based solutions.

The lack of services to implement SB 1045 is just the start, said Teitel. Law enforcement deputies are most often the ones to initiate psychiatric holds, meaning that the people whom cops tend to pick up the most — such as Black, Brown, poor and disabled people — will face even more police terror. According to 2014 data, 60 percent of people killed by police in San Francisco have mental health issues; nationally, it’s about 50 percent. As first responders, police are often called to intervene in situations involving people with mental illnesses. In many cases, their “response” is murder, as the killings of Ezell Ford, Kayla Moore, Teresa Sheehan and countless others show.

In Borha’s case, police were sent to her house during a suicide attempt. The cops tried forcing their way into her home. “It was terrifying,” she said. She added that the privilege of being a graduate student at the time may have allowed her to “articulate why I felt unsafe in that situation” where others targeted for conservatorship might not have the words to do so. “When that’s your entry point into a quote-unquote therapeutic setting, that sets the tone. When you’re in a state of crisis, it’s hard to respond,” and no response might be seen as “a sign of resisting.” Borha’s voice got quiet as she described the dangers of police contact when someone is both disabled and Black: “It’s like you’re dead before you’re dead.”

## WEALTH GAPS AND HEALTH GAPS



# re Stripping f Their Autonomy

Unequal distribution of resources like housing and health care aren't the only problem facing homeless people who are victims of what the UN's highest-ranking official on poverty called the Bay Area and greater US's "contempt, and sometimes even ... hatred for the poor" in a 2018 report.

Raia Small, an organizer with Senior and Disability Action, a Voluntary Services First coalition member, said SB 1045's emphasis on "taking homeless people off the streets" makes it obvious that the "legislation is an effort to win support from upper-class constituencies who don't like seeing homeless people in their neighborhoods." Small's take-away seems particularly on point given legislator Wiener and Mayor Breed's lack of support for a bill to fund homeless services, which passed despite the politicians' opposition.

"As the population of San Francisco has become richer, it's politically efficacious to show that you're 'tough on homelessness,'" said Small. City Hall recently teamed up with the police department to deploy mobile cop station RVs in homeless-heavy parts of town, such as the central Tenderloin District.

Similarly, neighborhood watch-like groups funded by the city, called Community Benefit Districts or Business Improvement Districts, were dubbed "Homeless Exclusion Districts" by the University of California Berkeley Law School in a report released in August 2018. The authors of the study found homeowner associations and business interests used the funding to increase policing, surveillance and harassment of homeless people, whose voices are excluded from the local decision-making.

The gentrifiers "don't want to see the consequences of their gentrification," Borha said. "These are manmade problems."

The No New SF Jail Coalition, of which Do No Harm is a member, recently asked the city to shift its focus away from increasing conservatorship, and instead toward creating low-income, cooperative housing. The city's latest housing report shows the vast majority of new residential buildings are affordable only to the richest of the rich. Four-person households making \$118,000 per year are considered "low-income," and eligible for subsidized housing. However, the odds of getting into that housing, which are rented and sold through lotteries, are about 1 in 82.

As of January 8, 2019, the city's handful of listings required "low-income" renters to make at least \$2,702

per month in order to apply for one of its subsidized one-bedroom apartments. The housing department's real estate industry-friendly math allows developers to sell a currently listed "affordable" one-bedroom for \$456,000 (not including homeowners' association fees of \$480 per month).

Borha reported moving five times in six months, a stressful situation for anyone, but one she recognized as privileged when she spoke with Truthout in her nonprofit's office in downtown San Francisco, as homeless people lingered, always under threat of police harassment, including in public space. "I had one roommate in conservatorship who dealt with a dual diagnosis: drug abuse and psychiatric challenges." When the roommate was up for release from the program, "She had nowhere to go," Borha said. "No one was helping her find a home, but also it wasn't legal to discharge her to the streets." She remained captive in the system for months until low-income housing became available to her.

On the other side of the country, the biggest city in Florida — the state that recently expanded its base involuntary hold period to 90 days — is more forthcoming with its homeless exclusion and vilification project.

In 1992, about 5,000 homeless Miamians joined a class-action lawsuit resulting in Miami's Pottinger Agree-

ment. A federal district court found that treatment of homeless people by the city and its police department amounted to "cruel and unusual punishment." Two events cited by Judge Clyde Atkins in the court decision were particularly shocking: Twice, cops handcuffed homeless people and made them watch while the officers set fire to their possessions. Their IDs, medicine, clothing and a Bible all turned into a pile of ash.

However, Pottinger is often ignored; attorneys for the ACLU say there were 72 complaints of police violating Pottinger's stipulations between April and October 2018. Now, the city is attempting to overturn Pottinger, very transparently, in the name of gentrification.

"Demographic" changes in downtown Miami, according to the city's May 2018 legal filing, make Pottinger's termination necessary. So, too, do the "90,000 premium square feet of retail," newly erected condos, the addition of new entertainment and sports venues like the American Airlines Arena and the Live Nation Amphitheater, and luxe hotels, such as the JW Marriott Marquis and the Four Seasons. The city claims these developments justify dissolving Pottinger and the policy's attempt to curb abuse and arrests of homeless people. In fact, the city believes police should have increased power to criminalize mentally ill people and drug users.

The profit potential for locking up

more homeless people is huge for the contractors whose bread and butter is imprisonment. GEO Group, the country's second-largest private prison corporation, expects to make \$250 million per year off its 2017 acquisition of Community Education Centers, a halfway-house operator that makes its coin off of treatment contracts with state and local governments in 17 states.

## A DOWNWARD SPIRAL

According to the National Institutes of Health, housing insecurity is a major stressor that causes mental illness and drug use, resulting in the most vicious of cycles: People with psychiatric diagnoses are vulnerable to homelessness and substance abuse, and lack of investment in basic needs like housing and health care mean more people suffering on the streets.

Some of the richest people in the US have made it very clear they want their neighborhoods cleansed of homeless people. They might get their wish, thanks to a country-wide battle not against homelessness, but against homeless people themselves. ■

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## Got Citations? Here's What To Do!

Quality of Life citations include things like sleeping or sitting on the sidewalk, panhandling, and other erroneous "violations" which target and criminalize homeless people. Often these citations are accompanied by a hefty fine homeless folks already cannot afford. If you have a citation for one of these bogus infractions, read the tips below so you don't get stuck paying for it or incur other consequences!

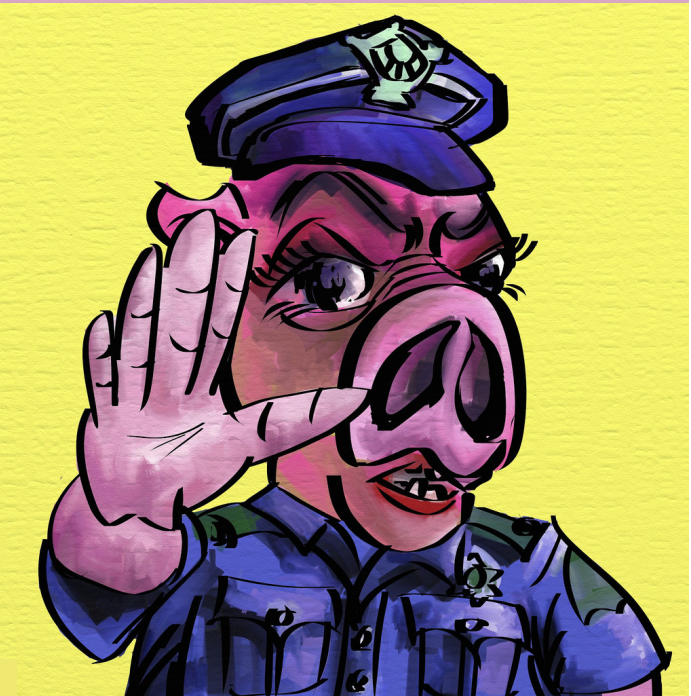
- Make sure you have a copy of your citation. If you do not have one, first go to the Hall of Justice- 850 Bryant Street- Room 145 to get a copy of your citations.
- With your citation go to any approved social services provider for them to fill out the Citation Dismissal Form (on the CONNECT Program website).
- Service provider will provide you with 20 hours of assistance which basically includes going to workshops, eating meals, and staying in shelter
- The social services organization will submit this verification form after the 20 hours are completed and the citation will be dismissed
- To follow up on the status of your citation, call 415-551-8550

### What organizations can you go to?

GLIDE- 330 Ellis (at Jones)  
Mondays and Thursdays 2-5pm

Hospitality House- 290 Turk (at Leavenworth)  
Mondays 2:30-4pm, Wednesdays 10am-noon, Thursdays 11am-1pm

image of a pig in a police uniform holding up a hand by Roy Blumenthal, pulled from Flickr





# THE RUNAROUND

Kelley Cutler, Human Rights Organizer

Hy Carrel from Faithful Fools and I ventured to the Department of Public Works (DPW) lot to retrieve an individual's belongings after it was "bagged and tagged" by law enforcement and DPW workers. The City says they don't throw people's belongings and survival gear away... they say they "bag and tag" it and people can simply go to the DPW yard and get their stuff. So easy, right?!

Spoiler alert... that's not the reality.

Luckily I had been to DPW before or this process would have been even more challenging because it's tough to find. Here are the instructions on the DPW site for retrieving your belongings.... easy peasy!

"To reclaim items:

The Storage Yard is open Tuesday through Saturday 9am to 3pm. There is a guard at the gate that will help people locate their items. Before going to the yard be prepared to provide the following information. Without this information, the DPW employees may not be able to help you.

- \* Date and time of the pickup
- \* Location of the pickup
- \* Description of the items
- \* SFPD badge number (if one was provided)"

We went up to the blue booth and asked about retrieving belongings, and the guy pointed us to a man sitting in a DPW truck on the street. We had all of the needed information to provide... even the officer info. Good ole Officer Peachy!

The guy in the truck asked if we had ID. You'll notice how that is not listed as an item required to get your belongings? That was just the first of many excuses for why they couldn't retrieve the belongings. DPW policy doesn't require you to have ID. Often folks' ID is taken by DPW during Sweeps.

Both Hy and I suck at lying so we were honest and Hy explained that he was there as a social service provider who was asked to help retrieve the belongings of a woman who is experiencing homelessness.

The items supposedly 'bagged and tagged' were a tent, sleeping bag, umbrella and a jacket. Apparently these items are too precious for them to allow a social service provider to transport back to the individual the City took it from.

The DPW worker was actually very pleasant to us; he was just playing the game the City plays to avoid giving people their belongings back.

We asked if he could check to see if the belongings were there so we could let her know. He said he would go check, and that he would come back in 20 to 40 minutes to let us know. So we waited....

"The look you get when you realize DPW is giving you the runaround"

As we were waiting I struck up a conversation with a couple who were trying to get their belongings back. This was their 3rd attempt at the DPW yard, and they had driven up from Santa Cruz. They were getting the runaround. The couple told me the DPW worker asked if they had receipts for their stuff, as if folks keep receipts for their backpack, makeup and other personal belongings. During their last trip to the yard they said the DPW worker took their DPW property confiscation form and never came back. After 2 hours they gave up. They didn't think he was ever coming back.

The DPW worker came back after 25 minutes and informed us that, yes, the belongings "bagged and tagged" out front of Faithful Fools at the day and time we provided had been

logged in. Great. We wanted to know what the items were that were logged in. Apparently that's confidential information, real top secret stuff. We told him again what the items were, because we had this top secret information, about the tent, sleeping bag, umbrella and jacket.

Well, getting an answer would require another 20 to 40 minutes for him to go find out. We waited... 40 minutes.

He drove back up and Hy asked if his client should take hours to come get her stuff and he stated "If it works, it's worth picking up."

The process is set up to frustrate people so they just give up. I needed to get back to the office for a meeting so I could no longer waste my time with DPW games.

He then spoke to the couple who drove up from Santa Cruz and were on their third attempt to get their belongings. The DPW worker explained that he only has the key for 1 of the 3 storage areas and their stuff was in one he couldn't get into. He told them to come back the next day, from Santa

Cruz.

Now I could understand things like this happening from time to time, but we hear the same thing from basically EVERYONE who attempts to get their belongings back from DPW. It's the DPW runaround.

But don't worry, you can trust that the City isn't throwing people's personal belongings or survival gear away. They just "bag and tag" it.

By the way, as of today there are 1,176 people waiting on the single adult shelter waitlist for a temporary bed. This doesn't include families and children.

So our question to Sam Dodge, assistant to the head of DPW, is this: when is the Local Homeless Coordinating Board going to get a tour of the DPW lot so we can see how this great process works? ■

image description: A meme featuring a disgruntled man sits on a bench in front of a fence rimmed with barbed wire with a sign that says "RESTRICTED AREA". The meme text reads: "The look you get when you realize DPW is giving you the runaround"





# SOCIAL JUSTICE CALENDAR

<div>MAR 2</div> <div>KEEP THE RED LIGHT ON</div> <div><b>WHERE:</b> WHISKEY TIP, 1910 SEBASTOPOL RD, SANTA ROSA</div> <div>UASO North Bay partners w/ North Bay Cabaret to bring you an unforgettable evening of burlesque, drag, pole, circus, storytelling, music, visual art &amp; more! Visual art will be for sale, including works provided through SWOP Behind Bars by incarcerated workers. Bring your respect and your money, as 100% of money will go to SWers and SW organizations.</div>	<div>MAR 7</div> <div>HEARING ON RAINSTORM SWEEPS</div> <div><b>WHERE:</b> ROOM 250, CITY HALL @12PM</div> <div>Sup. Haney has given us a rare opportunity to spotlight the lack of services available during winter storms and the ensuing sweeps. Let's show up big and let our supervisors know that these human rights violations will not be tolerated on our watch.</div> <div><b>ACCESS:</b> City Hall is wheelchair/ADA accessible.</div>	<div>MAR 8</div> <div>ST. ANTHONY'S MENSTRUAL PRODUCT DRIVE</div> <div>HOW YOU CAN HELP: ORDER: Use our Amazon Wishlist to buy products online and have them shipped directly to St. Anthony's: <a href="http://a.co/fbsnqyh">http://a.co/fbsnqyh</a> SHOP: Pick up an extra pack (or two!) the next time you're at the store HOST A DRIVE: Encourage your co-workers, friends, and family to collect products or donate Drop off or mail donations to: St. Anthony's Free Clothing Program 121 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102</div>	<div>MAR 9</div> <div>SF MARCH &amp; RALLY: HANDS OFF VENEZUELA! NO COUP, WAR OR SANCTIONS</div> <div><b>WHERE:</b> CIVIC CENTER STATION</div> <div>Join us on March 9 for a march and rally against the Trump administration's effort to engineer a coup in Venezuela and a new devastating war there. The aggressive policy against Venezuela repeats the ugly pattern of wars for regime change in the oil-rich countries of Iraq and Libya.</div>
<div>MAR 10</div> <div>THE PUBLIC: FREE SCREENING AND PANEL WITH EMILIO ESTEVEZ</div> <div><b>WHERE:</b> GLIDE, 330 ELLIS ST @5-8PM</div> <div>Join GLIDE's Center for Social Justice, the Coalition on Homelessness, and the San Francisco Public Library for a special and timely screening of The Public, a new film by writer/director/star Emilio Estevez.</div> <div><b>ACCESS:</b> The event is free, but spaces are limited so sign up on Eventbrite soon to take part!</div>	<div>MAR 13</div> <div>RAINBOWS NOT WALLS: A BAY AREA FORUM FOR TRANS CARAVAN MEMBERS</div> <div><b>WHERE:</b> ISHA'AR ZAHAV, 290 DOLORES ST @6-8PM</div> <div>Join faith and community members to hear more about how you can help welcome transgender members of the migrant caravans, who are already here and those on their way to San Francisco. Find out how congregations, community groups and individuals can help provide sponsorship, accompaniment and vital resources so that other members of the Migrant Exodus can be immediately released from ICE detention. Light refreshments will be served.</div>	<div>MAR 14</div> <div>FREE SCHOOL: THE CITY BUDGET PROCESS</div> <div><b>WHERE:</b> HOSPITALITY HOUSE SF, 290 TURK ST @10AM</div> <div>This course will cover how the city budget process works and explore the power of San Francisco's Mayor vs. The Board of Supervisors, how to get the budget ordinance passed and win funding for your causes, the budget calendar, and budget cuts of the past. If you want to get something done, here is the logistics of how.</div> <div><b>ACCESS:</b> ADA accessible space. Bag lunches will be provided. Classes will be in English with Spanish translation.</div>	<div>DEADLINE TO SUBMIT CONTENT FOR OUR APRIL FOOLS DAY COMIC ISSUE IS MARCH 20th</div> <div>*comics*funny articles*jokes*art*</div> <div>submit to <a href="mailto:streetsheetsf@gmail.com">streetsheetsf@gmail.com</a></div>

# ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OUR CITY OUR HOME OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

*The Our City Our Home Coalition garnered political support from Mayor Breed and Supervisors Brown and Fewer to establish an oversight committee for the \$300 million tax revenue provided by Proposition C*

San Francisco, CA — The SF Board of Supervisors Government Audit and Oversight Committee approved legislation co-sponsored by Supervisor Brown, Supervisor Fewer and Mayor Breed to establish the Our City Our Home (OCOH) Coalition Oversight Committee to monitor the City's use of funds from Proposition C which are now tied up in a legal challenge. This court battle could take upwards of two years before funds for homelessness can be actualized and get people out of the battle in the streets. In order to hit the ground running and ensure Prop C can be implemented accurately, an oversight committee, made up of

people with diverse and lived experiences of homelessness, is absolutely crucial.

At the hearing to establish this oversight committee, a handful of community leaders gave public comment in support. This encouragement resonated with Supervisor Vallie Brown who stated, "We need to make sure we're hearing from the right people to make these decisions. Even when we have the funding, it takes a year to spend it. Once we get the money, we should be ready to go."

There will be 9 seats for the Oversight Committee:

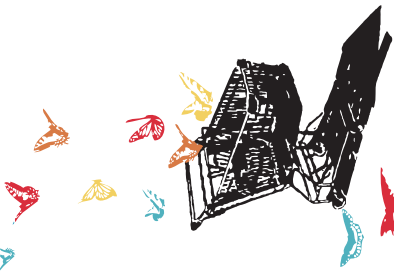
- Seat 1: individual with homeless housing development experience [Mayor's choice]
- Seat 2: individual representing SRO families [BOS choice]
- Seat 3: individual who provides homeless services [Mayor's choice]
- Seat 4: individual who has experienced homeless and advocates for homeless [BOS choice]
- Seat 5: individual with mental health service or substance use expertise [Mayor's choice]
- Seat 6: individual who has person-

- ally experienced homelessness [BOS choice]
- Seat 7: individual who has personally experienced homelessness [Mayor's choice]
- Seat 8: individual who has experience advocating on homeless or mental health [BOS choice]
- Seat 9: an at large seat [Controller's choice]
- "Our City Our Home was developed and centered around the voices of homeless and unstably housed communities," says Matthias Mormino, policy analyst at the Chinatown Community Development Center. "Hearing from the experts on homelessness -- people who are currently homeless or have lived experience -- will make sure Our City Our Home is informed and can be effective in ending homelessness."
- A minimum of one third of the Oversight Committee will have had personal experience with homelessness and will be the experts guiding other folks engaged in the struggle. The Board of Supervisors voted on whether or not to establish to Oversight Committee on Thursday, February 28th. ■



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**Name:** Sally Conn, 36; Jeremiah Conn, 41; Dawson Conn, 2  
**Date:** 13 December 2018  
**Place:** Compass  
**Without a home:** 3 months

**What does home mean?**

**Sally:** It makes me cry. Home means to me a family, where we're together and don't have to move around all the time. Home is the place where me, my husband, my baby can relax, be together, have dinner together.

**Jeremiah:** To be honest with you shelter and home, as long as your family is together that is home. Wherever you lay your head down, that is home to me as long as our family is together.

**The hardest thing**

**Jeremiah:** Being on the streets and seeing what's going on in real life and having my son susceptible to that everyday. Him growing up around it instead of being in home where we can teach him, we can't teach him outside.

**Sally:** Hardest thing is being outside all the time where the baby sees all this bad (stuff) that happens outside and you know you're not able to go somewhere where you know you're safe, where your baby won't get hurt.

**Jeremiah:** I see how other families are having to struggle to and it does affect me because I see what is going on compared to people that have homes and have everything they need. They don't see what we (those without a place) have to struggle and go through.

**Sally:** I see a lot of good people but I see more bad people. I see how they treat each other. When I came here I thought it would be a good place for us but it's not. It's not a really good place and it's affected me a lot.

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COMICS

coming on April Fools Day

Submit!!!!

your comics and drawings  
to streetsheetsf@gmail.com

Deadline is March 20th!