



PHA Annual Plan – Resident Participation Meeting

**Housing Authority of the City of Asheville
165 South French Broad Ave Asheville, NC 28801**

Location: Central Office Board Room

Time: 12:00pm

Facilitator: President & CEO, Monique Pierre

Number of Resident participants: 13

Overview:

Ms. Pierre launched the meeting thanking residents for their time and involvement in the Annual Plan process. The meeting items included a review of the purpose of the Annual Plan and the goals presented in the previous year. Residents were asked their thoughts on the topics of each goal and what the HACA can do to improve the quality of life on their sites, what they desire to see changed as it relates to customer service, safety and youth activities. Questions were posed in an open-ended manner and residents actively engaged in conversation with each other, asked questions of Ms. Pierre and provided thoughtful insight regarding the Annual Plan goals and objectives.

Customer Service:

- Pisgahview Apartments Resident regarding the customer service provided by the manager. Initial interaction with a manager, resident expressed dissatisfaction with the handling of her housing situation. The resident reported that she was offered an apartment by HACA and was informed that she had no choice but to accept it, or else she would be placed back at the bottom of the waitlist. Feeling pressured, she reluctantly agreed to take the unit. However, upon moving in, she found the apartment had not been properly cleaned and was infested with roaches. When she approached the manager about the cleanliness and pest issue, she was met with dismissive remarks. The manager allegedly stated that it's public housing, and roaches should be expected.
- Southside residents expressed concerns about manager's office accessibility during HACA business hours. Multiple residents reported being denied access without an appointment and encountering rude staff when entering the office. Residents also stated they were told only one person at a time was allowed in the waiting area due to confidentiality reasons and others are made to wait in the hallway. Residents went on to state management office is difficult to reach and often times does not return calls.

Property:

- PVA and Hillcrest residents raised concern regarding the property's grounds. During a recent conversation with a resident, they expressed significant apprehensions regarding their safety due to several issues related to the presence of homeless individuals.

- The PVA resident reported observing an increasing number of homeless individuals setting up camps in the area surrounding the apartments. This influx has led to several alarming incidents, including the syringes being left behind in the grass, playgrounds and street which poses a significant health hazard to both residents and children. Additionally, the resident mentioned witnessing homeless individuals rummaging through the garbage bins and subsequently scattering the contents across the property.
- Concerns raised by residents from PVA, Hillcrest, and Southside, regarding the consistency of pest control measures on the property. During recent discussions with residents, several consistent statements were made regarding the current pest control practices and their effectiveness. Residents have highlighted a significant issue with the current approach to pest control, stating that when a work order is placed for pest control services, only the unit that made the request is treated. This selective treatment does not effectively address the root cause of the pest infestation, as neighboring units may also be affected. Residents suggested that a more comprehensive approach is needed, whereby the entire building is treated rather than just individual apartments. Residents continued to emphasize the importance of regular pest control maintenance on a monthly or regular basis to ensure that the problem is consistently addressed and prevented from recurring. Not only would this approach help to eradicate existing pest issues, but it would also assist property managers in identifying units that may be contributing to the problem due to lack of cleanliness.
- Residents expressed concerns about living next to people who are chronically homeless or mentally ill. Ms. Pierre spoke about workforce housing and HACA's goal to ensure families are housed well in environments that have the capacity to meet their needs.
- Residents talked about fixing up some of the older apartments. Painting, blinds, screen doors flooring, mold issues, pests etc.
- Residents spoke about the number of abandoned cars onsite. Ms. Pierre updated residents on new registration process in the works for vehicles and the parking enforcement initiative with APD.
- Homeownership Opportunities: All residents expressed interest in homeownership opportunities as well as more opportunities to find affordable housing with a Section 8 voucher.
- Resident inquired about employment opportunities for residents to assist with revitalizing properties.

Children/Community:

- Residents expressed interest in having more programs for children onsite like afterschool and daycare and having the opportunity to work in these programs and host events for children and families especially for special occasions like holidays.
- Residents expressed a desire for expanded onsite programs for children, including afterschool and full time daycare services for working parents.

Other:

- Resident inquired whether it would be possible to adjust the rent due date to a different day of the month, as it may not align with their pay schedule. Ms. Pierre responded by stating that the rent is actually due on the 1st of each month and cannot be adjusted to a later date. She further suggested that residents should consider budgeting accordingly, as this due date aligns with the standard practice for rent payments across most rental properties and mortgage payments.
- Resident asked about the existence of a resident council and inquired about funding for community events for children, families, and other residents. Ms. Pierre responded by stating her intention to collaborate closely with the Resident Services department to establish resident councils at each site in accordance with HUD guidelines. Additionally, she mentioned plans to reestablish a resident advisory board to collaborate with HACA staff, ensuring that tenant participation funds benefit all residents rather than a select few individuals utilizing them for personal gain.
- Resident expressed concern about her daughter being offered a unit downtown and the day she was scheduled to move in, she was told by the manager that she could no longer have the unit because she was over-income. Unsure if this was HACA because the only HACA apartments downtown are Altamont which are mostly Elderly/DA. The incident happened years ago.