



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City of Wheeling and Youth Services System Partner for Winter Freeze Shelter

WHEELING, W.VA. – A new partnership between the City of Wheeling and Youth Services System (YSS) will allow for a larger space that will meet COVID-19 guidelines for the organization’s Winter Freeze Shelter.

During Tuesday’s meeting, City Council members approved a resolution authorizing the city manager to negotiate and enter into a short-term memorandum of understanding with YSS relating to the Winter Freeze Shelter for the months of December 2020 and January through March 2021. The agreement paves the way for the Winter Freeze Shelter to occupy space at the former Hillcrest on the OVMC campus.

“The City of Wheeling is pleased to be able to assist YSS with the Winter Freeze Shelter by fulfilling a need in our community,” Vice Mayor Chad Thalman said. “We are living in unprecedented times when it’s important for entities to work together for the well-being of everyone.”

This will be Youth Services System’s 12th annual Winter Freeze Shelter season. The primary purpose is to prevent death and serious illness of people who have no adequate shelter. The program also offers basic needs such as food, clothing and fellowship. Since 2009, more than 1,500 people have stayed at the shelter, which until now has been housed in several fourth-floor rooms of the YSS administrative building in East Wheeling.

“In light of our increasing numbers in recent years coupled with the ongoing pandemic, we realized our current facility would likely prove woefully inadequate,” YSS CEO John Moses said. “We approached the city about the space at the former Hillcrest and determined it is large enough to allow us to operate in accordance with the COVID-era guidelines for homeless shelters set forth by the Centers for Disease Control. We are grateful for this partnership, which

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is the latest example of the good working relationship YSS and the city have enjoyed for more than four decades. It shows the city's dedication to helping us serve the community's most vulnerable."

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