

cc: Mayor
City Council
City Manager
City Attorney
ACMs
DCMs
HR Director

From: Melinda O'Neill <iammindy@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 18, 2019 10:03 AM
To: Nicol, Colleen <CNicol@riversideca.gov>
Subject: [External] Homeless crisis

Dear Mayor Bailey, Council Members, City Manager, et al,

Thank you to everyone involved in the clean-up of Hole Lake. Over the years, I have watched the homeless population balloon and crime increase in our city. I care very much about Riverside and I was astounded to learn about the situation there. We should not be complacent in these complex situations going forward...which is why I am writing to you.

I read that Chief Diaz is resigning very soon. This is a perfect time for a fresh look and new ideas. Although Chief Diaz believes the police department is in a good place - and I want to mention here that I am very pro-law enforcement - I was very disconcerted to hear of a murder in downtown Riverside's entertainment district across the street from our historic Mission Inn and the recent murder of a CHP officer and two other officers injured. We have a problem with crime and, coupled with the homeless situation and early release, I am very, very concerned about the health of our city.

As the City Council goes about the hiring and decision-making process involved in choosing a new Chief of Police, I would like you to carefully consider the following things:

1. Choose someone who has a record of success with crime and homelessness in their own city. This is important.
2. Go outside California - do not choose someone from LAPD or San Francisco especially - choose the best candidate.
3. Take a look at what Sheriff Chad Bianco is doing – we need more of a “tough on crime” mentality/policy.
4. We need a reformer – we need change – and we need it now. Our city is only getting bigger – and so is our population of criminals and homeless.
5. We need a Chief who will demand that his officers engage the homeless population. It is horrific that citizens are having to clean our sidewalks of human defecation. We need to solve this situation now before we have Typhus and Typhoid Fever in our own city. Bring in people who have ideas/suggestions as this will need to be a multi-pronged effort - there is no one solution.
6. If other cities are sending their homeless population to Riverside because we've got better services, we need to send them back. It's grossly unfair to make your tax-paying citizens take care of other cities' problems.

Please, take the hiring of a new Police Chief very seriously - which I'm sure you will. Take your time getting the right person to handle our unique situation. The Chief of Police you choose to take care of our city should have an inclination toward solving the homeless epidemic and toward enforcing our laws and ordinances. This is paramount to a safe and successful Riverside.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Melinda O'Neill
Concerned resident