

Members Present: Teresa Anderson, Sharon Bosteder, Mary-Lynn Bowen, Lillie Clinton, Paula Danielson, Elsie Linebarger, David Madison, Rose McCoo, Elizabeth Miller, Tammy Morris, Amy Pawloski, Linda Radelich, Mary Rogers, Terry Stewart

KCHA Staff: Rickie Robinson, Bill Cook, Judi Jones, MaiLing Martin, Linda Weedman, Gina Guerrero, Sean Heron

KEY POINTS DISCUSSED		
NO.	TOPIC	HIGHLIGHTS
1	REVIEW OF MEETING NOTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notes were approved (North & South) with two changes
2	UPDATE ON CHILDREN'S SAVINGS ACCOUNTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview
3	GRIEVANCE & INFORMAL MEETINGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six recommendation of RAC
4	OTHER BUSINESS	

Welcome and Introductions – Linda Weedman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Review of Notes – Linda W. asked if there are any corrections needed on the notes from the May 2013 meetings. Terry Stewart wanted to clarify that she was asking about the annual inspection for all aspects of housing not just a particular Section 8 participant. Sharon Bosteder mentioned that she shared similar concerns about a proposed hearing officer due to a previous experience not specifically because of the outcome. The rest of the meeting notes were approved.

Update on Children's Savings Account – Linda W. gave a brief updated overview on the Children's Saving Account. The Public Housing Authorities (Seattle, Tacoma, and King County) are interested in a pilot program that provides a total of 2,000 children with savings accounts reserved for post-secondary education. The PHAs, in collaboration with CFED (Corporation for Enterprise Development), are currently examining how to best deliver the initiative to children and which financial institution(s) they should partner with to create and manage the accounts. For KCHA, the Highline School district was chosen to be the focus area. The children would enter the program early, likely in kindergarten or first grade.

Grievance & Informal Meetings – Sean Heron led a discussion about previous RAC recommendations (6) to improve the grievance hearing and informal meeting process. First Sean H. gave an update on the selection of hearing officers. There were only five proposals for the RFQ (Request for Qualifications) and KCHA selected four. Two will be returning hearing officers and two will be new to KCHA. The proposed roster of four hearing officers was also presented to the Northwest Justice Project (NJP) for comment and their comment. They had no specific concerns or comments about the four

proposed hearing officers. In fact, the NJP felt that the longer a hearing officer serves, and the more experience they have, the better able they are at doing their job.

1. The first of six recommendations was regarding the assignment of hearing officers. The consensus of the RAC was that hearing officers should not preside over back-to-back hearing for the same resident. Sean H. stated that KCHA was supportive of this recommendation and in the future there should be more flexibility with a roster of four hearing officers.
2. The second recommendation from the RAC was that hearing officers should have experience living in public housing or Section 8. Sean explained that the RFQ process included a broad outreach and recruitment. Announcements about the RFQ were sent to legal aid organizations, the Washington State and King County bar associations, mediation groups and multiple other agencies. The RFQ was also advertised in the local newspapers as well. There were only 5 applications received and only 4 qualified. The RFQ also included a Section 3 requirement that provided extra points to residents of HUD assisted housing and low income residents in the wider community. There were also tests to ensure that hearing officers would be unbiased. For example, the RFQ asked if the potential hearing officer belonged to any landlord associations.
3. The third recommendation was that there should be term limits for hearing officers. After receiving more detailed information about the difficulty recruiting and small number of applicants most RAC members felt that was no longer a valid recommendation. Sean H. did point out that the contract for a hearing officer was 3 years with the optional of extending the contract for two years at a time (up to a total of seven years). In addition, the hearing officer contract includes a clause that allows KCHA to terminate the hearing officer if they are not performing their work in a professional manner.
4. The fourth recommendation was in regards to voiced concerns of RAC members and access to KCHA documents prior to a hearing. Bill Cook stated that he is directing his staff to mail a copy of the hearing packets to the residents 7 business days before the hearing. Hearings must be scheduled within 7-15 days of being requested. The hearing process is not a legal courtroom and any new relevant evidence by either party can be brought in at the time of the hearing.
5. The fifth recommendation by the RAC was that residents should be able to participate in the hearing process similar to a jury. Many RAC members felt that this was not necessary because other residents should not be privy to other's information. Also, a jury of one's peers could possibly be more strict and harsh. Sean H. did state that the resident has the right to request a closed or public forum for their hearing.
6. The sixth and final recommendation for the RAC was that the hearings should be conducted in a way that is fair and unbiased. Many RAC members felt that when they walked into a hearing the officers and KCHA staff were on friendly terms. Sean H. explained that KCHA was very supportive of tightening up the policies and procedures to ensure that the hearings are fair and unbiased. He explained that, with the exception of the one KCHA staff member who is responsible for coordinating and scheduling the hearings, no other KCHA staff has prior access to the hearing officer. This one staff member has nothing to do with the hearing nor will they attend the hearing. KCHA is considering adding new language to the policies that would ban ex parte communication to ensure that the process is fair and that all parties have the same information as the hearing officer who will be deciding the case. This would mean that no one may enter the hearing with the hearing officer until both parties are present and that if one

party needs to leave the hearing for a break then both parties will leave the room to ensure that neither party has access to the hearing officer.

Other Business – The next RAC meeting should be in August or beginning of September because the MTW Plan will be presented to the Board of Commissioners in September. Tammy Morris asked to have Eden Bossom come and present the findings from the recent Section 8 focus group. She also was curious to find out if there would be more Section 8 focus group meetings in the future. Gina Guerrero said that more than likely there would be more meetings but that would be dependent upon staff time. Paula Danielson voiced concerns about a 3-day notice that was posted on a neighbor’s door. She stated that it was taped to the door for everyone to see and that it was illegal. Bill C. clarified that it is not illegal but agreed that this was not the correct way. He will look into the issue and contact property management. Lillie Clinton had a question about her rent statement since being switched over the Project-based Section 8. Judi asked her to forward a copy of her rent statement to her so she could help her understand. Mary Rogers had a concern about her landlord and a late notice of payment however is an issue that needs to be talked over with the Section 8 landlord.