RESIDENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS
COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY
OF WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLNIA
January 16, 2014

The regular monthly meeting of the Resident and Community Relations Committee was held on Thursday, January 16, 2014 at 4:00 p.m. at the Wilmington Housing Authority, 1524 South 16th Street, Wilmington, North Carolina.

Committee Members Present: Debra H. Hays, Commissioner
Jeffrey G. Hovis, Commissioner
Stuart Franck, Commissioner
Alfredia McDonald, Commissioner
Vernice Hamilton, Interim CEO
Hattie McIver, Community Liaison Coordinator

Committee Members Absent: L.S. "Bo" Dean, Jr., Commissioner
Helayne Levy, Commissioner

Others Present: Rose Coston, Client Services Coordinator
Rhonda Mack, Director of HCV
Ella Frink, HEO Coordinator
Sara Davis, Executive Assistant
Sargent J. Cina, New Hanover Sheriff's Department
S.D. Keaton, Wilmington Police Department

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 Thursday, January 16, 2014 Pursuant to the Notice sent to the Commissioners and Staff of Wilmington Housing Authority.

2. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the December 18, 2013 Resident and Community Relations Committee meeting were reviewed, Commissioner Hovis made the motion to approve and Commissioner McDonald seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Resident Council Update

Ms. Coston reported Houston Moore elections have been held and new officers are in place. She stated that Solomon Towers will need to have elections due to the President having moved and the Vice President passing.

Ms. Hamilton reported that Glover Plaza elections will be in the near future due to the resignation of the President and Vice President.

Ms. Coston handed out a more recent resident organization list and stated she would email Sara Davis a revised version with the new managers listed.

Commissioner McDonald asked if the Resident Organization offices have been set up along with email addresses and Ms. Coston stated all ROs have email addresses and will make sure they are aware of their email addresses. Ms. Coston stated the only office not yet set up is Houston Moore.

Ms. Hamilton stated she would make sure the MIS Department gets email addresses set up for all active RO offices.

4. Community Partners Report

Ms. Hattie McIver reported on the following:

- 25 children were transported to the YWCA for swimming and activities.
- Meeting held with a UNCW Professor regarding students for the internship.
- Rankin Terrace after School Program averages 12 children.
- Meet and Greet today at Creekwood for the ROSS Coordinator to inform residents in Family Self Sufficiency; 15 residents attended.
- Met with CFCC student Edwin McGray regarding schedule for volunteers.
- A resident has been found to open the Community Campus for different events.
- Hillcrest Reading Program, with Dr. Rice, will be starting again soon.

Commissioner McDonald asked staff to get the other colleges in the area involved in services for the residents.

Ms. Coston reported 4 UNCW students volunteer on Monday's in the afterschool program.

Commissioner Hovis asked staff to put together a budget to staff someone for the after school program on the different sites all five days. He stated if we find funds for programs like ShotSpotter then we have to find funds for resident services. The Committee discussed ways to fund the program and put a paid position in place.

Ms. Coston requested the police stop by and visit the afterschool program so the volunteers to see the uniformed presence for security purposes. Ms. Coston will get the days and times of the program to Sara Davis to distribute to the officers.

The Committee talked about a summer camp program for our children along with those in the surrounding community and Ms. Hamilton stated a MOU agreement would be made with whoever sponsors the camp and hold it in the community center. Solomon Towers was an example used where the seniors can help play games and teach crafts to the children.

Hattie McIver informed the Committee one area that would need to be considered is transportation issues due to the condition of the Housing Authority vans.

5. Resident Advisory Board Report

Ms. Coston reported elections have been held for the RAB and passed out a listing of new officers that are in place.

Commissioner McDonald stated the new President, Ms. Mullins, does not have transportation to attend the Committee meetings and Commissioner Hays requested that Ms. Coston contact Ms. Mullins and offer transportation for the February meeting.

6. Trespass Policy

Commissioner Hays deferred to Rhonda Mack and Ms. Mack stated the changes made were based on the concerns previously mentioned:

- 10 days from placement on list to appeal to the safety and security officer.
- Additional 10 days to appeal the decision from the first appeal to the supervisor of the safety and security officer.
- Appeal for removal in six months if infraction is minor, 18 months if infraction is more serious.

Commissioner Hays asked if the neutral third party mentioned in the policy is neutral and Ms. Mack stated it is because the appeal panel has nothing to do with clients outside the FSS Program and they are employees in a grant position. Ms. Mack stated there is the option to hire someone to come in and hold hearings but it would be a large time commitment and they would have to be dedicated to the position for a long time due to the training it would take.

Ms. Mack stated the policy is in compliance and consistent with the lease.

Commissioner McDonald stated the two employees conducting the hearings also sit on the eviction hearing panel for public housing and section 8 and feels we need to go outside the Authority for neutral panel.

The Committee discussed options in creating a hearing panel that was fair.

Commissioner Hovis asked if the Board is allowed to create another Board that would act as a hearing panel and would have a set term to serve. Ms. Hamilton stated she believed it would have to be advertised and suggested doing it like the City does by advertising for volunteers to sit on a Committee.

Ms. Mack stated a resident could not be placed on the panel due to confidentiality issues and safety of that resident.

Commissioner Hays suggested creating the panel from the Commissioners.

The Committee came to the consensus agreeing to approve the trespass policy and discuss the grievance process at the next meeting and all agreed.

Officer Cina stated he believes the sale of narcotics and possession of a firearm should be a lifetime ban. Ms. Mack pointed out that if they prove to regular offenders they would stay on the list anyway.

The Committee came to the consensus that the following changes need to be made to the policy:

- Purchase and sale of an illegal substance and illegal use and possession of a firearm will carry a 7 year ban will be proposed to the Board.
- Change of the wording; possession of illegal narcotics to possession of controlled substance.

7. Other Business

Commissioner Franck asked where we stand on the signs and Ms. Hamilton stated they are up on all sites and parking passes have been issued and are still being issued on all sites.

Ms. Hamilton stated there is less than 100 IDs that need to be issued. Ms. Hamilton said there was a problem with residents having vehicles that are not registered to them so a procedure had to be made so those vehicles could be registered for a permit. She explained the owner of the vehicle has to present the documents and a notarized statement stating the resident is allowed to use the vehicle.

Commissioner McDonald asked if a resident goes outside to smoke and do so on the sidewalk or the curb are they breaking the curfew and the officers said if it’s curfew then they are too young to smoke. Commissioner McDonald stated it was not a minor that said this happened and the officers stated they are not enforcing curfew yet.

Commissioner Hovis stated residents cannot smoke in any common areas due to the curfew because all common areas are closed to anyone after a certain time. Residents must stay in the outside space of their residence.

Commissioner Hovis reported talking to the City in regards to deeding the streets over to the Authority and talks are ongoing as different options are explored.

Ms. Hamilton stated that Progress Enegry will be assessing the lighting at Vesta Village and areas of Hillcrest.

Commissioner Franck asked the officers if they see a difference and the officers stated it is a lot better.

Commissioner Hovis stated the police department is willing to start conducting community meetings and work with the resident organizations to get those meetings scheduled.

8. Adjournment

With no other business the meeting was adjourned.