RESIDENT & COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE
Wilmington Housing Authority
November 15, 2012

The regular monthly meeting of the Resident & Community Relations Committee was held on Thursday, November 15, 2012 at 4:00 p.m. at the Wilmington Housing Authority, 1524 South 16th Street, Wilmington, North Carolina.

Committee Members Present:
Debra H. Hays, Commissioner and Chair
Alfredia McDonald, Commissioner
Jeffrey D. Hovis, Commissioner
Cheryl D. Sutton, Commissioner
Stuart Franck, Commissioner
G. Vernice Hamilton, Director of Human Resources
Hattie McIver, Community Liaison Coordinator

Committee Members Absent:

Others Present:
Michael Krause, Chief Executive Officer
Rhonda Mack, Director of Housing Choice Voucher
Cleveland Peoples, President Resident Advisory Board
Rose Coston, Client Services Coordinator
Sara Davis, Executive Assistant

1. Call to Order

The meeting of the Resident and Community Relations Committee was called to order by the Chair at 4:00 p.m. on November 15, 2012, pursuant to the Notice sent to the Commissioners and Staff of Wilmington Housing Authority.

2. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Hattie McIver brought to the attention of the Committee that on page 2 her last name is misspelled.

A motion made by Commissioner Sutton and seconded by Ms. McIver, to approve the minutes, as corrected, of October 18, 2012 Resident and Community Committee meeting, carried.

3. Resident Council Update

Mr. Krause deferred to Rose Coston for an update on the Resident Councils. Ms. Coston reported to the Committee that the elections at Hillcrest, Houston Moore and Solomon Towers have been successful. She did state that there have been problems conducting elections at Glover Plaza.

Ms. Coston stated that the residents have asked for another attempt after the first of the year. She said that Creekwood still does not have an organization but reported contacting HUD on how to do that when there are two different amps for one site. Ms. Coston said that it has been difficult to get a meeting at Rankin Terrace because not enough people attend for a quorum.

Ms. Coston stated that they would like to do some training with the different resident organizations but would like to wait until they get the boards established.

Commissioner McDonald asked how many residents were at Rankin and Ms. Coston stated there were 80.

Commissioner McDonald asked if that meant 8 people would need to be in attendance and Ms. Coston confirmed stating at the last meeting there was only 5 present.

Commissioner McDonald asked Mr. Krause when he would revisit enforcing the community service hour's being mandatory. He stated that he had already spoken to the property managers and instructed them to start enforcing it and submit proposals on how they plan to enforce that. Commissioner McDonald asked Mr. Krause to keep her informed on the progress of enforcing that requirement and he agreed.

Commissioner Sutton asked if it was possible to handle the resident organization business at the Rankin Terrace meeting Mr. Krause will be holding for the annual plan update. Mr. Krause agreed that an in-depth training needs to be done where they can learn organizational skills and training that is specific to the roles they each hold. He agreed with Commissioner McDonald and informed her there is a representative from HUD that has agreed to come down and help with the training. He said it is just a matter of getting a resident organization at all sites.

4. Community Partners Report

Mr. Krause deferred to Hattie McIver for the presentation of the Community Partners Report.

Ms. McIver stated that this morning she had a meeting with Clarence Smith, Cape Fear Community College, and plan on looking at bringing the nursing aide program to one of the sites after the first of the year. She did state that it is a big expense for the Authority but they are looking at ways of making it work.

Ms. McIver reported that the last Program Coordinating Committee "PCC" was in October and had a good attendance.

Ms. McIver said that staff took 12 children and 2 adults to UNCW to see a dance troupe. Ms. McIver spoke highly of UNCW and the partnership that exists.

She stated the nutrition program at Hillcrest Community Campus is still active.

Mr. Krause reminded Ms. McIver about the senior trip to UNCW to see the Haitian Drummers, to which Ms. McIver stated the residents very much enjoyed.

Ms. McIver informed the Committee about the Food Day event at UNCW. She said that 7 residents participated and learned ways to eat healthy and to buy healthy food. Mr. Krause said he was pleased with the turn out and felt WHA was well represented.

Commissioner McDonald asked Mr. Krause; based on a conversation they had months prior, if any of the other colleges had ever been approached for a partnership. He stated that he had talked to Shaw and Mt. Olive but had not yet talked to Miller Mote. He stated that he did not feel they showed any great desire to partner.

Commissioner McDonald asked for the names officers elected at Hillcrest, Houston Moore, and Solomon Towers. Ms. Coston stated;

Hillcrest-
President Mary Johnson
Vice President Rosa Spain
Secretary Shelia Powel
Treasurer (there currently isn't one)
Chaplain Mary Davis

Solomon Towers-
President Cleveland Peoples
Vice President Alfred Salley
Secretary Joy French
Treasurer Mario Martini
Chaplain Brenda Felder
Sargent at Arms Luther Baxley

Houston Moore-
President Dainya Polk
Vice President Latashia Stukes
Secretary Tasha Peterson
Treasurer Phyllis Gibson
Sargent at Arms Anna Suber

Commissioner McDonald suggested to Mr. Krause, that because of the problems at Creekwood with the prior Organization, training be done with the resident officers and ensure they all have a clear understanding on what their duties are. Mr. Krause agreed and informed the Committee that he has already spoken to someone at HUD that has agreed to come down and be a part of the training process. He also stated that there are many residents that have been on Housing Advisory Boards through the years and can help train the newer members. Commissioner McDonald also pointed out those residents that Mr. Krause mentioned need to get involved and take the lead by going to other organization and board meetings.

5. Resident Advisory Board

Commissioner McDonald left the meeting, by way of conference call, at this time

Mr. Peoples reported that everything with the RAB board is going fine. He informed the Committee that they met last month with the property managers and is working on building a relationship with them. He also said that the RAB board is looking at ways to get training for the members.

Commissioner Hays asked who regularly attends the RAB meetings and Ms. Coston said the RAB board consists of the Presidents and Vice Presidents from all the Resident Organization Boards. She said that Joan Johnson does sit in for Rankin Terrace.

Mr. Krause stated that organizationally it is supposed to be made up of the Presidents and Vice Presidents from each public housing community. He mentioned Glover Plaza and while it is not public housing, when they have an organization they are included in the RAB board as well as a representative from the Section 8/Housing Choice Voucher Program.

Commissioner Hays asked if each one of those have been voted on by their individual public housing communities. Mr. Krause and Rose Coston confirmed that is true. They stated that the elections are conducted according to the CFR. Commissioner Hays asked about the Section 8 program since it does not have a community or site, how elections work for that. Ms. Coston stated, and Mr. Krause confirmed, the person was handpicked. But Ms. Coston feels there needs to be a better method as the person needs to be voted into office.

The RAB board was mentioned in regards to attorneys being present at the meetings and the Committee members feel this is not a good thing because the members need to feel the right to speak freely at the RAB meetings. Mr. Peoples stated that it is the desire of the RAB Board that new elections be conducted and the people vote in a new representative for Section 8. Ms. Coston stated that if the RAB Board goes forward with the election then that means that notice needs to go out to all Section 8 residents 30 days prior. Mr. Krause stated that the Committee would back up anything the RAB Board decided but it would be the sole decision of the RAB Board. Ms. Hamilton asked of the notice would have to be sent via US Mail and the Committee responded that it would.

6. Family Self-Sufficiency Report "FSS"

Mr. Krause stated that Ms. Mack was not present due to illness but that there is nothing to report that is different from the month prior. Mr. Krause asked if the Committee had any questions and with no questions they moved on to the next agenda items

7. Other Business

Mr. Krause spoke to the Committee regarding the residents at Houston Moore that spoke to the Board of Commissioners in October.

He stated that most of the complaints made were valid and the Property Manager was suspended. He mentioned transfer requests and that they were submitted but the requests never made it to Central Office for his signature. Mr. Krause reported that it was just a mess over there from maintenance requests to resident files.

Mr. Krause informed the Committee that there is a new property manager at Houston Moore and a temp worker is in the role as assistant property manager.

Commissioner Hays asked for clarification on who the property manager and assistant property manager was. Mr. Krause said the property manager is one of our property managers that are filling in and the assistant property manager is a temp worker.

Commissioner Hays asked if Mr. Krause could state confidentially that the complaints made are at least being looked into. Mr. Krause confirmed they are all being handled. Mr. Krause did warn that the Commissioners may continue to hear complaints about transfers. He stated he would not be granting all transfers unless the request meets the policy standards.

Commissioner Franck questioned the complaints on criminal activity asking if it is legitimately a problem. Mr. Krause said it is definitely legitimate and stated that Willard Street is the worst. Commissioner Franck asked if anything could be done to correct that. Mr. Krause stated that WHA security staff spends most of their time at Houston Moore and hopes that the surveillance cameras will have the desired effect.

Commissioner Hovis asked about doing a walk through one night at Houston Moore but feels these needs to wait until the cameras are all installed. He also said the parking permits need to be enforced. Mr. Krause said that we need to speak to the police because he has seen police park their cars on Willard Street and not get out. He feels they need to be walking through the property.

Commissioner Hovis said we have to make the best of what we have at Houston Moore and make it as safe as possible.

Mr. Krause mentioned the after school program at Houston Moore saying that it is well attended and the children seem to really need the attention Rose Coston and Hattie McIver give. Commissioner Hovis asked if there was a need for volunteers and Ms. Coston said she gets a lot of support and help from the community partners but needs more volunteers. Ms. Coston reported there are approximately 40 applications.

Commissioner Hays asked how many children were in Houston Moore and Mr. Krause stated a report would have to be pulled.

6. Adjournment

With nothing else to discuss the committee adjourned.