

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF  
July 19, 2006**

**VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT – ITEM 57**

1 **Bill No. 2006-37 – ABEYANCE ITEM – Prohibits within City parks the providing of food**  
2 **or meals as would typically be provided in a rescue mission or shelter for the homeless.**  
3 **Proposed by: Bradford R. Jerbic, City Attorney**

4

5 **Appearance List:**

6 OSCAR B. GOODMAN, Mayor

7 BRAD JERBIC, City Attorney

8 GARY REESE, Councilman

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11 (11:19 – 11:26)

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14 Typed by: Angela Crolli

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16 **MAYOR GOODMAN**

17 Okay. Fifty-seven is Bill 2006-37, prohibits within City parks the providing of food or meals as  
18 would typically be provided in a rescue mission or shelter for the homeless. Mr. Jerbic, would  
19 you please read this Bill?

20

21 **BRAD JERBIC**

22 I'd be happy to Your Honor. Bill Number 2006-37 (inaudible) to bring certain types of food  
23 distribution within City parks and to apply for other related matters. Your Honor, this is a First  
24 Amendment that is up for consideration before the Council today. If I could briefly read into the  
25 record the new Subsection 6 that should be in your backup, and if it's not, I'll read this into the  
26 record now. These are the following things that are prohibited in City parks and Number 6 now  
27 becomes the providing of food or meals to the indigent for free or for a nominal fee. For  
28 purposes of this paragraph, an indigent person is a person who may reasonably, ordinary person  
29 would believe is entitled to apply for services or receive assistance under NRS Chapter 428.  
30 That is the new language that replaces the former language in Subsection 6. If I could, Your  
31 Honor, I would like to make a bit of a record on this Bill and then answer any questions that the  
32 Council has today.

33

34 **MAYOR GOODMAN**

35 Certainly.

36

37 **BRAD JERBIC**

38 On June 26 (sic), 2006, this Council heard Item Number 77 with respect to the problems at  
39 Circle Park and I know a number of people testified before the Council. The, I would like at this  
40 point in time to incorporate, by reference, that transcript into this record as backup and some  
41 evidence to support why we're doing what we're doing today or asking the Council what're doing  
42 today. In particular, I'm reading from a draft of that transcript, the testimony of Duane  
43 Sonnenberg, and if I could just read this into the record briefly. I think that one of the things we  
44 need to establish is the fact that this is not going to prohibit a single homeless person from

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45 obtaining the meal in this town. There was ample record made at that time that between the  
46 various shelters in town and the kitchens, that we're not only able to provide meals to anybody  
47 who wants one, but there's an harmful effect for providing them at other places.

48 Mr. Sonnerberg says on the record, and I'm quoting now, I'm Duane Sonnenberg, currently I'm  
49 the director of Grants and Special Projects. For the last 19 years I've worked with the Salvation  
50 Army, primarily with the homeless population. The Salvation Army and Catholic Charities, Las  
51 Vegas Rescue Mission, Lutheran Social Services, all significant effort going into providing food,  
52 not only for housed families through our family services, but particularly for the homeless. We  
53 feed over a thousand meals a day at the Salvation Army, probably 400 – of those go directly to  
54 homeless individuals in the afternoon. Catholic Charities will do the same thing in the morning  
55 meal and the Las Vegas Rescue Mission will do the same thing in the evening. Both Catholic  
56 Charities and the Salvation Army have recently built new state of the art kitchens. We could  
57 easily triple our capacity on our campus with the new facility, not only in the preparation of  
58 meals but also in the feeding of individuals using our dining facilities in, you know, just a  
59 sequential manner. So, we have no problem with significant increases in our ability to meet the  
60 need of feeding homeless people. In the past, we have invited community individuals and other  
61 faith-based groups if they want to feed to come onto our property.

62 And then he goes on to talk about the harms that occurred, based on his observation of a feeding  
63 that occurred across the street from the social services. We had a number that would feed over  
64 on Stocker across the street and the result was or several results was, one is when they showed  
65 up it was very dangerous crossing the street because those individuals who saw the food wanted  
66 to be first in line, and without regard to traffic or safety, immediately charged across the street.  
67 After they fed the homeless, there was a significant amount of debris and residue left that  
68 cluttered up the neighborhood and they did not have adequate trash bags or trash cans to collect  
69 the food. Oftentimes they were in styrofoam containers so the people would walk down the  
70 street eating as they walked and unfortunately wherever they stopped is where the container was  
71 left. And then he goes on to talk about parks in general and after observing some of the health  
72 issues and debris issues associated with feeding people not in association with the shelter, says,  
73 those feedings in the parks and on the street, from my perspective, are more problematic than  
74 they are helpful. The, Your Honor, we had a number of individuals who testified on June 21st  
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75 regarding the conditions at Circle Park where there have been efforts to feed homeless people  
76 outside the shelters and outside of any kind of organized structure. We've had testimony that  
77 there was a lot of debris left behind, but that the homeless population itself is being displaced  
78 from where service providers can assist them with shelter, medical and other needs to an area to  
79 where none of those services are available. They are left behind without transportation and as a  
80 result they end up in neighborhoods, not only leaving debris behind, but sometimes sleeping on  
81 people's yards, sometimes defecating, urinating on people's yards and we've also seen a spike in  
82 crime when that whole, when that park had been opened after it had been closed for renovation.  
83 You can draw whatever conclusion you want to from that. Based on those, that testimony and  
84 those facts, we were asked to craft some solutions. This is one of several ordinances that we'll be  
85 coming before the Council. With that, Your Honor, I don't have anything else to add to the  
86 record and I'll be glad to answer any questions that Council has.

87

88 **MAYOR GOODMAN**

89 All right. Thank you. Mayor Pro Tem.

90

91 **COUNCILMAN REESE**

92 I want to thank, personally thank the Mayor and especially Brad Jerbic for crafting this – Bill for  
93 the City. I've been representing Circle Park for many, many years. We really tried to be very  
94 proactive at this location in making a park that the neighbors can bring their kids, their children  
95 to – play, participate. I – finally, I reached my wits end and I invited the Mayor to one of my  
96 neighborhood meetings and you can see where it – went from there. And I – think, Mayor, that  
97 the – people who live in this area, really owe you a debt of gratitude because without you,  
98 without your leadership, without your tenacity, we wouldn't be here where we're at today, and I  
99 just appreciate what you've done for my Ward.

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100 **MAYOR GOODMAN**

101 Well, I appreciate that. Any other comments or questions? Basically, we – are in the process of  
102 considering ordinances which will address these issues to make neighborhoods safe, to preserve  
103 quality of life. This particular ordinance though, I think, is in the best interest of the homeless,  
104 particularly the indigent homeless who really need to be given guidance and counseling and to  
105 get themselves transitioned back into a meaningful, worthwhile, productive life, and that can  
106 only take place with the expertise of social workers, of psychologists, people who know how to  
107 relate to them and by having the homeless get their meals in a location, such as the Salvation  
108 Army or the Shade Tree or Catholic Charities, provides the opportunity where those folks can  
109 receive those services. So, I have no question we're doing the right thing, as far as this particular  
110 ordinance is concerned. So, with that, I move for its adoption.

111

112 **BRAD JERBIC**

113 As First Amendment, Your Honor.

114

115 **MAYOR GOODMAN**

116 As First Amendment. Let's vote, please. Post. Motion carries. **(Motion carried unanimously**  
117 **with TARKANIAN excused)**. Thank you. Thank you, Councilmen.

118

119

**(END OF DISCUSSION)**

120 /ac;ds