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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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MAYOR MARTY SMALL, SR.

City Hall
1301 Bacharach Boulevard • Suite 706
Atlantic City, New Jersey 08401
Telephone 609-347-5400

NEWS RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACT:

Andrew Kramer (Public Information Officer) – 609-226-3470; AKramer@acnj.gov

City of Atlantic City Kicks Off New Work Program That Employs Homeless Individuals

Atlantic City, N.J. (November 20, 2024) – The City of Atlantic City’s Homeless Outreach unit, under the Department of Health and Human Services, kicked off its Hope Work Initiative this week, a new program that provides temporary employment for homeless individuals with the City. Through the program, ten individuals who the City’s Homeless Outreach unit encountered during their daily homeless sweeps in Atlantic City are offered a job with the City of Atlantic City Department of Public Works. These individuals work 15-hour weeks (five hours a day, three days a week) in the Public Works Beach and Boardwalk, Sanitation and Building Maintenance divisions. The individuals earn \$75 a day, money that comes from the City’s Opioid Settlement funds at no cost to the taxpayers of Atlantic City. The Hope Work Initiative employees are fully supervised during their work hours. City of Atlantic City Social Worker Anthony Woodard oversees the program.

“When we formed our Boardwalk Improvement Group, we also created an entire outreach team to help address homelessness in the Great City of Atlantic City, something that was a concern in Atlantic City long before I became mayor,” said City of Atlantic City Mayor Marty Small, Sr. “The Small administration has daily conversations on ways we can tackle homelessness, and we expect the Hope Work Initiative to be one of many impactful solutions that will make a positive difference.”

“Our homeless outreach team is out there every single day trying to clean up the City and offer assistance to the homeless individuals we encounter,” said City of Atlantic City Director of Health and Human Services Jarrod Barnes. “It’s nice to see that hard work pay off by not only getting

these individuals off the streets, but helping them take that all important first step in bettering their lives.”

“The homeless individuals we come across on the streets or on the Boardwalk have been through some hard times, and we are offering them the chance to get their lives back on track through the Hope Work Initiative,” said Woodard. “It’s not that these homeless individuals do not want to work, they just can’t seem to get their foot in the door, so we are giving them that opportunity.”

Upon successful completion of the ten-week program, the City will strongly consider hiring the participants in the Hope Work Initiative to permanent employment with the the City. The City also hopes to move forward with this program in the future, possibly employing more than ten individuals at a time.

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