

**From:** [Anne Gormley](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Struggling to figure out how to register to speak at today's city council meeting...  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 16, 2024 7:19:35 PM  
**Attachments:** [COA mayor and city council letter 20240716.docx](#)

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Dear Clerk of Alameda City Council:

I have not been able to find out how to register for today's City Council meeting to speak on behalf of Dignity Village. (I have learning difficulties and I just could not find where to register.)

In lieu of being able to speak, I wrote a letter. Please make sure the City Council has access to read my letter.

Someone did forward me a link, so I was able to log into the City Council Meeting, but since I am not registered, I doubt I will be allowed to speak.

Thank you so much.

Respectfully,  
Annette Gormley

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16 July, 2024

Der Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft and the Alameda City Council Members

My apologies for not being present tonight, but I am taking 12 units in school this summer and I have two exams I need to complete tonight.

I am currently a resident at Dignity Village run by the City of Alameda and managed by Five Keys.

I was also homeless about twelve years ago and was in a program in Berkeley run by B.O.S.S. While there, I had a similar experience with the B.O.S.S. staff where money that I had saved up for first and last months rent and a deposit was stolen by one of the B.O.S.S. staff members. At the time, no one told me I could file a police report and the company did NOT do anything to help me recover the money or to sanction the person who stole my money.

Changing providers is NOT going to fix the issue. There has to be checks and balances and that only happens when there is adequate staffing.

In fact, it is more likely to happen again when B.O.S.S. is here because they always did the minimum and they will not provide out of their own budget a supervisor to be onsite like Five Keys does now.

Yes, the unfortunate event happened on Five Keys watch. Yes, they should be fined or sanctioned, or have to developed a written plan to remedy their lack of checks and balance.

Comparing the two programs, Five Keys is infinitely better. The Five Keys staff, in general, supports me in working on improving my skills so when I leave here I will be able to maintain stability. I truly am grateful for the encouragement, assistance, and support that I receive daily from them. The culture here is affirming with the goal of self-sufficiency. The Ambassadors can be overheard giving encouragement, suggestions, and resource ideas to guess even when their job for that day is kitchen staff or floater, etc. B.O.S.S. was always short staffed, I felt like I was cattle. It was depressing to be there, and they gave me no assistance, no hope, and no resources to access to find housing. Also, other than providing the matching account to save for my deposit, they offered nothing to help me prepare for permanent housing or to help build stability (which is why I am homeless now.) When I finally found housing, it was solely through my own efforts and my efforts were negatively impacted by their theft of my money that I had saved for that purpose.

Before you end Five Keys contract at Dignity Village and bring in another company, and especially before you decide to bring in B.O.S.S., keep in mind that because we are a marginalized population theft of clients/guests' assets is a common occurrence. Five Keys has lost face because of the action of only one employee, which makes them the most likely of any company to work the hardest to make sure that does not happen again.

Unlike B.O.S.S., most of Five Keys Staff really do live up to their corporate values, values that are in harmony with the values of Alameda. I really hope you reconsider cancelling Five Keys contract because I know what it is like to be in a B.O.S.S. program. It is hard enough to get back on my feet on my own, it is even harder when the program managers don't care about my long-term stability and instead treat me as a number.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to comments.

Sincerely,

Annette Gormley

Dignity Village A-21