

Boulder Votes to Restrict Panhandling to Those Who Don't Need Money

Written by Bum Rushedouttatown
Wednesday, 08 August 2012

Building on its law that prevents anyone from "camping" in city parks and sidewalks overnight, which has forced many homeless people to move to different locations with friendlier laws toward them, Boulder City Council voted unanimously to make it illegal to panhandle anywhere in city limits unless you can prove that you don't really need the money.



"We want to stress that this new law, like the camping law, doesn't single out homeless people," said Boulder Mayor Matt Cherrybomb. "It singles out people who don't have any money, and if that group is predominantly homeless, that's just a coincidence."

The new law created a Panhandling Permit Board, which will oversee who is allowed to panhandle on the lucrative Pearl Street locations and surrounding streets. To obtain a legal permit, prospective panhandlers must provide legal documentation showing proof of, for example, timely mortgage payments, car ownership, full paid tuition at a college or prep school, an investment portfolio with sufficient funds or a medical marijuana card. A complete list of acceptable documentation can be found at the board's Web site at www.changeforweed.com.

"There are certain types of panhandlers who are a boon for local tourism, such as the guy who can tell you the ZIP Code of where you live or the dark-skinned fella' who can fit his whole body into a little box," added Cherrybomb. "Plus, we didn't want a legal hassle from the wealthy parents of CU students who just need a little extra money for drugs."

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"We felt that this new law eliminates the undesirables, while maintaining the eclectic feel of Boulder panhandling that this community has spent decades developing," he added. "And, again, this isn't aimed toward ridding ourselves of the damned homeless. At all."

The new law will be strictly enforced by Boulder City Attorney Tom Carrtyuhofftojail, well-known for his kindly attitudes toward hippies and the homeless. Anyone caught panhandling without the required permit will be given a \$100 fine, which is the same as for a "camping" violation. Anyone unable to pay the fine, such as, say, the homeless, can either spend a night in jail or hop on a train headed out of town with their belongings wrapped up in a bandanna on a stick.