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**To:** [Mary Gourley](#)  
**Cc:** [Fernandez, Evert](#); [Kathy Oetinger](#); [Kevin Kilgore](#); [Bill Braga](#); [Dante Del Prete](#)  
**Subject:** Why Doesn't \$33K In Support = Financial Independence - What is the Goal of SAVS Safe Parking? Public Comment - Item 17 3/15/22  
**Date:** Friday, March 11, 2022 8:42:40 AM

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Council Members,

Sebastopol taxpayers are being asked to support the Council in their ongoing advocacy of SAVS (a nonprofit run by Adrienne Lauby who does not reside in Sebastopol) by assisting SAVS with finding yet another location after the 845 Gravenstein site closes in December. Why is this part of the work of the Council as outlined in the Report from the Committee on the Unhoused, Item 17, 3/15/22 Council Meeting?

### **Why doesn't \$33,000 in Support = Financial Independence?**

Why is another site necessary? Transients currently living at 845 Gravenstein are receiving free rent, free food, free utilities and other services for over 10 months. The total budget for the site is around \$600,000 for 18 RVs; that is \$33,000 per RV.

Can't the residents living receiving these extremely generous financial benefits find jobs and save enough money to be financially independent over the course of 10 months? Isn't the goal of these programs to help able bodied adults become financially independent? If not, what is their purpose?

Working at \$15 per hour, 40 hours per week, one can gross \$2400 per month. If a person worked one full time job and one part time job (as many people do), they could gross \$3600 per month.

As they have all living expenses paid, they should be able to save between \$1200-\$2000 per month. Over 10 months, they could save between \$10,000-20,000, which would enable them to find permanent housing on their own either here or in a cheaper location.

In addition, residents are not subject to the inflation which other workers are currently experiencing.

Few adults get the chance to live in an all expenses paid situation for 10 months; this is a golden opportunity for the residents to become financially stable and financially independent.

In addition, there is a labor shortage. Several fast food restaurants and other businesses are hiring within walking distance of the 845 Gravenstein site.

### **Why Doesn't 10 Months of Case Management Result in Permanent Housing?**

If residents have a permanent disability and/or are elderly and cannot work, why wouldn't

SAVS be able to secure and locate permanent housing for these residents? It seems that at least half of the residents of 845 Gravenstein are able bodied adults, which would mean that maybe 50% or 9 residents are unable to work. Over the next 10 months, wouldn't SAVS be able to locate housing for 9 people as they are part of a larger network of addressing people with disabilities who need permanent housing?

### **Financial Planning Should Be Part of SAVS Services**

Does SAVS provide financial planning to residents so they can map out a financially independent future? As we live in a system that requires able bodied adults to work in order to provide basic necessities like shelter, it seems that financial planning is necessary so that residents can optimize the enormous benefit package they are receiving and move into financial independence. Residents should be counseled to look at the cost of living in different parts of the country where they can support themselves on their labor and/or disability payments.

The goal of these programs should be financial independence here or in locations where people can afford to live. One basic requirement of adulthood is being able to shelter oneself. Many people move to locations where they can afford to live, especially if they can save money over a 10 month time period.

### **Why are the Residents of Sebastopol Responsible for Helping SAVS find an Alternative Site?**

SAVS is a nonprofit business not located in Sebastopol. When their 845 Gravenstein site closes, they should be able and capable of finding another site in the County if they are unable to help their clients gain financial independence or relocate to permanent housing or into subsidized housing. The residents of Sebastopol have no further obligation to SAVS or to the 845 Gravenstein residents. Sebastopol cannot afford any other transient services or Safe Parking.

The businesses and residents of Sebastopol have already been extremely generous with tax money going towards transients on Morris Street and other locations for the last 5 years.

Transients have cost taxpayers enormous amounts of money through policing, public works, fires, destruction of public property, including ongoing vandalism at the Community Center, port-o-potties, handwashing stations, outside attorney costs, City staff time, Council time and sanitation. The City of Sebastopol has no further obligation to SAVS, especially as the City continues to support transient populations at Park Village, the Sebastopol Inn and Safe Parking at Community Church. Sebastopol has the highest ratio of transient beds per capita in Sonoma County.

Best,

Kate Haug