**ACoN Minutes**
Sept. 26, 2017
6:30 p.m., Municipal Bldg., conference center

Present:
Gary Yount, President Betty Myers John Winfield
Beth Copenhaver, Secretary Bill Busser Mikaela Engert
Ann Dicks, V-President Laura Bagwell Tim Coakley
Diane Saunders, Treasurer Mary Yarborough Sgt. Dawn Drasher
Glen Gallman Betty Gyles JoAnn Tillman Hooper
Michele O’Shaughnessy Hattie Lloyd John Klimm
Lyanne Haislip Kevin Brown

President Gary Yount opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the Municipal Conference Center. He asked everyone to introduce himself/herself.

President Yount introduced Mikaela Engert from the City of Aiken’s Planning Department. Mikaela recapped what had been accomplished at the community meeting held at the Aiken Train Depot on August 24, 2017, regarding the Richland Avenue revitalization project. She said that a follow-up meeting will be held on Oct. 5, 2017 (5:30-7:00 p.m.) at the Aiken Train Depot to share the community comments/suggestions from August 24th. After Oct. 5, a report will be given to the City Council with recommendations. In addition, a grant request has been submitted to help fund suggested landscaping, etc. Resources of people, money, time, and effort will be necessary to bring about results.

President Yount introduced John Klimm, Aiken City Manager. John reviewed what was discussed at a July City Council work session regarding nuisance properties, absentee landlords, etc., which ACoN representatives attended. He reviewed concerns regarding negligent landlords, abandoned buildings, and problem tenants. In September, the city hosted city personnel from three communities (Clemson, Greenville, and Rock Hill) that have strong ordinances regarding nuisance properties. In the morning, these visitors toured neighborhoods throughout Aiken to see property issues facing neighborhoods in the City of Aiken. In the afternoon, these same visitors talked about their ordinances and how they are dealing with abandoned buildings, absentee landlords, etc. Mr. Klimm said that the Aiken City Council has just committed $100,000 from hospitality funds to address the entrances to our city. In addition, Mr. Klimm distributed a rough draft of changes to our city ordinances which will begin to address abandoned buildings and rental properties. He asked that ACoN representatives, as partners with the city, submit comments/suggestions regarding the revised ordinance to his office early in October.

The minutes from the July 25, 2017, meeting were distributed and approved as written. The treasurer’s report was disseminated, and Diane Saunders spoke briefly about the current balance of $390.52. The treasurer’s report was then approved.

In old business, President Yount said that we had discussed the 2017 ADPS Open House at our July meeting and he asked for a vote on whether we wish to participate in 2018, and, if so, whether we provide food for law enforcement only or for law enforcement and the community. After discussion, the vote was 6-3 to provide for law enforcement and the community. Betty Myers agreed to organize the donations and volunteers to serve in May 2018. Betty Gyles will assist.

Again in old business, President Yount asked for a vote on whether ACoN should have polo shirts or tee shirts with an ACoN logo. The vote results were for polo shirts. Michele O’Shaughnessy will have the order forms at the January 2018 meeting and shirts will be paid for by each individual member.

At the July ACoN meeting, Michele O’Shaughnessy, fundraising chairperson, had asked members to consider possible avenues for ACoN to raise funds (such as grants, grocery and restaurant incentives, etc). Beth Copenhaver offered to assist Michele with finding mini-grants (e.g., WalMart, Sam’s) that we can apply for non-profit funds, especially for activities such as thanking law enforcement.

Due to the time, the Community Roundtable and the decision regarding participation in 2018 Aiken Unity Day were moved to the November meeting agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m. **The next meeting of 2017 will be Tuesday, November 28, 2017, at 6:30 p.m. in room 204.**