

# City of Gainesville

**Inter-Office Communication**  
**Office of the City Manager**  
**Mail Station 6**  
**334-5010**

**TO:** Hon. Mayor and Members of  
The City Commission

**DATE:** January 13, 2005

**FROM:** Barbara Lipscomb  
Interim City Manager

**SUBJECT:** Ad Hoc Committee on Homeless Concerns

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When the City Commission authorized the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Homeless Concerns in November 2004, it was my intention to use this group to advise me on short-term issues related to homelessness. The suggestions and discussion from this committee would in turn help me to formulate recommendations that the City Commission could implement relatively quickly to provide immediate relief to those who are homeless in our community.

The Committee held its first meeting on January 9<sup>th</sup>. This meeting gave each of the key local emergency shelter providers – St. Francis House, Salvation Army and Interfaith Hospitality Network – an opportunity to articulate their most pressing needs. In addition, the groups began a discussion on how the City and others in the community could best support their efforts in both the short term and long term.

One of the three organizations, the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN), expressed the need to raise the visibility of the local congregations that participate in IHN in the hopes of showing what is currently being done to help the homeless. By doing so, perhaps other faith congregations would be willing to become part of IHN either as a host congregation or as a supporting congregation. It is proposed that the City Commission consider allowing a very brief presentation in support of Interfaith Hospitality Network at future Commission meetings, with the goal of adding 12 – 15 new churches that can provide emergency shelter for homeless families under the Interfaith Hospitality Network umbrella.

You will recall that the City is currently supporting IHN through a \$10,000 CDBG allocation. In addition, the City Commission has already taken steps to increase the number of persons who may be housed by IHN's host congregations, and discussions have already taken place at the City Commission and Community Development Committee levels to consider raising the number of meals that may be served at places of religious assembly where IHN's families are housed. I also believe that it is important for the City Commission to publicly recognize the fact that IHN is currently supported almost entirely by volunteers and the goodwill of 28 local congregations.

I will continue to update you periodically on the outcomes of the Committee's meetings, and I will be pleased to answer any questions that the City Commission may have in this regard.

Respectfully submitted,

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Barbara Lipscomb  
Interim City Manager