

**RESIDENT ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERSHIP
Presentation of the 5-Year and Annual Plan**

Our Resident Advisory Board (RAB) is comprised of Section 8 and Public Housing Residents. A letter was sent to all current Section 8 existing residents asking them to attend a meeting on September 22, 2009. All Public Housing Residents were notified in the September news letter. New Public Housing Resident Council members were elected on Monday, September 21, 2009. A letter was sent to the new Resident Council member asking them to attend their first Resident Council meeting on October 8, 2009 where the 5-Year and Annual plan would be presented.

Section 8 HCV clients were notified that JURHA would be developing a “Resident Advisory Board” and offer them the opportunity to serve on the board. They were also informed that the purpose of the RAB was to assist the Agency by making recommendations regarding the Agency’s PHA Annual Plan. A letter was also sent to the Public Housing Resident Council members requesting their attendance, as well as any Public Housing resident who they thought might be interested in serving on the RAB. The following persons volunteered and were chosen to serve (all volunteers were accepted):

Beulah Scales– Section 8
Latunya Moore – Section 8
Molly Murphy – Section 8
Margarte Ijidakinro- Section 8
Shirley Rattler – Section 8
Shena Davis – Section
James Farris – Public Housing Resident Council Member
Jeanette Ross – Public Housing Resident Council Member
Aquasha Anderson – Public Housing Resident Council Member
David Sharp – Public Housing Resident Council Member
Kimberly Stevens – Public Housing Resident Council Member
Veronica Guyton – Public Housing Resident Council Member
Lois Williams – Public Housing Resident Council Member

RESIDENT ADVISORY BOARD COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS & JURHA RESPONSES

1. One Section 8 resident asked how portability worked.

Jan Hopkins explained that you must have fulfilled your 1 year requirement to live here, be in good standing with Section 8 and give proper notice to your landlord to move. Once you determine where you want to move, you would see if that Housing Authority will accept portability clients. If the agency will accept portability then you would make an appointment with your JURHA case worker to give them the information of the Housing Authority where you want to transfer. You can also contact your case worker for help in finding an agency in the area you are interest in.

2. One Section 8 resident told about a mix-up she had in asking about a transfer. She is in a 2 bedroom house and would like to find a 2 bedroom elderly complex to live in. She is on a waiting list for a unit. She had called her case worker to ask about a transfer and was given a voucher. She was not ready to move yet and her daughter helped her get this straightened out.

Jan Hopkins explained the process she would need to go through in order to move.

The same Section 8 resident elaborated on her mix-up in asking for a transfer. She asked, “Why she was told she could not have a 2 bedroom apartment when she was in a 2 bedroom house now”?

Jeannie Cossey explained that she could get a 2 bedroom apartment but that she was only eligible for a 1 bedroom payment standard and in order to rent a 2 bedroom unit the cost would need to be within the 1 bedroom payment standard or her portion of the rent must be within 40% of her adjust gross income.

1. Another Section 8 resident stated that she was living in a house prior to being on assistance and after going on assistance the unit was not accepted. She wanted to know “why the unit was not accepted when the only thing that failed was a ceiling fan did not work and it was going to be fixed”? After further discussion, it was determined that the unit did pass HQS but that the amount of rent the Landlord requested was higher than Rent Reasonableness for the unit.

Jeannie Cossey explained that when a request to rent a unit is brought into the Housing Authority we first check to determine if your portion of rent is in compliance with HUD income guidelines. After the unit is inspected and passes the gross rent can not exceed the rent reasonableness determined for that area. We use a point system based on unassisted units that are similar in location, size and amenities to unit you are renting. The points determined for a unit are assigned a dollar value and the gross rent of the unit (rent & utilities) can not exceed this amount. We will call the landlord to see if he will accept the lower rent. Jan Hopkins stated that affordability and a tight rental market are two of the major housing needs in Jonesboro. JURHA is working to enlist more landlords.

2. One Section 8 resident told about her wall heating unit running all the time. She said that her landlord checked it out and told her it was ok but her bill was very high because of the unit running all the time. She also said that her landlord had put in “white” carpet that was very hard to keep clean. She and her daughter were experiencing health problem from the carpet.

Jeannie Cossey asked the resident to come in and fill out a complaint about the heating unit and we would send an inspector to check it out. If it was running and would not shut off during the inspection then we would ask the landlord for a certification from a quality HCAV technician that the unit was working properly. Jan Hopkins explained that as long as there was not HQS violation for the carpet we could not have the landlord remove or replace it. You could ask the landlord to replace or remove it. If he refuses and you are in the first year of your lease and this is affecting your health then you should get a note from your doctor and bring it into your case worker to review. Depending on the note from the Doctor you may be able to get out of your lease and find a new unit.

5. One Section 8 resident expressed interest in our Homeownership program.

Jeannie Cossey said that we have a waiting list for both our FSS and Homeownership programs. The programs are comprised of interested Section 8 residents. We only have 27 FSS Slots and 21 Homeowner Slots. You should have completed a form upon entrance into the Section 8 program that asked if you were interested in either of the programs. We gave out business cards to a couple of the Section 8 residents and asked them to call Sheila Reddig to check to see if they are on the Homeownership waiting list. If they were not they could be added to the list.

6. One Section 8 resident asked why we could not have more slots for the Homeownership program.

Jeannie Cossey explained that we are trying to expand our homeownership program. There are specific training requirements that a staff person must have to do Homeownership counseling. At the

present we only have 1 employee with the qualifications, so the available slots are based on the capacity of the employee. Also, funding is limited. We only received HAP assisted for HUD. We have to rely on other grants to help with other aspects of the Homeownership program.

7. One Section 8 resident asked why we did not have any “group home” housing here. She was from Minnesota which had a lot.

Jan Hopkins said that we do have guidelines to use the HAP for “group home” but that she was unaware of any in our jurisdiction.

She asked if we could apply for the voucher for group homes.

Jan Hopkins responded that before we applied for vouchers we have to have documentation showing a “need” for the voucher. I was not sure if the Housing Authority would qualify as a recipient of these types of funds. Some vouchers you apply for are designated to a specific group, such as the VASH vouchers target veterans. We could have applied for these vouchers if we could show a need to assist veterans. Jeannie Cossey stated that most group home funding starts with a private company securing the funds. Mid-south health system has some similar housing.

8. One Section 8 resident pointed to Attachment G and asked what is was.

Jan Hopkins explained that Attachment G – J were CFP Annual Statements/Performance and Evaluations Reports that we are required to submit with our plan. These are funds we received each year for our Public Housing units to make repairs and modernize. We complete a report for each year showing what we have done if funds have been used and what we plan to do for unused funds.

9. Comment Card from Resident Advisory Board. Oakrun complex- “Laundry Room – Improve Parking.”

10. Comment Card from Resident Advisory Board. “Digital cameras to view sites, Police scanners for Resident Managers, new tools for play grounds, new sand for kids to play on! Neighborhood Watch!”

Ms. Crawford advised the council that though intentions for CFP funds may include playground equipment, it often gets bumped down on the priority list because new roofs, kitchen cabinets, or air conditioners take priority. Ms. Crawford advised the council that there are grant funding opportunities available to resident organizations and that the council could choose to become highly active and work to secure grant funding to completely refurbish the playgrounds. Ms. Crawford stated that the neighborhood watch program was supposedly active.

11. Comment Card from Resident A-dvisory Board. “Move playground available for Marshall & Melrose children. Also move JPD involvement. See response on # 10.

12. Comment Card from Resident Advisory Board. “I think we need more and better playground equipment. Neighborhood Watch! See response on # 10

13. Comment Card from Resident Advisory Board. “The park needs filling too many waterholes and mud puddles.”

14. Comment Card from Resident Advisory Board. “First meeting enjoyed comments and feedback. Lawn cut too short.

Comments #1 – 8 were answered by appropriate staff during the meeting and no changes to the PHA Plan were necessary since they only involved questions on the administration of the HCV program..

Suggestions and/or comments from Commit Card #9-14 were turning in after the Resident Advisory/RAB meeting on October 8, 2009. JURHA has considered all comments and have taken the following action:

1. Comment # 9 - We are planning to demolish, rebuild our Oakrun complex. The units will have Washer/Dryer connections and there will not be a laundry room. In addition there will be a designed parking area that will be adequate to the types and number of buildings. See Goals and Objectives # 7.
2. Comment # 10 & 12- We will make suggestion that Resident Council put one Digital Camera in the budget, however, it will be shared between the Resident Managers and Resident Services/Security Coordinator to document events, etc. Any other uses might be considered an invasion of privacy. Will forward comments on new tools for playgrounds and new sand for play areas to the Resident Services/Security Coordinator and ask that he report his findings on the feasibility and need for additional equipment and sand. The new Resident Services/Security Coordinator is currently developing a "Neighborhood Watch" and needs volunteers for the developments.
3. Comment # 11- We will suggest that the resident need to become more involvement in Resident Council Meetings by attending meetings and working with Resident Services/Security Coordinator to provide these services.
4. Comment # 13 - Has issued WO# 12915 to fill in all holes in playground with sand/soft dirt especially under monkey bars and play ground equipment.