RESIDENT & COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE
Wilmington Housing Authority
September 20, 2012

The regular monthly meeting of the Resident & Community Relations Committee was held on Thursday, September 20, 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 G. Vernice Hamilton, Director of Human Resources Hattie McIver, Community Liaison Coordinator
Committee Members Absent:	Stuart Franck, Commissioner Cheryl D. Sutton., Commissioner
Others Present:	Jeffery Hovis, Commissioner Michael Krause, Chief Executive Officer Rhonda Mack, Director of Housing Choice Voucher Cleveland Peoples, President Resident Advisory Board 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 4:02 p.m. on September 20, 2012, pursuant to the Notice sent to the Commissioners and Staff of Wilmington Housing Authority.

The Chair stated she would like to see the Commissioners use their knowledge, connections, and skill to help increase the community relations and build involvement with our residents.

2. Community Partners Report

Mr. Krause spoke briefly regarding the report that Ms. Hamilton gives monthly to the Board of Commissioners. He deferred to Ms. Hamilton for the report on Community Partners.

Ms. Hamilton talked about the various partnerships, using Glover as an example. She informed the committee that there is a working partnership with several community partners; two mentioned were Department of Aging and Department of Social Services. Ms. Hamilton explained that many of the resident service staff is working closely with residents and community partners to get the services to the residents. Commissioner Hays asked if the community partners come on site or if it is left to the resident to go to the partners. Ms. Hamilton stated that it depends on the service but if possible the community partners bring the service to the residents.

Dreams was mentioned and, while currently active only at Creekwood, it is soon to begin working at Rankin Terrace as well.

Ms. Hamilton reported that Child Advocacy was very active at Creekwood and Houston Moore; the desire is to start a program at Rankin Terrace.

Commissioner McDonald asked if the seniors at the other sites can be involved with the activities and programs that occur at Glover Plaza. Mr. Krause explained that because the Service Coordinator at Glover is funded by a grant it has to be exclusive to Glover Plaza. He also assured the committee that information is shared with other sites to help residents throughout WHA.

Mr. Krause also told the committee that the Resident Service Staff is always getting help from Community Partners. The committee spoke at length about the various partners and the work they have done on the sites.

Commissioner Hovis asked if there was knowledge of the number of children on the various sites. Mr. Krause stated while there currently is not, it wouldn't be difficult to obtain that percentage. Hattie McIyver mentioned the summer lunch program that fed 3,114 children. Commissioner McDonald asked if all the sites were getting hot food. Hattie confirmed that the only hot sites were Creekwood and Hillcrest. Ms. Hamilton informed the committee that Golden Corral fed the children of Houston Moore dinner for a month in the summer. Golden Corral set up at a local church and the children of Houston Moore were brought to the church for dinner.

Commissioner Hovis asked Ms. McIyver if it was difficult to keep consistent programs. She replied that so far it has not been difficult at all. One of the partners mentioned was the Food Bank. Ms. Hamilton and Mr. Krause talked about their dedication to the residents and supplying an abundance of food.

Another Community Partner the committee discussed was the UNCW Community Campus. Mr. Krause told the committee that the University, as a whole, backs this program. He told the committee that he is working with the School of Health and Human Services and that recently he met with the Dean of the school. Mr. Krause told the committee about a visiting professor from the University of Denver that would like to work with WHA doing research on low income housing. He would like to offer evaluation services to WHA. He said that while the professor will not just be focusing on WHA he will definitely be working with us doing some research in areas like crime.

Commissioner Hays thanked Hattie McIyver and Ms. Hamilton for doing such a good job.

3. Family Self Sufficiency, (FSS)

Mr. Krause informed the committee that we now have 2 FSS Counselors and deferred to Rhonda Mack for the report.

Ms. Mack stated that currently there are 61 in the Housing Choice Voucher FSS program and 41 in the Public Housing FSS program. She stated that Public Housing numbers have dropped due to the ones graduating out of the program. The counselors are going to the residents and informing them of the program and working with them on budgeting. Currently there are 102 enrolled in the program. The committee discussed the reasons for the numbers being what they are and Ms. Mack pointed out that 30 to 40% of our clients are elderly or disabled and so the current numbers are really not that low. Ms. Mack also assured the committee that the FSS staff is consistently working closely with residents, going to RAB meetings, holding quarterly financial classes.

4. Resident Advisory Board

Mr. Peoples stated that the RAB is currently working on establishing a relationship with the managers. He reported that Rankin Terrace does not have an active Resident Organization. Mr. Krause told the committee that Houston Moore just had a turnover in their Resident Organization so hopefully they will become more active. Mr. Peoples said that they are working on getting the Resident Organizations along with the residents, more active and involved. Commissioner McDonald asked if anyone from the RAB Board has gone to the various Resident Organizations trying to get the residents and resident organizations more involved and active. Mr. Peoples stated that they are doing that and will continue to do so. Mr. Krause talked about the importance of getting the right residents in positions so that the boards become workable boards. Ms. Hamilton said that at Rankin and Houston Moore, Rose and Hattie have gone door to door to get residents to the organization meetings. And that few, if any, actually show up. Ms. Hamilton told the committee that notices go out weeks and days prior to each meeting. Commissioner McDonald feels someone should go out and sit down with residents individually to find out why residents do not want to get involved. The committee talked at length about ways to get residents involved.

Mr. Peoples informed the committee that the air conditioning at Solomon Towers is now fixed.

5. Other Business

The committee discussed the community service requirement by HUD and the difficulty there is in keeping a record on residents completing this. There were a couple committee members that questioned the ability to be able to require attending Resident Organization meetings. Mr. Krause told the committee it is not possible to require attendance but the residents can use the meetings as part of their community service requirement.

6. Adjournment

With nothing else to discuss the committee adjourned.