

Community Support Meeting
Audubon Area Community Services, Inc.

MINUTES

January 26, 2010

The Community Support Committee meeting was called to order at 12:40 pm by Committee Chairman Marshall Hatfield.

Members Present:

Mr. Marshall Hatfield

Mr. Hugh Smith

Mr. Sam Smith

Staff Present:

Ms. Sheila Harper, Housing Services Director

Ms. Tracie Howe, Assistant Director—Administration, GRITS

Mr. Michael Hughes, Assistant Director—Operations, GRITS

Mr. Dan Lanham, GRITS Transit System Manager

Mr. Ronald Logsdon, Executive Director

Financial Review. In the absence of the Chief Financial Officer, no financials for the housing and transportation services' funded accounts were available to provide to the Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

Green River Intra-county Transit System (GRITS). Mr. Lanham made his informational presentations to the Committee.

Parking Garage Update. Mr. Lanham informed the Committee that the final clean-up for the downtown Owensboro parking garage had begun. The final touches, awnings and landscaping, were in progress, he said. He circulates pictures of the current (virtually complete) state of construction to the Committee.

Mobile Electrical Generator. Mr. Lanham updated the Committee on the status of the mobile generator that had been approved and purchased under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The new generator is now on site, being housed at the parking garage. It has been tested and hooked up to the parking garage and the 1700 West Fifth Street Central Office. It will keep GRITS' power needs at 100%, he said, but as for the Central Office it will keep only the computers and wall outlets powered, but not all of the building's lights.

Mr. Hugh Smith asked how many kilowatts the generator was. Mr. Lanham answered that it was 150 kilowatts and about 400 amps. The hook up is color-coded, so it should be no problem to manage. It is diesel powered and will hold 200 gallons of fuel — enough for about one 24-hour day's supply. Several staff members have been trained already, he said, but he intends to obtain more training on the five and a half ton generator.

The amazing thing, as stated by Mr. Lanham, is the generator's lack of noise. When it is running full force, it is about as loud as a car, he said. One issue he is dealing with is the fact that it weighs over 11,000 pounds, which requires a larger truck to tow it than GRITS currently has.

ARRA-funded Hybrid Buses. The third part of ARRA 2009 was the acquisition of seven hybrid buses. The buses have had a lot of bugs and glitches, which was to be expected, he said. They seem to be doing well right now. The fuel savings, though, has been somewhat disappointing. It would *not* have paid us to buy these on our own, but for a full federal acquisition grant it was more than worth it.

Bus Maintenance Facility (Future). Mr. Lanham advised the Committee that he had begun to work on finding possible locations for the \$1.3 million bus maintenance facility “earmark” grant secured for AACS by Congressmen Brett Guthrie and Ed Whitfield. One major decision that must be made is whether to build a *new* facility or renovate an *existing* facility.

There is one promising existing facility on Medley Road, he said, that is a large building on about seven acres. Most of the land in that area has been priced between \$75,000 and \$100,000 an acre. This building and its seven acre area is down to about \$650,000, but he has been told it could come down more.

The Bosley family also has several tracks of land for sale. The property located across from Moon-Lite is probably going to cost between \$110,000 to \$120,000 per acre, he said. In addition, the old Green River Steel tract has a chunk of land for sale, and he’s also looked at that. There are seven acres available across from the Boatman on West Parrish Avenue for about \$75,000 per acre. One possibility there might be to split that tract half and half with someone else who may be interested.

Mr. Logsdon said that the \$1.35 million bus maintenance facility budget was what GRITS would have to live with. No additional funding could come from the agency for that project.

Route, Dispatching and Ridership Management Software. Mr. Lanham updated the Committee on the status of obtaining new or upgraded software for GRITS. Mr. Lanham said he was down to one more demo and then he would be ready to choose one of three possible packages. GRITS has a Transportation Cabinet grant to purchase the software, so the ultimate decision would have to be made within that funding framework.

New Freedom Bus. Mr. Lanham distributed pictures of GRITS’ new *New Freedom* bus that would be used for possible evacuations. He explained that the bus was an International and could hold up to ten (10) wheelchairs; it also has a loading ramp. He said the new vehicle had created a lot of interest among some of the local facilities, especially Wendell Foster Center.

2009 New Freedom Grant. This grant is for programs that serve Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) people and goes above and beyond the ADA requirements. He and his staff looked at buses that “kneel” and had wider ramps. He put a proposal together for three (3) buses. After putting that request out to the State of Kentucky he found out that there was actually more than one company that made that style of bus. The Arboc, which was originally planned for purchase, was priced at about \$115,000 per bus; the newly found Star Trans bus was priced at about \$90,000. The only problem is that those newer buses were not yet “Altoona Tested.” That had to be done prior to delivery. But by going with the cheaper company GRITS saved enough to get an additional vehicle with a wide lift, he said. He also had enough to repair GRITS radio system that exists throughout in the seven-county Green River area.

ARRA II Grant Application. Mr. Lanham advised that another round of U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) “stimulus” funding was coming to Kentucky. “ARRA II” is technically for “shovel ready” projects, he said, but he knows he can also apply for additional vehicles. The GRITS fleet is getting in better shape and the newer fleet is relieving some of GRITS’ high maintenance cost. He said that GRITS would probably ask for minivans in this round of funding.

He also said he may ask for ARRA II money for an add-on to the agency’s Owensboro parking garage. He have to tell the Office of Transportation Delivery (OTD), Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) by February 15th what AACS/GRITS wants to propose to do in this second “stimulus.” Mr. Lanham advised

the Committee that the OTD/KyTC used the agency's parking garage as a success story in their presentation to the U.S. DOT.

New "Livability" Grant. Mr. Lanham told the Committee that there was a new grant available: It is called the *Livability Initiative*. It will be hard to meet all the grant's requirements, though; because it's tied to housing and other non-transportation components. Mr. Logsdon suggested that the agency contact Tracy Glascock with Wabuck Development and see what kind of ideas she might have. Mr. Lanham agreed, and Ms. Harper said she's take care of that contact.

Housing Services Update and DOE ARRA Weatherization. Ms. Harper then made her informational presentations to the Committee.

Department of Energy (DOE) ARRA Weatherization Budget Revision. AACS received approximately an additional \$58,000 for major equipment purchases. With those additional dollars, two (2) F-250 trucks have been ordered and are scheduled to arrive on February 10th. AACS also received Kentucky Housing Corporation (KHC) approval to purchase one (1) new blowing machine, two (2) combustion analyzers, and two additional (2) blower doors. Ms. Harper said that she had also requested two (2) infrared cameras, but she understands that those have been denied by KHC for this year, due to money.

DOE Regular Weatherization Contract Production and Resumption. With DOE *regular* (non-ARRA) Weatherization funds, AACS was under contract to complete twenty-nine (29) dwellings under its FY2010 contract. Forty-eight (48) dwellings were completed, but AACS still has approximately \$100,000 remaining in its FY2010 contract, so on orders from KHC AACS will again begin working on DOE *regular* jobs, operating simultaneously both "regular" and ARRA Weatherization services.

AACS is contracted to complete 115 dwellings with its FY2010 ARRA funding, but as of the present time only twenty-five (25) dwellings have been completed under the ARRA funding. If AACS remains with only the 115 ARRA quota on dwellings to weatherize, there is a very good chance that AACS will meet that goal, she said, but it cannot do both. During a conference call last week, it was mentioned that DOE could possibly want 450 ARRA completions each month within the State of Kentucky. If that holds true, and there are only twenty-three Weatherization agencies in the state, then each agency's monthly completions would have to rise dramatically. Ms. Harper said that she did not think that was feasible.

AACS currently has two (2) Weatherization staff members in Frankfort for another round of evaluator training. If they successfully complete this training and are released by Kentucky Housing Corporation to perform those services, that will provide two (2) more inspectors out in the field, which will help tremendously, she said.

Four AACS staff, including the executive director, will be traveling to Frankfort January 27th to meet with Community Action of Kentucky staff to discuss the agency's current Weatherization challenges and limitations. This is mainly to make sure that AACS is staying in compliance with all of the regulations currently required, many of which are new and perhaps hastily implemented, for the ARRA Weatherization program.

Newly Certified Tax Credit Specialist. Ms. Jan Johnson was hired to oversee the agency's tax credit properties' tax credit compliance and tax credit delivery to the respective investors. Ms. Johnson is originally from Mayfield, Kentucky, where she had an extensive housing background, although no specific tax credit work. Recently, Ms. Johnson has successfully completed her Tax Credit Specialist training and obtained her certification.

Owensboro Regional Recovery. There are currently five (5) peer mentors residing at the Owensboro Regional Recovery (ORR) Center. Their applications for Section 8 housing in ORR's tax-credit apartments have been completed. Ms. Johnson and ORR's Program Assistant responsible for taking the subsidized

housing applications, Ms. Ashley Gardner, were in Madisonville this day with the applications for review by KHC, advised Ms. Harper.

The ORR peer mentors are currently residing in the SOS (Safe Off the Streets) section of the Center. As soon as KHC has released the ORR Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract and set the rent schedule for the property, Ms. Harper said that she and the staff would begin moving the men into their own apartments, which will formally begin the tax credits for the ORR complex. Mr. Logsdon stated that per AACCS' Limited Partnership Agreement (contract) with the equity provider, National City Bank, ORR must begin to have the ORR units rented and should begin tax credit delivery on *all* units as of April 20110.

Residents on Probation at *The Learning Villa*. For the fall semester, said Ms. Harper, there are nine (9) households residing at The Learning Villa that fell below *full-time student status* at their local college. Per the regulations of the "Kentucky Scholar House" program, students residing in these properties who fall below full-time status are allowed to be on probation *one* (1) time only and may be allowed a limited period of time to regain their full-time student status. If the households do not pull up (restore) their full-time student status and maintain a GPA of 2.0, they will lose their Section 8 subsidy at the end of the next semester.

The Learning Villa does presently have one household that has "worked the system" and The Learning Villa's advisory board is now proposing ways to prevent that happening again. The tenant in the crosshairs moved into the complex with a full-time status schedule, but within approximately one week after moving in she dropped her classes. She will be placed on probation, but this will cause her to remain in the unit "out of compliance" for six (6) months without the agency being able to do anything with this unit.

There were two households that were on probation last semester that did not meet the compliance regulations for this semester. The Housing authority has pulled their subsidy, which will be effective in February. At that point, the tenant must pay market rent or be subject to eviction proceedings.

Updates on Other AACCS-owned Properties. *Lincolnshire/Lincolnshire North* – This property is doing very well and the combined vacancy rate for these properties (208 units) is below 10% at this time.

Independence Heights – There are currently no vacancies at Independence Heights, but there is one household that is in the process eviction proceedings at this time.

Horizon Place – There are no vacancies at all at this senior housing property and no eviction proceedings are underway.

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 1:47 pm.

Marshall Hatfield
Committee Chair