



LAWSUIT OVER: Framingham agrees to pay SMOC \$1 million

By Danielle Ameden/Daily News staff

The MetroWest Daily News

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FRAMINGHAM — The town has agreed to pay the South Middlesex Opportunity Council \$1 million to settle an ant lawsuit the social service provider filed in federal court in 2007.

SMOC late this afternoon announced the settlement, which also requires training "relative to the rights of the disabl anti-discrimination laws."

The town's insurance company will pay SMOC the \$1 million, according to the settlement.

The sides met with a mediator earlier this month to work on settling the case out of court, on the advice of federal Ju Woodlock.

SMOC sued the town and certain individual officials and residents, alleging the town tried to block or stall the nonp relocate and expand its Sage House, a home for recovering drug addicts and their families, and to open Larry's Place disabled veterans

"On behalf of the disadvantaged and disabled populations served by our agency, we embrace the agreement in which acknowledge the right of every person in our community to have a place to call home," SMOC Executive Director Ja in a statement. "Making the decision to file the lawsuit in 2007 was extremely difficult, but we were guided by our b disabled population we serve is protected under state and federal law.

"The settlement agreement affirms that federal civil rights law supports the decision we had made over five years ag with siting housing for veterans with substance abuse and mental health service needs and housing for young famili committed to living in recovery and moving forward to successful independent living," he added. "This settlement w important guidance for the creation of supportive housing for disabled individuals and families. With this settlemen achieved everything we hoped to achieve."

Woodlock signed off on the settlement late this afternoon, closing the case.

The Board of Selectmen issued a statement through Town Manager Julian Suso early this evening, saying the settler has been a difficult chapter in our town's history."

"To avoid costly and protracted litigation and trial, the town's insurer made a business decision to make a payment t million," selectmen said.

Since 2007, Town Meeting OK'd spending \$750,000 on the town's legal defense.

Selectmen noted the town avoided one possible outcome scenario of a trial - that a federal judge would begin overse

future planning and zoning decisions.

"While mediation is not a one-way street and no party is completely satisfied, the Board of Selectmen firmly believe: is in the town's best interests."

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Comments (47)

Knight owl

16 hours ago

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This is good news-bad news. The good news is that we will not be spending any more money to defend this suit. the bad news is that Framingham further down the crapper This is indeed a sad day for Framingham. The days of this town being a desirable place for decent people to live and rai forever.

Love2Swim

16 hours ago

Report Abuse

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MWDN appears to have published without any input from Town or defendants.

Who wrote this half of teh story?

-Ned Merrill

ginker

16 hours ago

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Now that SMOC has 'achieved everything we hoped to achieve' according to Mr. Cuddy, as a goodwill gesture he should give that money back to Framingham, which are suffering terribly under repeated budget cuts. He should remember, our public schools are also educating many children. I hate to think of what effect this settlement will have on future funding of the schools.

sigtau95

16 hours ago

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get rid of this smoc crap they are bringing in alcoholic, drug addicts to our neighborhoods walking around where kids ride their bikes and play. They should be paying Framingham millions of dollars for dealing with their crap. How much police work is going to smoc-related people committing crimes?

BRING BACK MY OLD TOWN!!! CLEAN THE DIRT OUT OF FRAMINGHAM!

sallyp

16 hours ago

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Since when has being against illegals, drunkards, junkies, etc. been considered discrimination? If Mr. Cuddy is so concerned with these people, but we need a better environment, say 67 Moore Avenue, Warren, MA, where they will have fresh air, woods to roam, and be away from all the evil influences of Framingham.

evelyn

16 hours ago

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Okay, between Cuddy and the illegals, why don't we just hand over the keys to Memorial Building, the schools, the hospital and the FPD, and then we can go on to find another place to live. Should I sign up for the 'training lessons'? Calling the realtor now!

Knight owl

16 hours ago

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Any concessions from SMOC.? Maybe they could agree to spread out a little over the surrounding towns. Maybe they could agree to vett their client order that cop shooters aren't brought here.

flameo76

16 hours ago

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Joe go grab your camera'streets of Framingham taken over by Brazilians' again this town takes it up the 'pooper'1mill...now what services are to be cut or have an increase in cost...buckle up people ..school lunches are now 10 bucks....school bus ride \$850.....property tax up \$250.....FraminghamStoliCranberry

16 hours ago

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If you run a Keno Bar in the 135/226 center of town this will bring more business.

Otherwise only time will identify the impact of this settlement.

FraminghamGuy11

16 hours ago

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The bottom line is no matter what you think about their approach to their business (SMOC) the Town of Framingham officials have handled this cost the town millions of dollars. They will say that the insurance company is paying it, but how much did the insurance company pay overall, bet settlement. Further I bet the town paid at least a million to the overpriced Boston firm. It was a loser case, they were sold a bill of goods from a hi lawyer who pocketed seven figures. With Esty and Bernsteing running off their mouths, the Town could not win. Good money after bad, now the for years through increased insurance rates...they companies always get it back.

Knight owl

16 hours ago

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SMOC won this case because of the letter of the law and not the spirit of the law. These laws were not put in place so that an organization can inu people with expensive needs. Framingham has been treated with a battering ram in the form of SMOC's growth.

Knight owl

15 hours ago

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BTW.....I found it an interesting strategy that SMOC employed when it also sued the individuals in this case. The selectmen may not have been se they were not mentioned in the suit.

What was the settlement with the individuals.?

rk01701

15 hours ago

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Well folks, I guess this means that Cuddy and the SMOCites niow have free rein in this here town and they can do whatever they feel will provide for the creation of supportive housing for disabled individuals and families. With this settlement, we have now achieved everything we hoped to : NEVER be over.

RBP3483

15 hours ago

Report Abuse

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Report Abuse

We need to intensify our efforts to get rid of SMOC! Check every criminal adress for SMOC ownership. Keep this rubbish OUT of Framingham!!
cofficer
15 hours ago
Report Abuse
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Report Abuse

I will need some actors to star in a new movie call 'Escape from Framingham' . Who wants the Snake Pliskin role?
ashlandgirl
15 hours ago
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Report Abuse

I agree with Ginker. Give it back to the schools. Put the money back into the town that you take so much from and demand so much from. Hey--v goes around right Cuddy?
fram4500
15 hours ago
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Wish they could give the discrimination training to the blow-hards in this town - they're the ones who could really use it....Suggest if people don't they fight to repeal them or move to another country. Ignoring them doesn't seem to be a good option.

Framingham is going to go down the tubes because the schools are going down the drain and no young families with children would move here w options out there.

switchman

15 hours ago

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Time to move out, hold up your hands in surrender and come to Florida where you can buy a decent house for \$90,000-120,000 THEY have wor law abiding, taxpaying, decent person moved out of Framingham it would soon turn into Sodom and Gamorra and we could watch it burn to the Natick and Ashland would be next because wherever SMOC goes plague and pestulance are sure to follow!

BBB

15 hours ago

Report Abuse

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Report Abuse

Framingham's gone, gone forever. Sell, get out while you can.

FramMom

15 hours ago

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What *I* would like to know, and as SMOC is an organization that receives funding from taxes I believe I am ENTITLED to know, is where did th side of the lawsuit come?

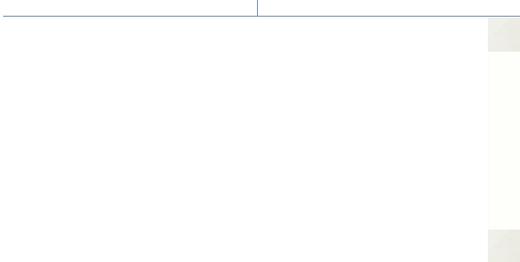
All told, I feel like this is a victory for Framingham. It would have cost a whole heckuva lot more to continue the legal battle than the million buck company ponied up and I bet you dollars to donuts that amount covers only a tiny amount of the money that SMOC wasted pursuing Framinghai citizens over what amounts to sour grapes over getting nabbed breaking their own rules.

I find myself wondering how SMOC intends to move forward. Surely between this and what took place in Worcester and Gardner, they must real burning more bridges than they are building. I am not so naive as to believe they will experience the massive paradigm shift they need to in order address the phenomenal amount of ill will - even among their former supporters - that they have cultivated through this terrible decision. But mc should at least realize that they will need to think and act more carefully. It remains to be seen if they are able to be rehabilitated, ironic consider their cause d'etre.

Disbelief2009

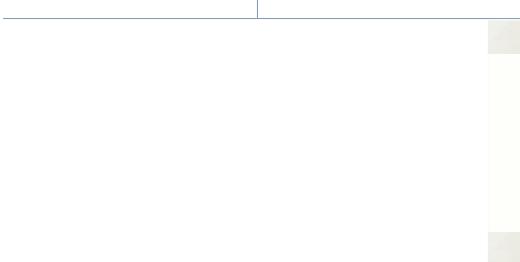
14 hours ago

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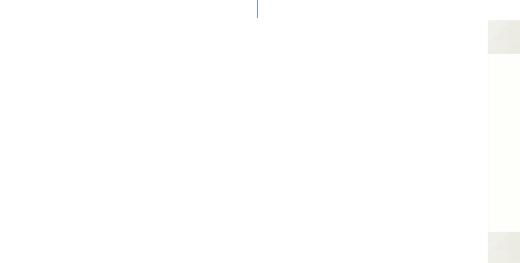
HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA! losers
BadSull
14 hours ago
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Report Abuse

'Selectmen noted the town avoided one possible outcome scenario of a trial - that a federal judge would begin overseeing the town's future planning decisions.'

Seeing what's going on maybe that wouldn't be a bad thing!
FlyersFan
14 hours ago
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Report Abuse

Regardless of what you think about SMOC, we just flushed at least \$750,000 down the toilet. When the suit started 3 years ago, everyone said we insurance company's lawyers because they had an incentive to settle; as a town, we needed to fight and win to protect our town! Here we are, three years later, and we are in the same place we were trying to avoid - we just settled the lawsuit, as FraminghamGuy says we'll be paying for it for a LONG time. The big question is: what will we do moving forward? Will everyone FINALLY realize that certain elected officials who can't keep their mouths shut have been told to by their attorneys - really shouldn't be in office?
geezergeek
13 hours ago
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Isn't it a conflict of interests that 4 of the 5 of the Selectmen were sued personally and they voted to settle in the name of the Town. If the 4 bobbl their mouths in the first instance maybe there would not be a suit. If Dennis decides to run again in the spring I hope everyone remembers his pa comes time to vote.

sdclams

13 hours ago

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It's only \$750,000 so far. That does not cover likely over another 300k more that has not yet been invoiced. So.... the final cost of trying to win a holding the shorter thingie is a cool \$2 Mil. Nice going FRAMINGHAM! Will be interesting to see how Laurie Lee and Giombetti try to play this c season kicks off next year, as they and their \$2 million spending spree in an knowingly un-winnable situation are up for re-election.

Framinghamnorth75

13 hours ago

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One lawsuit down.....four more to go.....

GabaGabaHey

12 hours ago

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Report Abuse

Did Herb Chasen get a slice of that smoc money??
MWgal
12 hours ago
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Can the residents of Framingham sue SMOC for the 300 % increase in crime due to their policies on allowing convicted criminals to roam the str
sobriety? What about the individual police officers who have been shot and assaulted by these residents, can they sue?

It seems obvious to me that when you have people who have been repeatedly convicted of crimes, that giving them 'free room and board' as well :
create an impact that someone responsible for the mess should have to pay for. If SMOC chooses to rehabilitate and house these people, fine- but
for the negative impact to those who don't 'choose' to do this??????
nynlyvs
12 hours ago
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town of Framingham; you have been out of line since 1991, SMOC just goes to show whoever blinked first got the pile of money on the table...the
for look at what is creeping around that God Forsaken town....all is not forgiven indeed..
AmericanLiving
11 hours ago
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Report Abuse

MW gal. In answer to your question, no. That's was the point of the lawsuit. Just, no.
Knight owl
11 hours ago
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Report Abuse

Enough of this....let's talk about Samantha, Framingham's kissing bandit.

greydevil

11 hours ago

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Report Abuse

Welcome to Smocingham, where taxpayers are second class citizens. I just pray that the board of SMOC gets stuck downtown some night, and ha their clients.

rob

10 hours ago

Report Abuse

You must be logged in to report abuse.

Report Abuse

I just hope that Framingham has an decent supply of heros like Officer Hurton - it looks like Framingham is going to be needing them.

Iamaccfile

9 hours ago

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Maybe we could use it to pay that bread and water salary Jim Cuddy gets for running SMOC:

What's it pay to lead social services?

Jim Cuddy, who as the executive director of the South Middlesex Opportunity Council is about as polarizing a figure in town as one will find, will salary of \$260,000 in 2010.

<http://www.metrowestdailynews.com/archive/x692838243/Whats-it-pay-to-lead-social-services>

Joe Rizoli

CCFIILE.com

Kingfisher

2 hours ago

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Report Abuse

Get out while you can, and please will the last one out turn out the lights. That is if the SMOC clients haven't stolen them all.

ZMAN

1 hour ago

Report Abuse

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Report Abuse

Well Jimmy boy guess it was just about the money, and not the people

Time to get out of town as we will all be flushed down the smoc drain and there is nothing we can do about it

townguy

1 hour ago

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Not many wins in the column for well thought of town Counsel, this might be the time to drop the overpaid lug and get someone in the lineup that we are at it take away the five in the top of the order and we know who they are (Short fat bald guy, the gambino family member, Mrs. Doubtfire, other lady) and replace them with new blood and new ideas. People we are in quicksand it is time to work to get out. As Warren Zevon used to say and money, the sh.t has hit the fan' We do know the first thing we have to do is sh..t all the lawyers, load all your guns, don't bother looking for the way of these nitwits running SMOCingham.

Thanks Mr. Cuddy for showing the town people we really can't play with the big boys, when you group came to town we should have left the sign instead we welcomed you for whatever reason and you have been giving it to us pretty good for 10 plus years. My question you is will there at least of the pounding?

prouliberal

1 hour ago

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Report Abuse

I for one breathed a sigh of relief. I remember commenting two years ago about this just as any citizen has a right to do. I am FOR the disabled and having a resource in which to turn. I thank fate or god or something for every day I am secure and not drug/alcohol addicted or abused on the street by the bloggers when he said it was a matter of civil rights and discrimination against the handicapped and mentally handicapped. I understood why you do not provide a place for people in need you will just suffer the repercussions because people have to go somewhere. I UNDERSTAND ALL knowing the intricacies of the case.

What I got verbally PILLORIED for by someone who -- I will NEVER NEVER forget if I live to be 100 -- is the fact that I said whoever owns SMOC KEEP UP THOSE FACILITIES. They cannot just allow people with problematic issues to live there and let the properties go to seed. I even went to a place people were talking about on a street I KNEW as a child. The facility was AWFUL!

So I am saying the SAME THING AGAIN. I think the settlement is a GOOD thing to FINALLY put this to rest and no more cash strapped town spending BUT BUT I still say that SMOC and those who own SMOC MUST maintain their buildings, maintain a SECURE environment, and keep a CHECK on.

I do not care if my liberal compatriots THINK I help the other side. THERE IS NO OTHER SIDE. There is just the humane and HUMAN side. People often through no fault of their own need a place. BUT the people of this town have a RIGHT to expect civility, maintenance of the property and a to BEHAVE with decency, morality and understanding that anti-social, profane or illegal behavior is UNACCEPTABLE. I HOPE the Fram Police situation AND I hope the owners of the property take care of its maintenance.

I am glad people have a place to go I really am. I feel empathy for all those who suffer as I have had my own share BUT that does not mean that you can be tolerated. I am GLAD mediation brought this wretched suit to an end. I will maintain my position not knowing the people involved or the cosmetic things I saw and I do NOT care who gets pole up their posterior because I speak what I HOPE is the truth without the stain of STUPID and no bias when we are ALL in this together. Maintain the property, keep it secure, monitor the behavior. That is all I asked or all I ever wanted and will EVER speak to me rudely and directly EVER again telling me I betray my politics. I betray nothing and do not have to prove my liberal credo EVER. I do NOT forget the upsetting diatribe but it did NOT sway me one inch. I still believe what I do and I am STILL a proud liberal even IF I do lockstep always with members of a political group.

The suit is over -- thank god. Now as one famous religious sage said -- GO AND SIN NO MORE!

newduke

1 hour ago

Report Abuse

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Report Abuse

Town guy could not agree more. It is time to look for new town counsel. It appears that in the end town counsel was the biggest winner. So in the million dollars from the town and has just got the upper hand on the town. Smoc 1 town 0. Then town counsel gets \$750k that we know of. Town Now the towns insurance company has to pay the bill of the 1 million. I know what you are thinking, that the town wins that one, wrong now the goes up. Insurance company 1 town 0. and to top it all off 4 Out of the 5 named in the lawsuit are still running the town. That is the biggest loss for tiredofmoonbats

1 hour ago

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With SMOC now poised to expand at will Framingham will surely need something along these lines:

Natick puts new limits on sex offenders

http://www.metrowestdailynews.com/top_stories/x1673647410/Natick-puts-new-limits-on-sex-offenders

Pat

48 minutes ago

Report Abuse

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Report Abuse

Proudliberal, you have a choice as to whether or not you want to be a drunk or drug addicted. It's called yout hand to mouth, or arm, or leg, or ve the nose. If you are on the street because you lost your job of 25 years, smuc will not help you because you have a proven record of being a decent Cuddy, my house is on the market; smuc being one of the reasons why I'm headed out of this sh*thole. It can easily be made into seven bedrooms 'disabled'. Sorry folks, I'm selling out.

Knight owl

33 minutes ago

Report Abuse

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Report Abuse

After 52 years a Framingham resident I am considering putting my house on the market. this town has been sold down the river. Look around. i : all over the place and I see multi-million dollar low income housing (musterfield). 40b is putting a whale in my swimming pool.

Some people used to say to put criminals on an island. Framingham is that island..

BBB

21 minutes ago

Report Abuse

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Report Abuse

Don't sue SMOC, sue Jim Cuddy. Drain him for every penny he's got. Drag it out until he's broke, loses his house and has to move to Framingham criminals, junkies, deadbeats, sex offenders.

Abrahamv2

14 minutes ago

Report Abuse

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Juniper Hill class of 74, Walsh Middle School class of 78, Fram North class of 82. Getting ready to pay my \$1,000 quarterly real estate tax bill th

This town sucks. Same as SMOC. SMOC needs to recognize the amount of hatred towards them and how this settlement will only exacerbate that contributes nothing of benefit to this town. SMOC acts as a magnet for every sort of scumbag, derelict, drug addict and deranged person imagina Framingham always forced to carry the full burden on her shoulders and her shoulders alone? Why can't SMOC do the right thing and spread the

Although I lived in Framingham for most of my 46 years I am done. I can't wait to move.

fax

8 minutes ago

Report Abuse

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Report Abuse

newt, town guy - our town counsel wasn't the firm representing the town in this case. it was mintz levin from boston. they are the ones who receive allocations to defend the town in this case, not petrinie.

prouliberal

7 minutes ago

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Pat, I am sorry you feel you have to sell your home. That is simply sad. I will argue one point with you and that is not a ton is known about addict person have a drink no problem and another get hooked. What makes one want the haze of heroine and others shudder at the thought? What ma that some want to anesthetize themselves from it even if it means destroying their own bodies? Personally, I have suffered great tragedy BUT wh makes me almost sick. These are genetic predispositions to the substance itself. Which genes may be involved, science does not know ... yet.

I disagree that EVERYTHING is a choice. No sometimes it is not a choice. The woes of the Biblical Job were visited upon him and yet he still clur same woes in modernity drugs provide a shield I suppose at least for a time. The ravages physically can be as we know simply unbelievable that o body to that which will destroy it. It seems counterintuitive.

For centuries mental illness was treated with a scarlet letter most believing one could control their behavior. They cannot often do that but in our they could. I remember years ago there was a woman in the town who talked to herself even in movie theaters. People laughed and thought she w as a kid, I probably did too laugh. As an adult now I KNOW this woman had a physical malady. Maladies of the mind can be more horrible than c of the body BECAUSE people often do not see it as the same. I submit, it IS the same but we simply do not know what medications will solve a pr drugs are in my opinion often pitiful as they are thrown into a hat for the physician to cover his eyes and choose one, or two or more.

A physician friend of mine discussed that and he said medicine is 'not quite there' where it can diagnose, do a blood test and see which medicatio what to do? I personally thought closing mental health hospitals was a grievous error. It put the mentally ill on the street and probably allowed th SMOC to grow. This is why I say keep the homes clean, supervised and maintained. I believe we as a town culture can do this. We must though, a people need help. When we do not accept that we sow the seeds of our own destruction and make people like you feel they have to move their ho

Happy Days
3 minutes ago
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WOW - Is there anything good left to the town?

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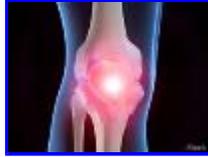
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