



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE  
September 12, 2023  
MINUTES**

**Members Present**

Kat M’Kora Farmer  
Brittany Fleenor  
Raymond Hill  
Ella Kane  
Steven Willinger  
Shauna Nefos Webb

**Members Absent**

Katherine Stigers  
Vernon Perry Jr.  
Patricia Herndon

**Others Present**

Steven Smith, Bristol Housing  
Kelli Bourgeois, Staff  
Cherith Young, Staff  
Christina Blevins, Staff

**I. Call to Order & Roll Call**

The Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) meeting was called to order on September 12, 2023, at 5:30 p.m., by Chairman Steve Willinger at the Bristol, TN Annex. Chairman Willinger welcomed the group. Christina Blevins called the roll and those present/absent are noted above.

**II. Public Comment Period – An opportunity for members of the public to address the Committee on Agenda items – Chairman Willinger**

Chairman Willinger opened the floor to allow members of the public the opportunity to speak. There were no public comments.

**III. Election of Officers**

Chairman Willinger reviewed the current officers, noting himself as Chairman, Vernon Perry, Jr. as Vice Chairman, and Christina Blevins as Secretary. Mrs. Blevins shared with the committee that Mr. Perry visited her earlier in the day, and unfortunately will need to resign from the committee due to health issues. Mr. Perry did ask Mrs. Blevins to write a letter to the committee which she read aloud. A get-well card was passed around the room for Mr. Perry.

Chairman Willinger opened the floor for nominations. Katherine Stigers name was mentioned

from the floor. Brittany Fleenor motioned to appoint Katherine Stigers as committee chair for the 2023-24 year. Ella Kane seconded the motion. No questions or discussion. All present were in favor.

Discussion for Vice chair ensued from the committee.

Ella Kane motioned to appoint Brittany Fleenor as Vice chair and Mrs. Blevins continue as secretary for the 2023-24 grant year. Shawna Nefos Webb seconded the motion. No questions or discussion. All present were in favor.

#### **IV. Approval of Minutes, April 11, 2023, Meeting**

Brittany Fleenor asked for any amendments or changes to the April 11, 2023, meeting minutes. Steve Willinger motioned to approve the minutes from the April 11, 2023, meeting as presented. Kat M’Kora Farmer seconded the motion. No questions or further discussion. All present were in favor.

#### **V. Public Hearings**

##### **2022 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)**

Brittany Fleenor formally opened the Public Hearing for the 2022 CAPER at 5:41 p.m. and announced the purpose of this first Public Hearing is to provide citizens of Bristol, public agencies, and other interested parties an opportunity to review and comment on the City’s program performance this past year through the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report also known as the CAPER for the 2022 HUD program year, running July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023. A 15-day comment period in conjunction with this Public Hearing was advertised in the Bristol Herald Courier for September 1 - 15, 2023.

Brittany Fleenor then asked if there were any comments for the first public hearing on the 2022 CAPER or if anyone present would anyone like to speak about the 2022 CAPER. There were no comments from the CDAC or public, and Mrs. Fleenor closed the public hearing at 5:43 p.m.

##### **2024 One-Year Action Plan**

Brittany Fleenor formally opened the second Public Hearing for the 2024 one-year Action Plan at 5:44 p.m. Mrs. Fleenor announced that the second Public Hearing provides citizens of Bristol, public agencies, and other interested parties an opportunity to express views regarding the identification of housing and community development needs within the City of Bristol or within the Northeast Tennessee / Virginia HOME Consortium footprint, and sets aside a time for staff to respond to proposals and comments. Interested parties are encouraged to comment at this Public Hearing or within 30 days following this public hearing. This begins the process for the planning of the 2024 one-year Action Plan. The 2024 one-year Action Plan works in conjunction with the 2020-2024 five-year Consolidated Plan for the Northeast Tennessee/Virginia HOME Consortium as well as the Community Development Block Grant program established by the City of Bristol, Tennessee. Public meetings will be conducted during the year and comments are welcomed throughout the planning process. A 30-day comment period was advertised in the Bristol Herald Courier for the time period of September 1, 2023 – September 30, 2023.

Brittany Fleenor asked if anyone would like to comment regarding any housing or community development needs within the Bristol, TN City limits or the Northeast Tennessee/Virginia HOME Consortium footprint, for the planning of the 2024 one-year Action Plan. No comments from the CDAC or public were heard, and Mrs. Fleenor closed the Public Hearing at 5:46 p.m.

## **VI. Old Business**

### **CDBG, CDBG-CV, HOME, and HOME-ARP Staff Monthly Reports/Program Updates:**

Christina Blevins stated that she emailed the committee staff reports for April – July 2023 for review and handed out the August report (s). Mrs. Blevins stated that City Manager, Kelli Bourgeois, has updated the monthly staff reports. Staff reports will now be more highlights rather than the normal day-to-day as in the past. Mrs. Blevins and asked if there were any questions regarding either of the reports. Brittany Fleenor noted that she was pleased to see the sidewalk projects moving forward. Kat M’Kora Farmer also added that she has several friends who noted that this project has been a huge improvement to their quality of life and access, she also is hoping that more sidewalks in the city will be improved and handicap accessibility. Raymond Hill also added that as a handicapped person, these improvements really have helped him. Ella Kane added that she has spoken with several community members who are also very happy with the improvements and agrees more is needed. Mrs. Blevins reviewed the costs for the CDBG-CV sidewalk project.

### **2022 Public Service Accomplishments**

Christina Blevins shared the information provided in the 2022-2023 CAPER for our funded public service agencies. The CAPER is delivered to the Slater Community Center, Bristol Housing, Bristol Public Library and front desk of the Community Development and Planning office as well as published online at Bristoltn.org. The CDAC started funding “A Place to Be” Day center through Family Promise of Bristol this past year. Their numbers were incredible, Mrs. Blevins added. The Day center has seen 2,265 guest visits, 385 unique individuals, 9 families served, 1,777 lunches served, 377 showers taken, 313 loads of laundry and 726 case management visits this past year! The CAPER shows the number of 385 as Mrs. Blevins did not want to duplicate individuals/services. The committee funded a portion of the case management expense.

The YWCA Children’s Center’s accomplishments include supporting 12 families, all qualifying below the 80% AMI for assistance (8 extremely low and 4 very low-income families). Ms. Blevins reminded the group of the impact these funds have on our community, noting the YWCA is the only organization in our region that offers a sliding-scale payment system for families needing daycare. CDAC has supported this effort for multiple years.

Mrs. Blevins added that the CAPER is primarily used for the CDBG and HOME accomplishments. She was able to add the CDBG-CV (CARES) funding partnership with The United Way of Bristol, as that project was closed out in 2022 grant year. Those numbers include helping 42 applicants affected by COVID-19, with utilities and food vouchers throughout the past 24 months.

### **2023 HUD One-Year Annual Action Plan:**

Christina Blevins stated that the 2023 Action Plan was approved by HUD and subrecipient agreements for this year have been signed by all parties.

## **VII. New Business**

**Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) 2022:** Christina Blevins discussed how the CAPER works in conjunction with the 5-year Consolidated Plan and the annual Action Plan. Mrs. Blevins encouraged citizens to review the 2022 CAPER, as it is full of very useful information on program performance. Mrs. Blevins stated that she gave a summary earlier of CDBG accomplishments, the HOME Consortium also assisted 5 households with down payment assistance, 9 homes were rehabilitated/reconstructed, and the consortium is working on several Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) affordable housing projects. Mrs. Blevins added that the CAPER will be submitted to HUD on or before September 30<sup>th</sup> as that is the due date.

**CDBG Workout Plan for Timeliness:** Christina Blevins discussed that the CDBG program recently received a letter from HUD for timeliness noncompliance. Mrs. Blevins was required to produce a CDBG workout plan for HUD, including identifying and responding to problematic projects. Mrs. Blevins added that during this assessment, staff reviewed several activities/projects that have been lingering in the CDBG program for some time. The first project identified is a Sidewalk Reconstruction project that started in CDBG program year 2016. The Sidewalk Reconstruction project started in fall 2016, in a Low to-Moderate-Income Census Tract and Block Group. This project was approved/implemented prior to the current staff. The original project approved by HUD included materials for sidewalks, however, did not pay for city employee staff time for the implementation of the sidewalks. The project has slowly used funding over the past seven years as the city's Public Works department is available to work on the sidewalk project. It has been a struggle for Community Development and Public Works staff since inception. As of August 1, 2023, the project still has a balance of \$71,827.83. This project has not had new allocation of funding in many years as staff continues to try and spend funding that was originally allocated.

The second activity/project identified is a general project demolition category. The City of Bristol earmarked funding for unsafe, dilapidated residential structures. The demolition category is to be used in conjunction with the city's Better Property Board and Code Enforcement Division. Once a property is identified as a demolition and cannot be rehabilitated by the Better Property Board, the Board gives the property owner 90 days (sometimes longer depending on circumstances) for the owner to demolish the property. After the allocated period, CDBG funding could be and has been used in the past to demolish the structure and a lien is placed on the property. The CDBG Demolition activity has not been used over the past several years; the current carryover from prior year funding as of August 1, 2023, is \$43,775.

Identifying these two projects and available carryover funding totals \$115,603.23 and are the primary activities that need to be reprogrammed or be spent ASAP. Mrs. Blevins has taken multiple steps to ensure compliance in the future.

## **VIII. Other Matters**

**TN State Law Change PC 300:** Christina Blevins stated that a new "Public Comment Period" item was added to the regular agenda. Public Chapter 300 went into effect on July 1, 2023. It amends the Open Meetings Act to require that all governing bodies must reserve a period for

public comment, “to provide the public with the opportunity to comment on matters that are germane to the items on the agenda.” The governing body may put reasonable restrictions on the public comment period, but may not restrict the viewpoints being expressed, and should take steps to ensure that any opposing viewpoints are fairly represented. Any notice of a public meeting shall indicate the manner in which a person may indicate the person’s desire to provide public comment at the meeting. This requirement doesn’t apply if there are no actionable items on the agenda. Staff has added the public comment period to the agenda and anyone who wishes to speak during the public comment period just needs to be present and notify the Chair or the staff liaison that they want to speak.

**Bristol Housing (BH) Update:** Steven Smith, facilities manager for Bristol Housing, gave an update. The ongoing balcony project at Edgemont Tower was completed. BH next new larger capital projects will include a generator and flooring at Fort Shelby and a generator at Edgemont Tower.

#### **IX. Announcements & Adjournment**

The next CDAC meeting is scheduled for October 10, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

APPROVED:

  
Brittany Fleenor, Vice Chair

  
Christina Blevins, Recorder

