

# **Kendall Housing Authority Resident Advisory Board**

## **Minutes of August 21, 2013 Meeting**

The August 21, 2013 meeting of the Kendall Housing Authority's Resident Advisory Board (RAB) was held in the 2nd Floor Conference Room of the Kendall County Health Department, 811 W. John Street, Yorkville, IL.

Attending were RAB member Victoria Swe, KHA HCV Manager Kenny Coles and KHA Sr. Administrative Assistant Greg Lippert.

The meeting began at 3:10 p.m.

RAB member Diane Teeling called in during the meeting when her work unexpectedly prevented her from attending. She didn't have her notes about the Kendall Housing Authority (KHA) Annual Plan with her, so it was agreed that Greg Lippert would call her for comments and questions about the Annual Plan and the KHA's operations in general. Her comments are part of the minutes below.

### **Summary**

Resident Advisory Board members had no specific recommendations on changes to the draft 2014 KHA Annual Plan. Several questions and comments about the Plan are noted below.

### **Introductions**

Kenny Coles welcomed Victoria Swe to the meeting, and thanked her for serving on the Kendall RAB. They briefly discussed their backgrounds.

### **RAB Purpose**

Mr. Coles said the KHA seeks the experience of RAB members as voucher-holders to help make sure the KHA administers the Housing Choice Voucher program in the best way possible for all parties. He said the KHA also is looking for RAB feedback on the KHA Annual Plan and Administrative Plan.

### **Discussions**

**Wait List:** Ms. Swe asked when the KHA's Section 8 Voucher Wait List would reopen, and if the KHA needed any help for that. Mr. Coles said the Wait List status will be reviewed in the fall to determine if it should be reopened; no help will be needed if it is reopened, he said. He said nearly all of the KHA's 160 vouchers are in use.

**Number of Vouchers:** Ms. Swe asked if more vouchers will be made available to KHA. Mr. Coles said that seemed unlikely because of federal budget sequestration. Vouchers become available, he said, when it is determined that current voucher-holders no longer need them. He discussed how income changes affect that determination.

**Other Programs:** Ms. Swe asked if there is a program to help voucher-holders make more money so that they can eventually leave the Section 8 program. Mr. Coles described the Family Self Sufficiency program, and he said he will ask the KHA Certification Specialist to give program information to Ms. Swe.

**Requirements:** Ms. Swe asked if the KHA planned to require voucher-holders to work or be tested for drug use, as she had heard. She said it seemed fair to have some kind of work or education requirement, with some exceptions. Mr. Coles said the KHA does not have such requirements, although some other Public Housing Authorities do. He said there has been discussion about the federal government making such requirements mandatory for voucher-holders, but there has been no action so far. Mr. Coles said such requirements would involve changes to the KHA's Administrative Plan.

**Landlords:** Ms. Swe said that when she talks with prospective landlords, she usually doesn't begin by asking if they will accept a Section 8 voucher because some don't like the program. Mr. Coles said that Chicago essentially forbids city landlords from refusing to rent a unit simply because the prospective tenant is a voucher-holder; he said that Kendall and other suburban counties do not have that rule. He said it's important for a voucher-holder to file a fair-housing complaint with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development if the person believes she/he has been a victim of discrimination.

**Homeownership:** Ms. Swe asked about the KHA Annual Plan's Objective 2, which says that the goal of implementing a Homeownership Program will be discontinued. Mr. Coles said that the program is dormant for the moment; he said that this could change as the economy improves. Ms. Swe said that she supports such a program. Mr. Coles said the Family Self Sufficiency program can have a homeownership component.

**Pets:** Ms. Swe asked about Section 6 (#9) of the Annual Plan, which concerns policies pertaining to the ownership of pets in public housing. Mr. Coles said the item does not apply to the KHA because the KHA does not operate any public housing.

#### **Next Meeting**

Mr. Coles said he hoped the RAB could meet quarterly, with 2 meetings a year in person and 2 meetings a year by teleconference. The RAB's next meeting date was to be determined.

The RAB meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Submitted: Greg Lippert

#### **Comments by RAB member Diane Teeling**

Here are comments by RAB member Diane Teeling, who spoke by phone with Greg Lippert on 8/23/13.

**Homeownership:** Ms. Teeling asked about the KHA Annual Plan's Objective 2, which says that the goal of implementing a Homeownership Program will be discontinued. She said it would be a good program to have.

**Lost files:** Ms. Teeling said that when she recertified in 2012, key records were missing from her file. She had to come to Wheaton with her birth certificate and Social Security card. She said the process went much more smoothly this year, but she wondered how such important documents could be lost and if it happened to other KHA tenants? Are there precautions to make sure it doesn't happen again?

**KHA notifications:** Ms. Teeling said that payments to her landlord were held for several months last year because the KHA was waiting for a new lease (something new). The landlord was informed of the requirement a day before the lease expired, she said. Things went much more smoothly this year, she said. Still, it's very important for the KHA to clearly communicate changes to policy to tenants and landlords. Changing rules isn't a problem, she said, as long as those affected are told about them.

**Unreported family members:** Ms. Teeling asked if the KHA has plans to investigate whether tenants are reporting changes in family (boyfriend moving in, for instance)? She said she doesn't know of any cases personally, but has been told by people that such abuse happens frequently.