

In a previous "Letter to the Editor" I wrote that the Galveston Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, all appointees of the Mayor, had the power to hire and fire the Executive Director and approve all GHA's policies. Since then I have learned that the Commissioners have even more power; they hold Galveston's FATE in their hands.

We have all been hearing that HUD was forcing us to rebuild all 569 units on the existing properties. Well, a few of us decided to check with the HUD Field office in Houston. Please review the communications below:

From: Jacquelyn Tarpy

Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2009 10:18 AM

To: Warren, Sandra H

Subject: Question about HUD's Position on rebuilding Galveston Public Housing Units

"Good Morning Ms. Warren,

I am a resident of Galveston and as you are probably aware, there is a great deal of discussion in Galveston about the rebuilding of the 569 Public Housing Units at their previous location.

We are being told by the Galveston Housing Authority and Galveston City officials, that HUD is mandating that all of those units be rebuilt and on the same property. At this point we are only "hearing" this and have seen nothing in writing. I am requesting that HUD provide us with a written statement and the reference to the policy/regulation that supports the decision, for the rebuilding of 569 Public Housing Units, in a flood plan and in a city that presently has an estimated 9,000 vacant properties.

Your assistance is sincerely appreciated,

Jacquelyn Tarpy"

From: Warren, Sandra H

"Hello Ms. Tarpy,

Thank you for your inquiry. However, in as much as your inquiry is regarding the City of Galveston's public housing units is outside of my office's purview, I am forwarding your message via this email to Mr. Dan Rodriguez, Public Housing Director.

Thank you for your interest in HUD's programs.

Sandra H. Warren, Director"

Shortly after receiving this email, I received a call from Mr. Dan Rodriguez, HUD Public Housing Director, in Houston. He explained to me what the HUD policy was regarding rebuilding public housing, I requested that he put it in writing, so he sent me the following email:

"Dear Ms. Tarpy:

The Department of Housing and Urban Development does not currently have a one for one replacement mandate for Housing Authorities to replace units that were destroyed, demolished, and/or being redeveloped. Decisions regarding the number of units and their location is a local decision to be made by the Housing Authority Board of Commissioners.

It was a pleasure talking to you and I encourage you to share your thoughts and ideas with the Housing Authority representatives as they are currently in the process of formulating a Plan for

continued assistance of the low income families in the City of Galveston who were displaced by the storm.”

So, it is up to the concerned citizens of Galveston to let the GHA Commissioners and the Mayor, know how you feel about their “Vision” for the future of Galveston.”