

RESIDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RAC)

King County Housing Authority, 700 Andover Park W, Tukwila WA Snoqualmie Rm

■ September 9, 2015 ■ 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Members Present: Sharon Bosteder, Lillie Clinton, Elsie Linebarger, David Madison, Linde Radelich, Susan Scroggs, TerryLynn Stewart

Other Residents Present: Barbara Janelli, Alice Hill, Cecelia Miller, Ciza Djumanne, Po Saw Shee, Say La Wah, Sharon Havener

KCHA Staff: Bill Cook, Elizabeth Westburg, Katie Escudero, Nadia Marchuk, Shawli Hathaway, Beth Meshke, Rickie Robinson, Nikki Parrott

Johnson Controls (JCI): Jake Terzot

KEY POINTS DISCUSSED

NO.	TOPIC	HIGHLIGHTS
1	Welcome, Introductions, Review Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notes from May 20, 2015 joint RAC meeting were approved.
2	Energy Performance Initiatives Contract (EPIC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shawli Hathaway gave an overview of and collected input from the RAC about the EPIC.
3	2016 Moving To Work (MTW) Annual Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Katie Escudero gave an overview of and collected input from the RAC about the 2016 MTW plan.
4	Property Management Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bill Cook answered questions.

Welcome and Introductions

Rickie Robinson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made around the room. Visiting residents who came to hear the EPIC and MTW presentations were welcomed.

Prior RAC Meeting Notes

RAC members approved the notes from the joint RAC meeting of May 20th. (One RAC member voted not to approve due to some unclear language.) These notes will be posted at KCHA's web site: <http://www.kcha.org/residents/rac/>

Energy Performance Initiatives Contract (EPIC)

Shawli Hathaway, Assistant Director of the Resident Services department at KCHA, shared some information about EPIC. Jake Terzot from Johnson Controls, also called JCI, the EPIC contractor, was also there to answer questions about the EPIC project.

What: The goal is to install products that are more energy efficient into some of the apartments and some of the community areas.

Why: King County Housing Authority (KCHA) cares a lot about maintaining its properties well and also about reducing waste and energy usage, and being environmentally friendly. We have decided to go ahead with this project because it will save money by reducing energy usage by making our buildings more energy efficient. Another reason to do this is that rent only covers part of the cost of operating the properties. The government has been paying us less and less over the last several years to maintain our properties, so we need a way to close that financial gap. We will reduce utility costs if we improve utility efficiency. The improvements should also improve residents' quality of life, such as with

better air circulation and lighting. The exact items to be installed have not yet been decided. Shawli distributed pictures of some potential new items.

Where: Here is the list of the buildings covered by the project right now. Public housing buildings not on the list are already energy efficient or didn't qualify for the program.

Ballinger Homes, Northridge I, Boulevard Manor, Northridge II, Briarwood, Northwood Apartments, Brittany Park, Northwood Square, Burien Park, Pacific Court, Burndale Homes, Paramount House, Casa Juanita, Park Royal, Casa Madrona, Peppertree, Cascade Apartments, Plaza Seventeen, College Place, Riverton Terrace II (Senior), Eastside Terrace, Salmon Creek (Greenbridge), Firwood Circle, Shelcor, Forest Glen, Sixth Place (Greenbridge), Gustaves Manor, Southridge House, Island Crest, Valli Kee, Kirkland Place, Wayland Arms, Lake House, Westminster, Mardi Gras, Yardley Arms, Munro Manor, Cedar Grove, Nia (Greenbridge), Hillsvue, Northlake House, KCHA Central Office

What Products: Some of the products are new lights (new LED bulbs last longer), new toilets to reduce water usage, air ventilation systems, and new heating systems. We might be able to replace some older refrigerators and we might be able to replace some older elevators. All of these upgrades will not only reduce consumption of utilities but will also be easier for KCHA staff to maintain because newer items won't have to be maintained and replaced as often.

When: Current Status: KCHA has decided to do this project, and has looked at the general products which will be installed, but not specific models. We will be finalizing the list of what products go where this fall. We plan to start installing upgrades on the first building in February 2016. The project will take about two years to finish. So far the contractor Johnson Controls (JCI) has done an audit this summer at our buildings to find out what improvements are needed. Each building will get different upgrades depending on what each building needs. The whole project will probably take until the end of 2016, but we will only be at specific buildings for a certain period of time.

Possible Employment Opportunities: Let one of the contacts for EPIC listed below know if you want to be more involved stay up to date. There might be employment opportunities for residents in connection with EPIC. We don't know exactly what might be available yet, but maybe some administrative work, maybe some cleaning, or maybe some other tasks. Once we know which measures will be installed where we will have more information about employment opportunities.

Disruption to Residents: There will be no tenant relocations during this project. No tenants will need to move out of their units. Before we start work at a specific building we will have a meeting with residents to discuss what work will be done, what products will be installed, and what to expect during the work. If we are making improvements in your apartment, the workers will need to come inside the unit, but we expect most of the improvements to only take two to three hours at the most.

Demonstration Units: Johnson Controls has installed some demonstration products such as new lights and toilets in some units. After they have been used for a few weeks, we will get feedback from tenants, maintenance staff, and property managers about the demonstration products.

Q & A: Shawli shared this list of questions and answers that have been asked at prior meetings.

1. What is an Energy Performance Initiative Contract?

EPIC is an agreement between a federally funded agency, such as KCHA, and an energy service company, that provides financing of energy conservation measures. The energy service company completes an audit of the selected properties for the program, and then suggests energy efficient upgrades.

2. What are the benefits of this project?

- Makes KCHA buildings more energy efficient—less impact on the environment
- Improves quality of life for resident
- Saves money to pay for new products and future improvements and programs

3. Who do I contact for more information or to get involved in the project?

- Your Property Manager or Resident Services Coordinator
- Burgandi McCurdy (Communications Officer), 206.829.2465 or BurgandiM@kcha.org
- Beth Pearson (Project Manager), 206-574-1162 or BethP@kcha.org

4. When will we know for sure which properties and improvements will be installed?

We will have a final list early in 2016, about one month before construction starts.

5. How can you be sure this project will result in the savings you are expecting?

Johnson Controls Inc., the company we are contracting with for this project, has projected our estimated cost savings. If we do not realize the projected savings from this project, Johnson Controls will make up the difference.

6. How long will it take to realize these savings?

Some measures, like water and lighting, will realize savings very quickly. Others will take longer. The cost savings were projected based on 20 years of using the new measures.

RAC Member Comments and Questions about EPIC

Will EPIC improvements be made in community areas?

Yes, some of them. We have not yet identified the specific units and common areas where improvements will be made.

I have already had energy improvements put in my unit, but my utility bills have gone up this year compared with last year.

The goal of EPIC is to reduce energy usage. Your bills might have gone up because the utility company increased its rates.

The fan runs so much that it is using more electricity than before it was installed and I cannot turn the fan off.

We will keep in mind your concern about fans when we decide what to implement in EPIC. We are also planning to provide more information about ventilation systems and air flow to better explain why the fans work the way they do.

Are the new LED lights better?

Yes, the newer ones are brighter and come on instantly and take less energy.

Can new toilets come in the higher seat height?

Jake from JCI noted the request for the “comfort” height of toilets.

Some residents don't like a ductless heat pump unit above windows inside units preventing drapery from being used on that window. Many people want curtains not just window blinds.

Jake said they would take that under consideration. Depending on the layout of the space there might not be another location that would work. These units can provide air cooling and residents who choose to use a ductless heat pump for cooling would pay the extra electric cost themselves.

KCHA staff and Board of Commissioners members should get the same energy efficiency items installed in their homes that KCHA residents get so staff will understand what residents are going through.

The heaters we got installed under our windows are not efficient because the windows leak.
That is not under the scope of this project but we noted your concern.

Where will new heating units be installed on the outsides of buildings?

Locations could be on the wall, on the roof, on the ground, or on the balcony of a unit, depending on the building. We will decide on placement on a case by case basis.

How are you going to measure the area needing heating and install the heat pump in the best location and enough heating?

For instance, if you have a long narrow area you would install the air distribution head on the narrow side. These units have veins that turn back and forth which distribute the heating and cooling pretty efficiently. The units are sized for heating the entire space.

My building has central heating. Will we get heating units in each apartment during this project? This would increase my electric bill.

That hasn't been decided. If you have an opinion about not having central heating we would like to hear it. If you get a heating unit in your individual apartment, your rent would be reduced if your electric bill goes up because you are responsible for paying for heat and you didn't used to pay for heat.

Has KCHA figured out if the expenditure will be worth it?

JCI does a lot of analysis about cost savings and their studies have shown that this project will be cost effective. Usually some of the paybacks come quickly, such as new lighting and water saving measures, and those savings are used to pay for some items where the payback comes less quickly, such as new heating systems. The payback for this project is expected to be 20 years. Johnson Controls calculated the savings. If the savings do not work out as JCI calculated, Johnson Controls will pay the difference.

What is KCHA going to do to help residents of the manufactured home parks?

Those properties are not part of EPIC because they are not subsidized properties, but there might be opportunities for residents of those properties through KCHA's Weatherization Department.

Clear light covers allow more light to shine through. My new bulbs don't radiate enough light.

The covers that JCI installs are not completely clear but they are designed to distribute the light as efficiently as possible. The new light bulbs and fixtures will be brighter than what we replaced.

Seniors should be involved with the demos of the new products.

That is a good idea.

Will this project require changing lighting to put in the new lighting even if someone has a disability?

No, existing reasonable accommodations will be honored.

Moving to Work 2016 Annual Plan

Katie Escudero is a policy analyst at KCHA who puts together the plans and reports that go to the federal government about how KCHA is using its federal dollars. She covered these topics.

1. What it means for KCHA be a Moving to Work (MTW) agency.

MTW was created in the 1990's by the federal government to allow Public Housing agencies to use their funding in more flexible ways. KCHA is one of only thirty nine high performing Housing Authorities with MTW authority to do things a bit differently such as delivering subsidy in different ways, developing new policies, to be innovative, to do things more efficiently, to increase housing choice for people, and to increase self-sufficiency of participants. The main thing it means to us as an agency is we try to make improvements every year. KCHA has been participating in MTW since 2003. The RAC is very important because we need you to provide feedback about our MTW plan before we submit it to the federal government for approval.

2. Goals and activities KCHA is continuing to implement through the MTW program.
 - a. Expand housing opportunities for low-income King County residents by adding up to 248 new Public Housing units. The 2016 MTW plan proposes ways to simplify the process for adding new units.
 - b. Preserving our existing affordable housing stock with improvement projects such as repaving, replacing sidewalks, installing new drainage systems, installing new storm water systems, replacing roofs, and interior unit upgrades; and implement the EPIC. MTW makes it possible to fund these projects.
 - c. Increasing access to high opportunity neighborhoods such as Bellevue. These neighborhoods have better schools and better transportation. One idea to help people with Housing Choice Vouchers move to neighborhoods with higher opportunity and also higher rents is to go to more than the current two payment standards. Another idea to increase access to high opportunity neighborhoods is to purchase housing in those neighborhoods.
 - d. Better respond to diverse needs of people, such as homeless young adults and domestic violence survivors, with flexible housing subsidies. Some ideas along those lines are time-limited assistance or assistance with move in costs.
 - e. Improving educational outcomes for children. For example, providing after school services for the children living in KCHA properties, engaging parents, and pre-school programs.
 - f. New software systems coming on line at KCHA.
 - g. Examine our business processes and make improvements.
3. New activities being proposed in KCHA's 2016 MTW Plan.
 - a. Implementing a Budget-based Rent Model
What: allows KCHA to dedicate a larger budget to a KCHA-owned project-based Section 8 property if it faces any changes in costs such as increased operational expenses, necessary upgrades, and debt service to pay for renovations.
Why: A property's needs and costs can change over time – the population can change, necessitating more services or a new roof could be needed or energy upgrades – leading to a bigger budget that supports these services or debt related to upgrades.
Outcome: By setting a rent level that aligns with a property's costs, KCHA ensures that the 700 units in these properties are financially supported and sustained for the long-term.

b. Streamlining Land Sales and Disposition

What: Developing a streamlined sales process that reduces the administrative complexity and paper work for remaining sales at the Greenbridge community. Reduce paperwork to one page, creating one framework for the remaining lots, easy to duplicate when an offer comes in.

Why: Despite approval in 2005, KCHA must still submit a detailed application (more than 40 pages) for each individual sale. This process hampers our ability to compete in the private marketplace and fully complete the Greenbridge community.

Outcome: By streamlining this process, KCHA will be able to efficiently and effectively complete the final stages of the Greenbridge development.

c. Converting Former Opt-out Developments to Public Housing

What: Converting entire Project-based Section 8 properties to Public Housing all at once. Going to one set of rules for a single building versus two sets of rules.

Why: Currently, a unit turns over to Public Housing only when a current resident moves out, making the process slow and unpredictable. Two sets of rules govern the management of the property, adding to the administrative complexity of providing housing assistance.

Outcome: By streamlining the conversion to Public Housing, KCHA can administer a single set of rules and cut down on administrative complexity and costs.

4. Collect comments on the 2016 plan which RAC members had received in the mail.

RAC Member Comments and Questions about the 2016 MTW Plan

Q. Will the budget-based rent model for project-based Section 8 program affect all of the project-based units?

A. No, not all of them.

Q. How do you decide how much a property costs?

A. Every property every month produces a report that shows the revenue and expenses. We use those reports to come up with how much each property costs. We can divide by the number of units in the building to get a per unit cost. This is a rough idea of the cost per unit that is useful but isn't perfect.

Q. If the budget-based rent model shows a property costs more, will we have to pay more in rent?

A. No, the resident's portion of rent will not change.

Q. For the storm water improvement project at Burndale Homes, could we use rain barrels?

A. We have rain barrels at some sites. That is a good idea, although rain barrels are not enough to address the drainage problems at Burndale. A lot of our properties have drains that come off of gutters and go straight into sewer lines so we cannot use rain barrels at those sites.

Q. What is the definition of self-sufficiency?

A. It is in the report (see the *Moving to Work Annual 2016 Plan*) when we give the metrics.

Q. The report says KCHA will let the landlord do inspections.

A. We only allow landlords to self-certify a minor inspection fail item, not major fail items.

Q. I am concerned about changing inspection frequency for problem landlords.

A. We are proposing to have inspections less frequently only for landlords with good maintenance and repair records.

Q. What programs do you have for the mentally disabled people and for homeless families?

A. We have a few ongoing programs. For example, we have a rapid rehousing program targeting homeless families that includes supportive services in partnership with the Highline School District. We have a program for chronically homeless people, some of whom are mentally ill, with supportive services provided by Sound Mental Health.

Q. When was the public hearing for the MTW Plan? What mtgs were canceled?

A. We held the public hearing on September 1st. The meetings which were canceled were about proposed lease changes. We will have lease change meetings at a RAC meeting next year and at various properties. The lease change topic was postponed because of useful comments from RAC members and other residents.

Questions and Answers with Bill Cook, Director of Property Management

Q. I would like the landscaping to be watered. I would be willing to pay for some water.

A. We have to treat everyone the same way, so we don't allow anyone to water outside. None of the grounds at KCHA managed properties are watered. When we stopped watering, our water bill went down 50%. All new landscaping is being done with drought resistant plants. I have noted your request for your watering your property's grounds to be watered.

Q. Can we improve rent payments even if I don't have a computer or I don't have internet?

Can my bank send my rent payment directly to KCHA's bank?

A. We are looking at new software so some changes are coming. We don't know yet exactly what will be implemented. Banks can have high fees for bank to bank transfers. Some residents do not have computers, some do not have access to the internet, and some do not want KCHA to pull out of their bank accounts.

Q. Can we remove the thing on our stoves that make the burners take a long time to heat up?

A. We are not going to remove all of them, but we are past the time when we had to keep them on (we got them for free.) Please let your property manager know about your problem with the stove.