

Audubon Area Community Services, Inc.
Community Support Committee

MINUTES

January 17, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 12:25 p.m. by Committee Chairman Marshall Hatfield.

Members Present (3):

Mr. Marshall Hatfield

Mr. Jerry Manning

Mr. Sam Smith

Staff Present:

Ms. Tracie Howe, Assistant Director for Administration, GRITS

Mr. Dan Lanham, GRITS Transit System Director

Mr. Terry Payne, Chief Financial Officer, AACS, Inc.

Mr. Ron Logsdon, Executive Director, AACS, Inc.

Mr. Michael Hughes, Assistant Director for Operations, GRITS

Ms. Sheila Boling, Housing Services Director

NEW BUSINESS & COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT

Housing Services.

Weatherization Assistance Program. Ms. Boling reported that the Weatherization program had been awarded an additional \$54,000 for FY2008. However, she said, there has been no revisions made to the current program budget as of yet. Mr. Logsdon said that he had just received an e-mail that there could possibly be even more dollars coming down for Weatherization. Ms. Boling said that she assumed, then, that FY2008 budget revisions would be made after the final figure has come in. The additional dollars will be used for materials and also to complete additional households.

A copy of an article from the Owensboro *Messenger-Inquirer* newspaper about Audubon's Weatherization program was shared with the Committee.

Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF). A copy of a new AHTF proposal to Kentucky Housing Corporation (KHC) was distributed to the Committee. Ms. Boling reported that AACS had requested \$126,000 to build three (3) homes. This program is similar to the previous HOME program that AACS has had in the past. The new regulations for this funding round are different that what has been allowed in the past, she said. KHC used to allow \$60,000 to be spent on a dwelling with the homeowner paying a portion of that back depending on their income. Ms. Boling said that this funding round, KHC has maxed out the amount of dollars to \$40,000 and the homeowner will have to acquire a loan for the additional dollars.

Horizon Place and Independence Heights. Ms. Boling said that she had spoken with Tracy Glasscock, vice president of Wabuck Development, earlier in the day. Ms. Glasscock says that the tentative starting date on construction for these projects will be late summer 2008. At least one, though, may start upon completion of The Learning Villa, which is expected to be completed by May 2008. Horizon Place is a 34-unit senior housing development. Independence Heights is an innovative 25-unit development for youth aging out of the state's foster care system.

The Learning Villa. Ms. Boling stated that she and her staff have been receiving many phone calls since the article about AACS, Inc. taking over the ownership of The Learning Villa ran in the *Messenger-Inquirer* in early January. People want to submit their applications now to be put on a waiting list for The

Learning Villa, she said. Ms. Boling said she spoke with Ms. Glasscock in regards to how to handle this situation at this point and she was advised at this point *not* to even start a waiting list, but to tell people interested to call back, as the new units were not to be available until the summer 2008.

Ms. Glasscock stated, though, that AACS, Inc. needed to be thinking about the Service Advisory Committee for this project. The executive director stated that this was in his “management and general” departmental list of goals in conjunction with the Board-approved 2008 Strategic Work Plan.

Lincolnshire Vacancies. Ms. Boling reported that Lincolnshire/Lincolnshire North vacancies were currently at approximately 11%-12%. Several tenants had moved out after Christmas and one resident died, she said. Eleven percent vacancy is the upper limit at which the agency estimates the properties at a break-even point, said Mr. Logsdon.

Gifts In Kind. Mr. Payne reported that he was contacted earlier in the week by the Gifts In Kind organization in regards to available donations from Home Depot. For an administration fee of \$150 and a donation fee of \$500, the agency will be able to receive pallets of donated building material from the local Home Depot, he said. This material received from Home Depot through Gifts In Kind would be used for Weatherization Assistance Program and possibly the houses that will be built if funded by KHC, and also some of it may be used at Lincolnshire.

Ms. Boling explained that AACS was previously a Gifts In Kind member several years ago. The agency received several semi-truck loads of insulation for approximately \$3,000, she said. The rolls of insulation that we previously received from them ended up costing the agency \$5 per roll.

Housing Services Department’s 2008 Strategic Goals. Ms. Boling said that although she had forgotten to bring her list of goals, she could summarize them, which she did. They are basically working with other organizations, agencies to build the agency’s housing arena. Specifically, she and her staff will be working on acquiring and building more low-income-affordable housing development partnerships.

GRITS Transportation.

FY2009 Human Services Transportation Delivery (HTSD) Medicaid Brokerage Awards. AACS, Inc has received two regions under the recent HSTD re-bid. AACS was awarded Region 3 (7-county Green River Area), which will be administered under its GRITS system. Through a joint funding arrangement through AACS/GRITS-RTEC, LLC, a partnership between AACS, Inc. and Rural Transportation Enterprise Coordinated (RTEC, based in Mount Vernon, Kentucky, it was also awarded the 12-county Barren river Area. AACS/GRITS-RTEC, LLC, will be headquartered at AACS, Owensboro. AACS/GRITS will administer the 6-county western ½ of Region 5; RTEC will administer the 6-county eastern half of Region 5.

Mr. Lanham said that GRITS was in the process of getting ready to pass a readiness test sometime in the spring. GRITS plans to take some of its equipment into the six new Barren River counties awarded in Region 5. GRITS expects to build good relationships with providers there, he said, and use them to transport in all areas that they have operating authority for. Mr. Lanham said that he felt that the only safe way to run AACS’ part of Region 5 is to bring in some agency vehicles to assure good service to the clients. GRITS staff have been looking at purchasing used equipment, he said, and have sat down and put some numbers together.

In the process of passing the readiness test, he said, AACS will hire perhaps six new reservationists at GRITS’ Owensboro location. In the short run while the new garage/offices are under construction, partitions will be put up in GRITS’ current offices’ conference room. So the current Committee meeting is probably the last meeting to be held at the current GRITS office, he said.

A protest has been filed on the new HSTD awards, said Mr. Lanham, who added that staff felt it was by LogistiCare, which received no region in the re-bid, not even Region 6 (Louisville area) which it had previously brokered. There have been a lot of shifts, said Mr. Lanham. LKLP did acquire Region 1 (Paducah area) and Region 4 (central Kentucky), so those two regions very likely filed a protest also, he said.

There will be a lot of changes. Mr. Lanham said that GRITS now has several staff members who do have experience with Medicaid, which he hoped would give it an advantage in getting ready to roll. June 1st GRITS will begin taking reservations for July 2008 trips. July 1st GRITS will actually start as the broker farming out trip referrals and transporting clients itself. AACS, Inc. will have to hire eight (8) new staff in Owensboro and three (3) new staff in Bowling Green. He said that he felt that the only way GRITS can “treat people right” and keep a good handle on things is to have an office in Bowling Green. By having two (2) dispatchers and an office manager from there and located there in Bowling Green, it is felt that they knowing the area well can intercept many brokering and trip assignment errors.

Mr. Lanham said that GRITS had found a good possibility for office space in Bowling Green. The building we are looking at is neat, modern, and freshly painted. If we choose this location we will have to do very little to get it ready. That office will have a direct line to the Owensboro GRITS office. GRITS will also hire a new fleet manager to help take the load off the assistant director for operations, Michael Hughes, for all the vehicle and lift issues. GRITS will also hire a billing coordinator to help with the paid fare billing, private auto payments, cash, timesheets and that sort of thing, said Lanham. Mr. Lanham said that he expected to have all of the new people hired by March or April.

Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC)/New Freedom Grants. Mr. Lanham reported that the federal share on the FY2008 JARC and new Freedom grants had finally been received and GRITS could now begin to implement the new and expanded services planned under those grants.

New GRITS Software Need Must Be Bid. Mr. Lanham informed the Committee that the Office of Transportation Delivery (OTD), Kentucky Transportation Cabinet had notified him that AACS, Inc. would be required to bid the new GRITS system management software. Hopefully, he said, GRITS will still be able to get the software it wants. Mr. Lanham, Ms. Howe, and the IT Director, Dennis Hagan all went to Ft. Wright, Kentucky, to visit another transportation company called TANK. TANK has been using the SrataGen software for some time. Mr. Lanham said that all AACS staff were very pleased with what they saw.

GRITS Phone System. Mr. Lanham said that GRITS was in the process of putting in a new phone system. As a broker, GRITS will be required to record conversations, hold times, and monitor dropped calls. GRITS has also decided to give all its drivers Blackberry cell phones, he said. Through their Blackberries the staff will be able to receive email, weather updates, and have the push-to-talk ability. This will eventually allow GRITS to eliminate radios. The capabilities of the Blackberry system are great, he said. Mr. Manning asked if GRITS’ current radios were private; Mr. Lanham said they are not *completely* private. Mr. Lanham let the Committee know how hard Mr. Hughes worked with AT&T to get an unbelievable deal on GRITS’ new phones.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Grant. The CMAQ grant had been submitted to OTD, said Lanham, but GRITS had to redo it and get it back in by January 21st. This is money funded to help transportation deliverers reduce air pollution. With the CMAQ funding, GRITS will be applying for two (2) Ford Escape hybrids, he said.

Senior Transportation Grant. Senior Transportation money has been applied for, but the GRITS management has not yet heard back. The money will be used to transport seniors for a day out at no charge. One-day trips are the plan. The grant specified it wanted recreational activities for seniors, said Mr. Lanham.

FY2009 GRITS Refunding Grants. Mr. Lanham reported that it was nearly time to again begin work on GRITS' FY2009 refunding proposals: "5310" capital assistance, "5311" operating assistance, "5309" capital/facilities grants, and the new "5316"/"5317" refundings. The applications for all those have just arrived from OTD, he said, and staff will begin to work on these right away.

2008 GRITS Strategic Goals. Mr. Lanham distributed a handout and discussed the strategic goals for GRITS transportation for 2008.

Mr. Manning made a motion to approve GRITS and Housing Services' 2008 strategic goals. Mr. Hatfield seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hatfield asked if anyone had more business and everyone said no.

There being no further business,

A Motion was made to adjourn the meeting. There being no objection, the meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Marshall Hatfield
Committee Chair