



Legislation Text

File #: 160652., Version: 5

Homeless Services (B)

This item is a request to discuss the future services for homeless in Gainesville-Alachua County and to the report the action of the Gainesville City Commission from the November 30, 2017 Special Meeting.

At the November 30, 2017 Special Meeting of the City Commission, the Commission discussed the status of the Request for Proposal (RFP) for Homeless Services and the proposed contract with the Alachua County Coalition for the Homeless and Hungry (ACCHH). In addition, the Commission discussed the need for a long-term strategy to manage and implement services for the homeless in Gainesville and Alachua County.

The City Commission discussed a proposal by Commissioner Hayes-Santos to develop a long-term funding strategy for homeless services. Attachment A outlines Commissioner Hayes-Santos' proposal. The Commission briefly discussed the long-term management of homeless services; however, they voted unanimously to place this item on the December 11, 2017 Joint City/ County Commission meeting agenda.

The Gainesville City Commission discussed the RFP for Homeless Services at the Empowerment Center. The City Commission decided not take an action on the RFP for Homeless Services but decided unanimously to:

- Authorize staff to negotiate an extension of the contract with ACCHH for nine months ending September 30, 2018 at a cost of \$855,000 (an increase of \$100,000 each for the City and the County) and identify a funding source;
- Authorize staff to work on a back-up plan if negotiations with ACCHH are unsuccessful;
- Authorize staff to send a letter to the County with the results of the special meeting;
- The City Commission referred the discussion of Dignity Village to the General Policy Committee; and
- The City Commission referred the discussion of Rapid Rehousing to the General Policy Committee.

On November 28th, the Alachua County Board of County Commission (BOCC) discussed an item on assuming the responsibility for the management of the Empowerment Center. A letter dated November 29th from County Chair Lee Pinkoson to Mayor Lauren Poe indicated that they were not interested in assuming the contract management of the Empowerment Center, however the County Commission was willing to discuss a long-term strategy on housing and services for the homeless. The BOCC did reach a concession on the following points regarding the Empowerment Center:

- City maintains facility ownership and upkeep;
- City retains repair and maintenance responsibility of buildings and grounds;
- County does not assume lease for forest land;
- City continues to fund GPD and public services; and
- City provides additional funding for housing.

The County intends to pursue the following items if in the future it assumes control of the contract:

- Create an outreach team to travel across the County;
- Hire dedicated staff to oversee the Empowerment Center contract;
- Close front door to Dignity Village;
- Phase out the pavilion;
- Prioritize programs and services geared towards housing; and
- Increase Diversion funds.

City Staff is requesting the City Commission to take the following actions in order to complete the direction of the City Commission from the November 30th meeting:

- Authorize the City's Purchasing Department to close the RFP process for the Low Barrier Emergency Services Shelter for Homeless Persons (No. CMGR-180019-GD); and
- Authorize the City Manager to enter into contracts required to continue homeless services at the Empowerment Center if an extension of the contract with ACCHH cannot be negotiated.

The City Commission requests the Alachua County Board of County Commission to consider allocating \$100,000 in their budget for an extension of the contract with ACCHH for nine months for a cost of \$855,000 (equally sharing in the cost of the contract, plus \$100,000 from the City and \$100,000 from the County). The City and County have already budgeted \$655,000 for the FY2017 Contract for Homeless Services.

The City Commission recommends the Alachua County Board of County Commission: 1) hear a brief presentation from City and County staff on Homelessness and allow both the City and County Commission to discuss homeless services; 2) consider an approval of \$100,000 from their budget to extend the contract with ACCHH for nine months in the amount of \$855,000; 3) authorize City and County staff to work on a back-up plan if negotiations with ACCHH are not successful; 4) authorize the City Purchasing Department to close the RFP process for the Low Barrier Emergency Services Shelter for Homeless Persons; and 5) authorize the City Manager to enter into any contracts required to continue homeless services at the Empowerment Center, if an extension of the contract with ACCHH cannot be negotiated; subject to approval by the City Attorney as to form and legality.