December 4, 2006

Dear All:

Attached you will find the complete set of recommendations that has been received from the community so far. You have worked very hard to create these solutions to address poverty in our community and to improve the quality of life for all Athenians. Thank you for your work!

There are over 100 recommendations addressing a variety of issues including Education, Early Learning, Dependent Care, the Economy, Housing, Health, Workforce, Mentoring, Service Providers, Transportation, and Adult Education.

Your participation and recommendations have made several things very clear. First, poverty affects all of us. It reflects negatively on our community and limits economic growth. Poverty makes government, education, health care, and social services more expensive not just for the poor, but for everyone.

As a community we have learned that the issues of poverty are interrelated and must be addressed with a holistic approach. High expectations must be maintained not only of our citizens, but also of our institutions. Business as usual is not working. To break the cycle of poverty we need innovation and creativity.

During the next two months we will continue working with the committee chairs and Steering Committee to research and refine the recommendations. The Steering Committee will agree upon the set of PPA recommendations at its retreat in February. These PPA recommendations will be posted on the web and discussed with you at Town Meetings in March prior to them being sent to the Co-Conveners for their approval. Your continued involvement is critical to ultimate success.

Thank you for your commitment to our community!

Sincerely,
Steve Jones, Chairman
Partners For A Prosperous Athens

1. **Pursue a Family Mentoring Program to Address the Holistic Needs of a Family.**
   - Families would be identified by existing service providers such as Athens Justice Project, Interfaith Hospitality, Churches, Schools, etc.
   - There would be criteria and background checks for the both the mentors and the families.
   - Each family would be assigned at least one highly trained mentor.
   - Focus on families with young children.
   - Partner with existing mentoring programs as much as possible. For instance, if a family was chosen to receive services and they had children in schools, the chamber mentoring program would be asked to serve those children (in addition to the role the family mentor would play.). If the family had a parent who was incarcerated, the Athens Justice Project would become involved, etc. It is likely there would be multiple agencies involved.
   - There is a Family Promise Mentoring Program through Interfaith Hospitality that offers a 12 hour comprehensive training as well as an outline of a program. (Patty Freeman-Lynde has more details)
   - Develop a service provider network with identified contacts that would help expedite the various service provider connections..
   - Work closely with neighborhood churches to get volunteers, find families, and use resources and spiritual support.
   - There could be four general levels:

        Level 1—assessment, referral, introductory meeting with client/and or family, expectations

        Level 2-Begin developing family action plan and identifying needs and resources in the following areas:
        1. Education
        2. Economic Situation and resources-budget
        3. Career Path
        4. Accountability
        5. Special Needs
        6. Outreach-resume writing, how to access, and how to mentor, collaborations with business partners to employ both students and parents. Resume writing..
        7. Team approach
        Level 3—Implementation

        Level 4-Graduation and Mentorship (One criteria for participation is becoming a mentor to someone else.)
   - We would pilot the program with 3-5 families and hand select the first 5 volunteers.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION WORKSHEET

I.   **List the Learning(s) that this recommendation is addressing:**

- **WRITE THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION** (limit focus to one subject or action item, more than one recommendation may be needed to address a particular learning):**
  Develop a Volunteer Center to provide support for quality training, coordination, recruitment, and communication for mentoring and other volunteer agencies in Athens and surrounding areas.

- **Identify any research, or other kinds of information that was used to craft this recommendation.** (add additional sheets as necessary)

- **Identify additional research or information that could help clarify this committee recommendation. List potential sources if possible.**

- **Indicate people or groups that we need to talk to help clarify this committee recommendation. List any recommended locations.**

- **What kind of action or resources would be necessary to implement the recommendation?**

II.   **Indicate what forces and influences are likely to occur that will support or oppose implementation.**
          Forces that support (please list):

          Forces that oppose (please list):

 **As information is received and/or clarified, these potential recommendations may change or be discarded.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION WORKSHEET

I.   **List the Learning(s) that this recommendation is addressing:**

- **WRITE THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION** (limit focus to one subject or action item, more than one recommendation may be needed to address a particular learning):**
  Involve businesses in mentoring students.

- **Identify any research, or other kinds of information that was used to craft this recommendation.** (add additional sheets as necessary)

- **Identify additional research or information that could help clarify this committee recommendation. List potential sources if possible.**

- **Indicate people or groups that we need to talk to help clarify this committee recommendation. List any recommended locations.**

- **What kind of action or resources would be necessary to implement the recommendation?**

II.   **Indicate what forces and influences are likely to occur that will support or oppose implementation.**
        Forces that support (please list):

        Forces that oppose (please list):

**As information is received and/or clarified, these potential recommendations may change or be discarded.