



WABASH — The City of Wabash announced it will once again partner with local agencies dedicated to helping those facing homelessness.

Wabash Mayor Scott Long announced last week the city will contribute one-third of the funding –\$15,000 – for three rooms to be leased annually at BlissPoint Inn, 1950 S. Wabash St. Housing Action of Wabash County (HAWC), Advantage Housing, Inc., City of Wabash, and BlissPoint Inn began collaborations last year providing transitional housing for the homeless in the county.

According to HAWC statistics, more than 400 people faced homelessness last year in Wabash County. More than 100 were children. And the numbers could increase as the economy continues to battle inflationary trends.

The U.S. Census Bureau calculates Wabash County is currently sitting at a 12 percent poverty rate. According to the most recent report issued by the government, the poverty threshold for a family of four is \$29,960. For an individual, the poverty threshold is \$14,891. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issues its poverty guidelines based on the U.S. Census Bureau's poverty thresholds.

HAWC is a consortium of Wabash County nonprofits, government agencies, and churches whose missions and clientele bring them into contact with homeless and other low-income families and individuals. HAWC leadership hopes to raise in excess of \$180,000 annually for operations. HAWC can currently provide short-term housing solutions for up to three rooms at the BlissPoint Inn. Leadership hopes that number can increase exponentially over the course of time. "Networking to help keep three leased rooms at the BlissPoint Inn for the second year in a row provides immediate housing and case management. Our goal is to move them to permanent housing," said Rhonda Duhamell, a HAWC executive and housing director for Advantage Housing.

HAWC also is providing additional funds to house people who are on the streets and provide a case management meeting to connect them with services. The additional stays are limited to one week at a time. "I am excited to see this through for a second year and see families benefit from this important resource in our community," added Long.

BlissPoint Inn Owner Hari Patel is more than willing to provide essential emergency housing by offering safe, temporary accommodations at his hotel for individuals and families in need. "Our goal is to provide comfort and stability during difficult times, ensuring a secure place to stay while they transition to more permanent housing solutions," he added.

For those seeking to assist HAWC in its fundraising efforts, visit HAWC's website at hawc85.org.