

Follow Up to Public Commentary – October 2010 Regular Board Meeting:

Ms. Chatman: Identified herself as a resident of the Commission’s South Seventh public housing site, she raised a concern regarding the unsatisfactory condition of the sidewalk at her site and inquired of when it would be addressed. She raised a concern regarding a neighbor smoking recreational drugs. Informed the Commission of a story she saw in the Detroit News about the Indianapolis PHA regarding pre-admittance drug testing of public housing tenants and their agreement to sign a document before being admitted, and recommending that the AAHC look into this. She later stated that there was an issue with maintenance requests not getting into the system. She commented on legal expenses and the need for staff to be more sensitive to persons’ disabilities and mentioned that she was escrowing her rent until her items were fixed.

AAHC Response: The Commission had originally anticipated having additional concrete work done when First Contracting was on-site conducting construction work on various properties. However, based on HUD’s instruction regarding limitations on change orders, the Commission could not expand concrete work to sites not already identified in the contract. While the sidewalk at South Seventh is not currently specifically identified in the Commission’s plans for use of Capital Fund Program grant funds, the Commission intends to address the sidewalk concern at South Seventh thru the use of operating funds, if there are sufficient funds available in the spring. This has been discussed previously with Ms. Chatman. Since this work cannot be done until the spring, due to weather, the Commission’s staff has recently temporarily repaired several specific sidewalk issues at South Seventh. Based on Ms. Chatman’s complaints, the Commission has sent a reminder letter that the use of illegal drugs is a lease violation. While several public housing authorities across the country have adopted drug testing policies, it is unclear if this is legal, and likely to be challenged. Ms. Chatman has had numerous work orders responded to. The Commission has not received other complaints that residents are unable to make maintenance requests. The Commission staff is very sensitive to residents’ disabilities, especially given the wide range of residents’ special needs at the various Commission properties. Management has stressed the importance of recognizing various special needs of our residents, as demonstrated in having CSTS provide an all staff training on “Working with Mental Illness in Public Housing.” Assisting our residents with various special needs is a priority of the Commission. The Commission does not allow the escrowing of rent by a tenant. Tenants are required to pay their rent and if they are utilizing the Commission’s formal grievance process the Commission may escrow such rent. Ms. Chatman has been fully informed of these requirements.

Mr. Vitagliano: Identified himself as a resident of the Commission’s West Washington public housing site. Stated that he had hired an attorney to pursue a lawsuit against the Commission regarding the wrongful destruction of property that he had located in storage in the basement of West Washington. Mr. Vitagliano stated that it took a long period of time for the Commission to dry and clean the basement area after a water heater leak which resulted in mold, and also stated that a contractor hired by the Commission discarded his belongings that were in his storage area and which were damaged by the water leak.

AAHC Response: The water heater tank next door to Mr. Vitagliano’s apartment had an emergency leak. This was not expected as there had been no work orders called in by the tenant indicating any problems. The tenant called in when the tank began to leak. Unfortunately the leak went thru to the basement below, damaging walls and some items in storage lockers. The Commission responded immediately calling in an outside contractor who found that the relief valve had failed, not something that could have been anticipated. The water tank itself was only seven years old and had not reached its useful life (ranging at least 8-12 years). The Commission immediately searched the basement for damage finding it

to have water damage. The basement first needed to be dried out to assess the damage and as such dehumidifiers were placed in the basement the next day to begin drying it out. The Commission then brought outside contractors in to assess the damage and then obtained bids. A contractor was hired to conduct demolition of the existing drywall. The Commission is now in the process of determining whether or not new drywall is needed given that this is a basement used only for storage – the Commission is consulting with the City on this. Mr. Vitagliano’s items in storage were not discarded by the Commission or by a contractor. They were moved to another locker that was dry and Mr. Vitagliano was informed of this. The Commission’s insurance does not cover residents’ personal items. Residents are required to carry renter’s insurance for their personal belongings.

Ms. Jones: Identified herself as a resident of the Commission’s Hikone public housing site. She complained of too many cats on the property defecating in the children’s sandbox area and that residents with cats were not complying with the Commission’s pet policy. She would like to see such pet policy enforced and such cats be registered, immunized and kept in their homes.

AAHC Response: The Commission’s Pet Policy limits the number of pets allowed to one per apartment. It requires that residents’ pets be registered and inoculated, and requires pet owners to be responsible for removing feces dropped anywhere in a building or on the grounds. Cat owners are required to have a litter box. The Policy does *not* require cats to be kept inside. However, the Pet Policy states, in part, “Dogs and cats must be on a leash at all times when not in the owner’s apartment. The leash must not be longer than 6 feet.” Management has contacted the City’s Animal Control Officer. Management has sent a letter to Hikone tenants regarding this issue, outlining the AAHC pet policy and indicating that violations of such policy will result in the Commission issuing lease non-compliance notices.

Ms. Doughty (Exec. Dir. Of CAN): Added to Ms. Jones’ comments that the cats are also defecating in the community vegetable garden area. Provided a handout to Commissioners which included photos from the Betsy Lindsley Greenhouse Opening Event. Discussed the use of milestones and performance measures for the Community Action Network programs at Hikone and Green Baxter Court and requested that the Commission allow the usage of the same performance targets used by the Office of Community Development. She reviewed statistics and matrixes included in the handout, including several measurable outcomes of the CAN Programs at Hikone and Green Baxter Court.

AAHC Response: The Commission values its relationship with the Community Action Network (CAN) and appreciates the work Ms. Doughty has done toward developing performance measures for their work at Hikone and Green Baxter Court. The Commission staff will review with CAN the performance measures and targets used by OCD to determine the most appropriate measures for Hikone and Green Baxter.

Ms. Miller: Identified herself as a resident of the Commission’s Baker Commons public housing site and a member of the Baker Commons Resident Council. She informed the Board that one apartment at Baker Commons had been treated for bed bugs and that such treatment failed and inquired if HUD would be treating the entire building for beg bugs.

AAHC Response: Two units at Baker Commons have had confirmation of bed bugs. The first unit’s heat treatment did not eliminate the infestation and an outside contractor is proceeding with chemical treatments 1x/month until eliminated. A second unit was recently identified and received treatment. All units adjoining the infested units are inspected multiple times (at initial ID of infestation and at each

treatment). Additionally, any other tenant who requests an inspection has had their unit inspected as well as the Baker Commons lounge area. No other Baker Commons' units have an infestation to date. The Commission will continue to proceed as described here. Ms. Miller has been informed of this information and the Commission's process for on-going treatment. Initial heat treatments are costly (approx. \$1,000 per unit) and are paid for by the Commission.

Mr. Morgan: Stated that he did not receive new windows for his unit yet and is inquiring of when the windows will be replaced. He stated that he has purchased materials to work on his windows and would begin that process. He later reiterated that he intends to work on his windows and requested that a letter be sent to him indicating when his windows will be replaced.

AAHC Response: The Commission has budgeted \$120,000 in its 2010 Capital Fund Grant for replacement windows at Baker Commons. The Commission cannot begin to draw down on this grant until its environmental review is submitted and approved by HUD. The Commission is in the process of finalizing the necessary environmental paperwork. This item will require a full RFP process. Based on estimated time needed due to the RFP process and also based on weather considerations, the Commission hopes to have the Baker Commons window replacement project done by the summer of 2011. As requested by Mr. Morgan, the Commission sent him a letter with this information and also included information reminding Mr. Morgan that tenant "renovations" are prohibited, but that the Commission offers to put up plastic on Mr. Morgan's windows (as has been done in the previous two winters).

Mr. Pierce: Identified himself as a new resident of the Commission's Baker Commons public housing site, and also a member of the WCHO Board. He suggested that the Commission consider developing better documentation for residents with regards to the recertification process; something that lists the steps in the recertification process because many consumers do not fully understand the process. He also suggested providing better documentation regarding the rent calculation during the recertification process. He stated that staff was evasive in providing information during the recertification process. He inquired if a Section 8 participant would lose their voucher if they moved into public housing or Project Based Section 8 housing.

AAHC Response: Mr. Pierce has voiced some very good suggestions. The Deputy Director will work to develop more informative documentation regarding the Commission's recertification process - a step process or chart, and will review the documentation currently provided to residents with regards to rent calculation to determine possible improvements. The Commission is attempting to increase transparency thru increased use of its website. The Commission will work toward making more information available to residents and the general public thru its website. A recipient cannot "double dip" and as such, they must choose to live either in public housing or to participate in the Section 8 Program (either thru the voucher program or in a project-based Section 8 development) – but they cannot do both. This information will be conveyed to Mr. Pierce.

Follow Up to Public Commentary – November 3, 2010 Special Board Meeting:

Ms. Chalklin: Ms. Chalklin identified herself as a representative of IHN (Interfaith Hospitality Network). She talked about the Pilot program that IHN has with the Commission, started back in 2003. She stressed the increased need for affordable housing and indicated that her agency would like to renew past relationships with the Commission as well as begin new partnerships to address the need for housing and services within the community.

AAHC Response: The Commission thanks Ms. Chalklin for coming to speak at the Board meeting and welcomes increased partnership opportunities – this is a high priority of the Commission. The Commission has already been engaged in dialogue with IHN and will continue to move this partnership forward. The Commission staff will follow up with Ms. Chalklin regarding her reference to homeless statistics.

Mr. Strange: Identified himself as a resident of Miller Manor. Mr. Strange complimented the new management staff and stated that Mr. Centala in particular has done a very good job, especially with asking residents to bring him their problems with proposed solutions. He stated that the new management treats residents equally and fairly. He reiterated an earlier request regarding the possibility of making the rear yard of Miller Manor accessible to residents in wheelchairs and indicated that he would be working with the Center for Independent Living to potentially apply for a grant for this.

AAHC Response: The Commission thanks Mr. Strange for attending the Board Meeting and for providing such complimentary comments. The Commission has reviewed the possibility of making the rear yard of Miller Manor accessible. The yard is currently not accessible for any residents, not just those in wheelchairs. The yard is steeply sloped and would require substantial landfill to level it off. If Mr. Strange is able to locate funding, the Commission would gladly coordinate with the Center for Independent Living on possible improvements to the Miller Manor back yard.