KNOXVILLE-KNOX COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE

December 8, 2016

MINUTES

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee was held at the L.T. Ross Building, 2247 Western Ave, Knoxville, Tennessee at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 8, 2016.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Ms. Virginia Anagnost
Dr. Martha Buchanan (Represented by Mr. Dempsey Andes)
Councilman Daniel Brown
Commissioner Charles Busler
Mayor Tim Burchett (Represented by Mr. Chris Caldwell)
Ms. Polly Doka
Mr. Buz Johnson
Ms. Kathy Mays
Ms. Martha Olson
Mr. Terrell Patrick
Ms. Judy Poulson
Mayor Madeline Rogero (Represented by Ms. Avice Reid)
Judge John Rosson
Mr. Thomas Strickland
Mr. Derek Tate
Dr. Sandra Twardosz
Ms. Lula Williams
Mr. Charles Wright

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Art Cate (Represented by Ms. Ashley Ogle)
Ms. Mary Farmer
Rev. John Gill
Mr. Gerald Green (Represented by Mr. Doug Burton)
Ms. Rebecca Parr
Mr. Steve Ritter
Mr. Buzz Thomas (Represented by Dr. Clifford Davis)
Ms. Jaleesa Warner
The meeting was opened with a moment of silence, Ms. Virginia Anagnost, board chair, presiding.

I. MINUTES (MAILED)

Ms. Anagnost asked if there were additions or corrections to the minutes of the October 27 board meeting. There being none, the minutes were approved as distributed.

II. AMERICORPS PRESENTATION

Mr. Jason Scott introduced the AmeriCorps team for the 2016-2017 service terms. Each member introduced themselves and briefly explained their positions and where they serve.

Ms. Anagnost welcomed the group and commended them on their commitment to service.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Thomas “Tank” Strickland presented the Administrative Committee report for November 30, 2016. The Administrative Committee met on November 30, 2016 and makes the following report.

Approved the personnel actions on the attached sheet. The committee reviewed a report of the Office on Aging invested funds. No action is required at this time. The committee reviewed the homeless services financial reports. The committee reviewed the Head Start and Early Head Start program information and financial reports for the month of October 2016. The committee received a report about vandalism to Head Start vehicles at the North Ridge Crossing Head Start Center. Nine (9) vehicles were significantly damaged. The incident is being investigated by KPD. It is expected that the cost of repairing the vehicles will be covered by insurance. The committee was advised that the Charitable Solicitations Registration has been extended to March 31, 2017. The committee was advised that the annual financial audit is underway. An extension of the due date will be requested. The committee reviewed a contract from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture for continuation funding for the Emergency Food Assistance Program. Full board approval is recommended. Proposals for the Homeward Bound programs for the period February 2, 2017 to January 31, 2018 were reviewed. Full board approval is recommended. The committee received an update on Knox County CAC Transit. We did not receive the increased share of federal transit funds that come into the region that we had requested from the City of Knoxville. We have a request for an increase in state funds pending with the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT). We continue to contact and meet with local and state officials to secure the funding needed to maintain the existing service level. Monitoring reports for the CAC AmeriCorps were reviewed. In the 14/15 year, the vendor used to conduct background checks on four (4) members did not use an approved repository to do so. This resulted in a penalty of $1,000. In the 15/16 year, in nine (9) instances background checks were initiated late and/or secured from
an incorrect source. This resulted in a penalty of $3,500. The identified deficiencies were procedural. All members and staff “passed” the background check. A revised CAC AmeriCorps Background Check Policy and Procedure has been developed to insure that background checks are secured consistently in a correct and timely manner. A revised CAC AmeriCorps Background Check Policy and Procedure was reviewed and discussed by the committee. Full board approval is recommended. This will be a separate agenda item. The committee was informed of an incident that took place at CAC Beardsley Community Farm. On November 8, 2016, the Urban Agricultural Director and the Assistant Urban Agriculture Director were attacked by a part-time employee who had been a long-time farm volunteer. Both employees are expected to fully recover from the injuries they sustained. The attacker has been arrested and remains in custody. The Knoxville Police Department has provided extraordinary support to the farm facility and to the staff and volunteers during this difficult time. CAC Beardsley Farm events will continue as previously scheduled. This will be a separate agenda item. Plans were made for the December board meeting. The new class of CAC AmeriCorps members will be introduced. Plans for a variety of events to be held in December and January were reviewed. Board members are encouraged to select at least one event to attend and support.

Mr. Strickland moved to approve the administrative committee report. Mr. Charles Wright seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

IV. CAC AMERICORPS BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY & PROCEDURES

Ms. Kelly explained that the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has very specific requirements for background checks for all members and staff associated with any CNCS funded program. The background checks must be conducted correctly and timely. At the federal and state level, there has been increasing focus on the correctness and timeliness of background checks in recent years including the institution of a system of financial penalties. CNCS has approved repositories that must be used for state of resident reference check. Ms. Kelly stated that the policies and procedures that are being proposed are very detailed. They have been reviewed by Volunteer Tennessee, the state agency that administers the AmeriCorps program. If the board adopts these policies and procedures and if we follow these procedures carefully, there should be no further instances of non-compliance or financial penalties. Ms. Kelly reviewed the policy and procedure. She reviewed the section on disqualification. Disqualification is not automatic. However, a person on a sex offender registry, a person convicted of murder, a person who refuses to undergo a background check, or a person, who makes a false statement in connection with the background check, must always be denied work or service with a CNCS funded program.

With regard to the penalties, Ms. Kelly explained that the issues were all procedural. All staff and all members “passed” the background checks. Ms. Twardoz asked if we were still using vendors to conduct background checks. Ms Kelly replied that we use both third party vendors and CAC AmeriCorps staff to access the repositories. Judge Rosson and Commissioner Busler
both asked if it would be possible to require the third party vendor to pay or reimburse us for the fine. Ms. Kelly replied that it was CAC’s responsibilities to ensure that CNCS approved repositories are being used and that the proposed policy makes that very clear. CNCS wants to know that we know the rules and follow them. If there is an issue, we accept responsibility and develop and implement whatever corrective action is needed. She stated that she doubted there was any basis for requesting repayment, but would look into it. Judge Rosson offered to help in any way possible.

Mr. Buz Johnson moved to approve the CAC AmeriCorps background check policy and procedure. Mr. Derek Tate seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

V. KNOX COUNTY CAC TRANSIT ANNUAL REPORT

Karen Estes presented the report for Knox County CAC Transit for the year ending June 30, 2016. She introduced Michael Humphrey, Transit Manager and Nancy Welsh, VAT Assistant Program Manager. Ms. Estes used a PowerPoint presentation to highlight the accomplishments including providing 199,653 trips to 7,114 different individuals. The fleet is composed of 56 vehicles averaging 800 trips per day. Last year these vehicles traveled 1,919,348 miles, averaging 7,677 miles per day. Ms. Estes explained about the background checks that are required for drivers and the training they receive. She reported that they had received funding for four (4) new vehicles and that funding to equip all vehicles with cameras was coming soon. Ms. Estes read a letter from a rider expressing appreciation for the service and complimenting the drivers. Ms. Estes announced that the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) had just advised us that additional funding would be available. She explained that this was the news we were waiting for and that it meant we would not have to reduce services. However, we are at capacity and will not be able to increase the number of trips. Ms. Martha Olson commented that for people with certain jobs, CAC is the only option for transportation to work. Ms. Estes explained that CAC does not serve anyone that can use KAT. She gave an example of providing service to ACCESS which is located at Turkey Creek which is not serviced by KAT. In order to take as many riders as possible, CAC Transit provides service to and from the transfer point. She reminded the board that Knox County is spread over 500 square miles and the need for transit services is extensive.

Ms. Estes presented the Volunteer Assisted Transportation (VAT) annual report for the year ending June 30, 2016. The program has been in operation for seven (7) years. In that time 30,843 trips have been provided to 731 seniors and people with disabilities. Thirty (30) percent of the riders are over eight-five (85) years of age. She described the program and explained that volunteer drivers receive extensive screening and training. Volunteers drive agency vehicles. Last year, 677 VAT volunteers provided 7,411 hours of service to 254 riders on 6,581 trips. This represents a 9% increase in trips over the prior year.

In response to questions, Ms. Kelly explained how the federal transit funds come into the urban area. They come from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to the City of Knoxville.
which is the designated agency to receive these funds. The Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) makes recommendations to Mayor Rogero who decides how to allocate the funds that come into the region. CAC has been advocating for an allocation formula that would more equitably distribute the funds between KAT and the providers that serve outside the KAT service area, CAC and the East Tennessee Human Resource Agency (ETHRA). Similarly, we advocate with TDOT for a more equitable share of the funding they provide to the region. Ms Kelly gave an example of a woman with a medical condition who was told to take three KAT buses each way from her home in Fountain City to the doctor’s office. CAC took her to the appointment, which is the kind of flexibility that is possible if the funding is available. She was advised about how to apply for the KAT Lift service for trips in the future.

Mr. Wright moved to accept the Knox County CAC Transit Annual Report and the VAT Annual Report. Dr. Sandra Twardosz seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

VI. PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS

CAC Beardsley Farm

Ms. Kelly advised the board of an incident that occurred on November 8, 2016. Ms. Khann Chov and Mr. Adam Caraco were both injured when they were attacked by a long term volunteer and current part-time employee. The attacker is incarcerated and will be prosecuted. The victims are both recovering and are expected to have full recoveries. Two (2) AmeriCorps members were on the premises at the time. Follow up counseling will be provided for those involved. Ms. Kelly indicated that security at the farm would be reviewed. She stated her opinion that the farm was a safe place. She described and praised Adam Caraco’s heroic actions and commented that the Knoxville Police Department has been extraordinarily supportive and a source of great comfort and security to the staff and volunteers.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

Ms. Sue Campbell reported that VITA is ready to begin on January 18. She announced that Friday, January 27 will be EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) Day. There will be a special recognition with Mayor Rogero and Mayor Burchett scheduled to participate. She announced that South College will have five (5) interns helping at the site. A special day for the deaf community with interpreters has been scheduled. We have a new Spanish speaking volunteer who will be helping with the Head Start families. Other innovations and improvements are being finalized.

Empty Stocking Fund

Ms. Kelly reported that 3,275 applications had been taken so far. We will continue to take applications through next week. The homebound distribution will be on December 22 and the
Jacobs Building distribution will be on December 23. In response to a question from Mr. Tate, Ms. Kelly explained that applications were taken at East, West and South Centers. She noted that if more people applied than we had tickets for, we would give out “standby letters” which are processed as soon as the regular distribution ends at 11:00 a.m. This covers the number of people who have tickets and who, for a variety of reasons, do not make it to the Jacobs Building on distribution day. She also mentioned that some of the Empty Stocking stories are being lost in the coverage of the wildfires at Gatlinburg. This is totally understandable, but there may be an impact on the Empty Stocking Fund donations.

VII. UPDATE S & ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Winter Wonderland Event** Mr. Albert Nelson reported that the Winter Wonderland event is being presented by 5 Points Up, a community group in East Knoxville, in cooperation with the Knox County Health Department, and others. There will be Christmas lights, holiday treats and caroling. This is a free event to be held on Thursday, December 8 to promote community engagement and involvement.

**Office on Aging** Ms. Susan Long reported that Mobile Meals is selling holiday cards and cookbooks. She also announced that 2-1-1 was asked to help answer the phones related to the wildfire emergency. She reminded board that CAC has a contract with 3-1-1 at the city to answer the 2-1-1 calls and that this services is funded by the United Way. The Office on Aging is lending one staff person to the 3-1-1 office to help answer the additional calls and we are pleased to be able to help in this emergency situation. Ms. Polly Doka added that, the organizations dealing with the wildfires do not need more items to distribute, they need volunteers and money.

Ms. Long also reported that 950 Mobile Meals recipients will receive gift bags for Christmas. We are partnering with Subaru to collect the gifts. Gifts can also be dropped off at the CAC Office on Aging offices at the Ross Building.

**Project Help** Ms. Lori Galbraith reported Project Help will start taking donations at Food City stores and Home Federal Bank offices, starting on January 9 and continuing through February 3.

Ms. Anagnost called attention to the list of meeting and events listed on the agenda and encouraged the board members to participate. She wished everyone season’s greetings.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

[Signature]

Polly Doka
CAC Board Secretary