

KNOXVILLE-KNOX COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE  
September 29, 2022  
MINUTES

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee was held at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday September 29, 2022. A meeting was held at the Ross building.

BOARD MEMBERS PARTICIPATING

Ms. Virginia Anagnost  
Mr. Doug Burton – representing Mr. Jeff Welch  
Mr. Chris Caldwell – representing Mayor Glenn Jacobs  
Commissioner Kim Frazier  
Ms. Ann Jefferson  
Mr. Buz Johnson  
Ms. Dena Mashburn – representing Mr. Kevin Parton  
Mr. Orris Nero  
Ms. Martha Olson  
Mr. Terrell Patrick  
Ms. Judy Poulson  
Judge John Rosson  
Mr. Tank Strickland  
Mr. Derek Tate  
Ms. Lula Williams  
Mr. Charles Wright

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Ms. Desiree Beasley  
Mr. Sam Brown – representing Representative Sam McKenzie  
Ms. Angela Cheek  
Ms. Anna Compton  
Ms. Polly Doka  
Ms. Kori Lautner – representing Superintendent Dr. Jon Rysewyk  
Mr. Charles Lomax – representing Mayor Indya Kincannon  
Councilwoman Gwen McKenzie  
Ms. Ashley Ogle – representing Mr. Ben Bentley  
Ms. Kenyadah Sullivan  
Dr. Sandra Twardosz

The meeting opened with a moment of silence presented by Mr. Tank Strickland, Jr., board chair, presiding.

1. MINUTES (MAILED)

Mr. Strickland asked if there were additions or corrections to the minutes of July 28, 2022, board meeting. There being none, the minutes were approved as distributed.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Buz Johnson presented the Administrative Committee Reports from Wednesday, August 17, 2022, and Wednesday, September 14, 2022, and made the following report:

August 17, 2022

The committee approved the personnel actions on the attached sheet. The committee was advised that Knox County Covid-19 cases are back to medium transmission rate. Updated guidelines will be published for employees. The committee reviewed a plan to provide a \$500 financial incentive to CAC Transit vehicle operators who have or obtain a Commercial Class C License with Passenger Endorsement. Full board approval is recommended. The committee recommends that a contract to audit the retirement plan be approved with HGA& Associates in an amount not to exceed \$9,500. This is a \$500 increase. Full board approval is recommended. The committee was informed that Ms. Kori Lautner will represent board member Dr. Jon Rysewyk, Knox County School Superintendent, replacing Ms. Renee Kelly. The committee reviewed the report of the Office on Aging Invested Funds. No action is required. The committee reviewed the Homeless Services financial report and the reports of various Covid-19 related funds for the month of July 2022. The Head Start/Early Head Start financial report and program report for the month of July 2022 were reviewed. The committee was advised that the Community Action Plan was submitted. The committee reviewed and approved the CSBG Summary for FY 22/23. Full board approval is recommended. This will be a separate agenda item. The committee reviewed and approved the Funding Summary for August 2022. Full board approval is recommended. This will be a separate agenda item. Plans are being made for the August 25, 2022 board training at Alex Haley Farm.

September 14, 2022

The committee approved the personnel actions on the attached sheet. The committee reviewed the report of the Office on Aging Invested Funds. No action is required. The committee reviewed the Homeless Services financial report and the reports of various Covid-19 related funds for the month of August 2022. The committee was advised that the Annual Report for the period ending June 30, 2021 will not be released by the September 30, 2022 due date. The projected release date is on or before November 30, 2022. The Head Start/Early Head Start financial report and program report for the month of August 2022 were reviewed. No action is required. The Head Start/Early Head Start Supplemental Funding Request on the attached sheet was reviewed by the committee. Full board approval is recommended. This will be a separate agenda item. The Head Start/Early Head Start Refunding Package on the attached sheet was reviewed by the committee. Full board approval is recommended. This will be a separate agenda item. The committee reviewed and approved the Funding Summary for September 2022. Full board approval is recommended. This will be a separate agenda item. Plans are

being made for the September 29, 2022 board meeting. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Western Heights Head Start on October 18, 2022, at 2:00 pm. A tour of the facility will be available after the ribbon cutting.

Mr. Johnson moved to accept the Administrative Report for August 17, 2022. Mr. Doug Burton seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Virginia Anagnost moved to accept the plan to provide a \$500 incentive to CAC Transit vehicle operators. Ms. Martha Olson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Lula Williams moved to approve the contract for HGA & Associates. Ms. Dena Mashburn seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Johnson moved to accept the Administrative Report for September 17, 2022. Mr. Orris Nero seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

### 3. HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Ms. Renee Hauge, Head Start director, gave a presentation on The Head Start Way: Grounding Ourselves in Purpose. Ms. Hauge discussed some of the challenges that faced Head Start/Early Head Start during the 2021-2022 school year. The program transitioned back to full, in-person services and struggled to keep classes open as staff and children were exposed to Covid-19 and classes had to be closed off and on due to quarantine and/or sick staff. The program was chronically short-staffed, throughout the school year which resulted in the program being unable to open nine (9) preschool classes. In addition, the program enrolled an increasing number of children with high needs – health issues, special education needs and mental health needs – including children who use challenging behaviors. When making difficult decisions regarding these challenges, the program returned to its core values for guidance.

The program has worked with its staff in identifying their individual core values and have defined the program's core values. Those program values are: Excellence, Responsiveness, Child and Family Focused, and Inclusivity. Ms. Hauge spent some time discussing the core value of Inclusivity – one of Head Start's defining values. Head Start accepts and includes everyone – regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, immigration status, health status or ability level. Head Start is for everyone. Head Start's commitment to inclusion is embodied in its resolve to serve the neediest. Ms. Hauge described the serious health needs of some of the children currently enrolled in the program. She also talked about the large percentage of children in Head Start with verified disabilities. Although it is still only in the beginning weeks of the new school year, the program has already identified 41 children who require mental health intervention and support in classrooms to manage their challenging behavior. This is in addition to another 53 children with developmental and language delays which impair their functioning in the classroom with an additional eight (8) children with autism.

Looking back at the 2021-2022 school year, in spite of all the challenges Head Start also had several successes, some of which Ms. Hauge shared:

- A fully flawless federal monitoring review with no areas of concern and no findings – only 52% of the programs reviewed nationwide last year had no findings, and only 48% of the programs in our region, and our Head Start program was one of them.
- Head Start maintained its 3-star ratings (the highest rating given) for all of our centers in TN’s child care rated licensing system.
- All of our traditional playgrounds have been transformed into natural playscapes – outdoor classrooms.
- We helped our staff to build their resilience and we can see evidence of that work in their interactions with one another and in their interactions with children and families.

Ms. Hauge showed pictures of Head Start children engaged in meaningful work as an example of the excellent services provided and as evidence, that for children, Head Start is a joyful place to be. Ms. Hauge also played a video clip of a Head Start parent speaking about the difference that Head Start made for her child with special needs.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Ms. Hauge reviewed a one-time supplemental funding request to provide a retention bonus to current Head Start staff based on their longevity with the program. The incentive payment serves to recognize those staff who have remained with the program through significant challenges. The one-time supplement would also fund a retention strategy targeted toward teaching staff who are working with children who are exhibiting extremely challenging behaviors by bringing a Conscious Discipline Master Trainer to provide onsite support to those teaching staff.

Mr. Johnson moved to accept the report and approve the supplemental funding request. Mr. Nero seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Hauge then reviewed the Fact Sheet for the Head Start/Early Head Start Refunding Proposal. Head Start proposes to operate 39 preschool classes in both part-day and extended-day options as well as 22 infant/toddler classes in a locally designed option. The program also provides home-based services to a small number of infant/toddlers – primarily from the Spanish-speaking community. Ms. Hauge also reviewed the budget details for the refunding application.

Mr. Johnson moved to accept the refunding application for Head Start/Early Head Start. Mr. Charles Wright seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### 4. COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

Ms. Barbara Kelly reviewed the Community Action Plan Summary FY 22-23 distributed in the board packet. The CSBG allocations is \$853,432.21.

Ms. Judy Poulson moved to accept the FY 22-23 Community Action Plan. Mr. Wright seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

5. HOUSING PLACEMENT UPDATE

Ms. Misty Goodwin, Social Services director, gave a brief update on the housing placement that has taken place since March 1, 2020 to September 29, 2022. Here is a picture by the numbers:

Although there is, and has been, a shortage of affordable housing in Knoxville, our case managers have continually found housing options for our clients. Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, we can report:

- 803 Households have been housed. Of those households:
  - 465 were families
  - 110 were seniors
  - 176 were single
  - 52 were youth

And just this year, between January 1, and September 25, 2022:

- 276 Households have been housed. Of those households:
  - 168 were families
  - 35 were seniors
  - 69 were single
  - 4 were youth

Ms. Goodwin stated that during the pandemic, an average of 30-40 families were living in their cars. CAC answered that need in partnership with the City of Knoxville and Knox County by providing hotel rooms where families could live. That program will be ending December 31, 2022. CAC staff is working diligently to house all those who are currently living in hotels.

Mr. Derek Tate asked, “Can you tell us what is being done about street homelessness?” Ms. Goodwin explained that CAC has four (4) outreach case workers two (2) in the City of Knoxville and two (2) that serve the County. Ms. Goodwin pointed out that the face of homelessness has changed. Post Covid-19, there are a lot more drug addicted individuals who need rehab, which is beyond what CAC can do.

Judge John Rosson moved that we accept the Housing Placement Update. Mr. Burton seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. NATIONAL CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

Ms. Kelly informed the board that due to absences of the board members involved with the presentation, the National Conference overview has been postponed until the October board meeting.

7. GRANTS, CONTRACTS, AND APPLICATIONS

Ms. Kelly reviewed the summary of grants, contracts, and applications, included in the board packet:

**Funding Summary for August 2022**

**CAC Transit**

Critical Trips Funds (CRIT). Received \$795,564 from Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) to provide operating assistance for the increased demand for transit service in the Tennessee urban fringe areas. These funds are from July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023.

**Nutrition Services**

Commodity Program. Received \$20,500 from the State of Tennessee for program operations.

Mobile Meals. Received \$4,800 from Akima Club of Knoxville to provide home-delivered meals for Knox County seniors.

Mobile Meals. Received \$151,125 from United Way of Knoxville to provide home-delivered Mobile Meals from July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023.

Senior Nutrition. Received \$957,782 from the Older American Act funds for home-delivered Mobile Meals and congregate dining.

Senior Nutrition. Received \$236,578 in America Rescue Plan (ARP) funds for home-delivered Mobile Meals and congregate dining.

**Office on Aging**

J.T. O'Connor Center. Received \$8,000 from Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability for program support.

**Proposal/Application Summaries**

**Nutrition Services**

Mobile Meals. Applied for \$14,040 from the Gene and Florence Monday Foundation to provide home-delivered meals for Knox County Seniors.

**Office on Aging**

PAWS. Applied for \$7,000 from the CATalyst Council to support veterinary services for cats.

### **Social Services**

Elizabeth Homes. Applied for \$137,283 from HUD to renew a rapid re-housing grant that will assist homeless families with case management, housing search and placement, and financial assistance for deposits, utilities, and rental assistance.

Families in Need (FIN). Applied for \$233,742 from HUD to renew a rapid re-housing grant that will assist homeless families with case management, housing search and placement, and financial assistance for deposits, utilities, and rental assistance.

Resources Extended to Assist Chronically Homeless (REACH). Applied for \$104,580 from HUD to assist homeless individuals with case management, housing search and placement, and financial assistance for deposits, utilities, and rental assistance.

### **Funding Summary for September 2022**

#### **Beardsley Farm**

Perishables Program. Received \$5,000 from the Lawson Family Foundation to purchase food from local farms to deliver to refugee families twice a month. Each family will receive one (1) 12-14 pound bag of produce for every three (3) people in the household.

#### **CAC Transit**

CAC Transit. Received \$968,735 from Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) to provide operating assistance for transportation. These funds are for FY 2022-2023.

CAC Transit. Received \$1,650,000 from the Tennessee Public Transportation Association (TPTA) to purchase vehicles. This grant is from July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2025.

CAC Transit. Received \$3,000 from the Public Entity Partner's Grant to purchase safety and loss prevention materials and/or provide training aimed at reducing work-related injuries and accidents.

#### **Nutrition Services**

Mobile Meals. Received \$6,000 from the Medic Summer Grant to provide home-delivered meals for Knox County seniors.

### **Social Services**

Resilient Families Program. Received \$60,000 from United Way to provide financial assistance to families who are at-risk of housing instability and to connect them to resources.

Youth WINS. Received \$60,000 from United Way for homeless youth. These funds will be used to connect youth with housing and transportation, as well as other supports, to help them achieve high school graduation and/or to pursue a secondary degree.

## Proposal/Application Summaries

**CAC Transit.** Applied for \$5,000 from the Public Entity Partners for driver safety activities, training, and materials.

Mr. Tate moved to accept the grants, contracts, and applications as presented. Ms. Williams seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

### 8. PROGRAM UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements were found in the board packet or highlighted at the meeting:

**Senior Job Fair.** Wednesday, October 12, 2022, 9:00 am to 11:00 am, at the J.T. O'Connor Center.

**Covid-19 and Flu Vaccinations.** Tuesday, October 25, 2022, 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm, at the East Neighborhood Center.

**Harvest Festival.** Saturday, October 29, 2022, 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm, at Beardsley Farm.

**Ageing: A Family Affair.** Thursday, November 10, 2022, at Rothchild Conference Center from 8:00 am to 3:45 pm. The cost for the day is \$25 through October 28; after this date, the cost will be \$30. You may register online @ [knoxseniors.org](http://knoxseniors.org) or call 865-524-2786.

Ms. Mashburn reminded the board that the Knox County Health Department is now administering the Covid-19 Omicron variant vaccine, as well as the flu shot.

Ms. Kelly encouraged board members to attend the Head Start Western Heights ribbon cutting on October 18, 2022, at 2:00 pm.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.  
Respectfully submitted,



Buz Johnson, board secretary pro tem