



Alameda Floating Homes Association

Barnhill Marina tenants will not face excessive rent increases after the City Council changed the Rent Control Ordinance to include floating homes.

## City Council Halts Rent Increases at Floating Home Community

### Sun Staff Reports

At its April 28 special meeting, the Alameda City Council voted 5-0 to adopt an urgency ordinance that will extend the protections of the city's Rent Control Ordinance to maritime residences or floating homes.

The decision by the council ensures floating homeowners at Barnhill Marina & Boatyard, located at 2394 Mariner Square Dr., are subject to the same rent increase stipulations other renters of multifamily housing units face.

"We are grateful to Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft and the City Council for urgently intervening by calling a special city council meeting to adopt an urgency ordinance to put floating homes under the city's existing rent stabilization ordinance," wrote Liz Williams, a member of the Alameda Floating Home Association and a Barnhill resident, in a press release.

Tenants at Barnhill Marina own their floating homes and live-aboard vessels, however, they rent the berths they occupy. Barnhill Marina management had imposed excessive berth rent increases, some as high as 178 percent. The increases were scheduled to take effect May 1. Several Barnhill residents submitted their berth rent

invoices to the council to show the exorbitant rent increases. One resident's rent bill was \$750 on March 1 but ballooned to \$1,645 on April 1. Another resident's rent bill increased from \$490 on Jan. 1, to \$1,365 on April 1.

Now Barnhill management can only increase rents at the rate allowed under the Rent Control Ordinance. The ordinance, which went into effect Sept. 2019, says rents at multifamily properties built before February 1995 cannot exceed the Annual General Adjustment (AGA), calculated at 70% of the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the 12-month period ending April of each year. The AGA cannot exceed 5% or be less than 1% in any given year regardless of the percentage change in the CPI. The City of Alameda announced on March 29 this year's AGA is 2.7%. Property owners were allowed to impose the 2.7% increase on May 1.

City staff was concerned about the rent increases because of the demographics of the residents at Barnhill.

"If floating home residents are not provided with the same protection as other tenants in the

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## Independent Autopsy Declares Gonzalez Died From Restraint Asphyxia

### Ekene Ikeme

According to a second autopsy report conducted by an independent pathologist, Mario Gonzalez died because of restraint asphyxia after an altercation with three Alameda police officers.

The report, which was released Wednesday, April 27, was commissioned by the Oakland law firm, Haddad & Sherwin. The firm is representing Gonzalez's son, Mario Jr., in a federal civil lawsuit against the City of Alameda and the three officers, Eric McKinley, James Fisher and Cameron Leahy, who restrained Gonzalez.

The independent autopsy was conducted by well-known forensic pathologist Dr. Bennet I. Omalu. Omalu found acute, severe swelling and congestion in his lungs and swelling of his brain, from the lack of oxygen and asphyxiation, according to the report. Omalu believes this was the leading cause of Gonzalez's death.

"The lethality of the asphyxial brain injury in this case far exceeds and supersedes, the lethality of methamphetamine toxicity, and asphyxial brain injury will assume the underlying cause of death," the report states.

This claim refutes the findings of the Alameda County Coroner's Bureau's (ACCB) autopsy report ("Coroner Report Released," Dec. 14, 2021), which stated "the toxic effects of methamphetamine" was the leading cause in Gonzalez's death.

According to the independent report, deaths from methamphetamine are rare. "Statistical estimates indicate that about 13 million people, 12 years and older, in the United States have reported using methamphetamine. Only about 100,000 people (0.77%) visit the emergency department for methamphetamine toxicity annually, and only about 3,000 people (0.02%) die from methamphetamine toxicity annually."



GoFundMe

A second autopsy declared Mario Gonzalez's death was caused by restraint asphyxia. Gonzalez's son Mario Jr.'s lawyers commissioned the independent autopsy.

amine toxicity annually."

Omalu's report noted that the amount of methamphetamine (0.907 mg/L) and amphetamine (0.134 mg/L) found in Gonzalez's system meant he had consumed the drugs within hours of his death. However, the report indicates 0.01 to 2.5 mg/L of methamphetamine is a non-toxic range in individuals who use the drug recreationally, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

"Mr. Gonzalez-Arenales was a chronic drug user, and people who use methamphetamine chronically develop drug tolerance and habituation," the report stated. "Therefore, levels of 0.907 mg/L of methamphetamine and 0.134 mg/L of amphetamine may not be of such a significant forensic consequence as it would have been for an individual who has never used methamphetamine."

Alameda County District Attorney Nancy O'Malley announced no charges will be filed against the three Alameda police officers involved in the altercation that led to Gonzalez's death ("No Criminal Charges for Officers Involved in Mario Gonzalez Death," April 9). In O'Malley's final report detailing her decision, she used the ACCB report's causation of Gonzalez's death when deciding not to press charges.

"Because the altercation and restraint were a contributing factor and 'not the cause of death,' it creates a significant challenge in proving beyond a reasonable doubt, the officers' actions were a substantial factor in causing death," wrote O'Malley.

Omalu's report will not lead to a reversal of O'Malley's decision. However, the independent report might factor in the two federal civil lawsuits against the

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## Mayor Searching for Talented Residents for City Roles



### Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft

Attention Alameda Residents: Your city needs you! There are a dozen different city boards and commissions whose members review a wide variety of city programs, projects, and policies, and make recommendations to the City Council. Volunteering on a city board or commission provides a wonderful opportunity to learn more about your city, and work with other residents and talented city staff to help shape our future.

Now's the perfect time to apply because board and commission

terms — generally four years — expire at the end of June, and interviews are starting soon. After submitting an application, you may be invited to a Zoom interview with the mayor and the city staff member who oversees the board or commission you've applied for. The mayor nominates potential board and commission members, and the full City Council votes to approve each nomination.

More information about boards and commissions is available on the city's website where you can also watch a meeting in real time, view videos of past meetings, and review meeting agendas, minutes, and related documents. Please visit [www.alamedaca.gov](http://www.alamedaca.gov).

Here's a brief overview of the meaningful work that each of our boards and commissions are doing. Find one or more that resonates with you and apply today! It's easy to complete and submit your application online at: [www.alamedaca.gov/application](http://www.alamedaca.gov/application).

The Civil Service Board (CSB) works to ensure that recruitment, selection, and retention of City employees is based on merit and

done in a fair and unbiased manner. The CSB also reviews job classifications and acts as a hearing board for certain disciplinary actions and grievances.

The Commission on Persons with Disabilities advises the City Council, other boards and commissions, and City staff on issues impacting people with disabilities, including traffic safety, planning new residential developments, climate action, and more.

The Golf Commission receives and disseminates information and input among golfers, city staff, and golf course operator, Greenway Golf. Currently, the Commission is providing input on the renovation of the Fire Tower at the entrance to Corica Park.

The Historical Advisory Board (HAB) reviews and makes decisions regarding historic buildings, sites, and districts, such as the Historic District at the former Naval Air Station Alameda and the Park Street Historic District. The HAB also recommends policies to the City Council regarding preservation of local historic resources.

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## Deceased Male Found in Alameda Parking Lot

### Sun Staff Reports

The Alameda Police Department (APD) is investigating the suspicious death of a man who was found in a parking lot near Blanding Avenue and Broadway Thursday, April 21.

According to APD reports, around 1:45 p.m. police officers responded to the report of an unresponsive male in the rear of a commercial parking lot. A business patron spotted the body and called 911. APD officers and Alameda firefighters arrived at the scene and pronounced the man deceased.

According to reports, police said it appeared "attempts were made to conceal the man."

APD officers have been pursuing credible leads to understand the circumstances around the man's passing. APD released an image of a white minivan (pictured above) they believe is connected to the death of the man. APD is asking for the community's assistance in locating the vehicle identified as a 1998 to 2002 white Toyota Sienna with a missing driver's side front hub cap, according to an APD report. APD released photos of the vehicle Thursday, April 28. The vehicle was last seen driving into the Posey Tube towards Oakland



Alameda Police Department

APD is seeking this white minivan in connection with the death of a man discovered in a parking lot on Blanding Avenue and Broadway.

on Thursday, April 21, just after midnight.

The man's identity has not been made available as of Monday, May 2. The body has been transported to the Alameda County Sheriff's Office Coroner's Bureau. The bureau will conduct an autopsy to determine the cause of death.

As new details and vetted facts become available, APD may seek the community's assistance. If anyone has any information that can assist in the investigation, APD asks that you contact Det. George Koutsoubos at 510-337-8389, or Sgt. Spencer Mountain at 510-337-8336.

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Fax: (510) 263-1473

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Betty Young

**Alameda Sun Almanac**

Date	Rise	Set
Today	6:09	20:02
May 6	6:08	20:03
May 7	6:07	20:04
May 8	6:06	20:05
May 9	6:05	20:06
May 10	6:04	20:07
May 11	6:03	20:08



## Alameda Kiwanis Clean up at the Oakland Zoo

### Sun Staff Reports

As a one-day service project, an annual event for Kiwanis clubs nationwide, the Kiwanis Club of Alameda selected the Oakland Zoo for its effort.

The zoo serves children, families and the general community, and is very deserving of volunteer hours. Landscaping and beautifying of the extensive grounds is labor-intensive to maintain. The Kiwanis Club of Alameda weeded a whole hillside overrun by undesired vegetation. Twelve Kiwanians worked from 9 to 11:30 a.m., to the great applause of Ray Odeh, head of grounds maintenance at the zoo. Afterwards, they visited the animals for the rest of the day.

For more information about volunteering at the Oakland Zoo, contact Loretta McRae at [lmcrae@oaklandzoo.org](mailto:lmcrae@oaklandzoo.org). For more information about Alameda Kiwanis, visit [www.alamedakiwanis.org](http://www.alamedakiwanis.org)

Kiwanis Club of Alameda

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Alameda Sun  
3215J Encinal Ave.  
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