

GHA Human Capital Plan

1. I am the Vice Chairman of the GHA Board. The Board of Commissioners has appointed Commissioner J.T. Edwards and me to the Human Capital Committee. GHA has been allocated approximately \$2.5 million in funds to develop a “Human Capital Plan.” Generally, these funds are used to help public housing residents transition into a mixed income environment.
2. We want to do more than that. We want to develop a program that provides residents with the tools to move up the economic ladder. Our theme is “move in, move up, move out.” We want to implement a state-of-the-art program in which public housing is simply part of an overall plan to help public housing residents and their families do just that. We aren’t interested in simply managing poverty. We want to eliminate it, at least here on Galveston Island. That’s the goal line. We intend to do everything possible to get there.
3. We also want to develop metrics by which we can measure the program’s success. We hope to use this initial seed money (which sounds like a lot, but really isn’t) to test-drive this program, secure additional funding, and ultimately expand it to cover all Galvestonians living in public housing or receiving “section 8” vouchers. We reached out to local stakeholders identified in our recent RFP, such as GISD and the Sustainable Communities Alliance. Our hope is devote these monies to delivering services as opposed to re-inventing wheels or creating new layers of bureaucracy that siphon dollars off the top.

4. By early summer of this year, we had gotten to the point where we had the overall vision for the plan, and needed a “quarterback” to help us implement it – someone experience in helping low income persons develop their individual skills and abilities, and empower them to move up the economic ladder – and, of course, make sure their needs and their families’ needs are met along the way.
5. To find that quarterback, we issued a Request for Proposals for implementation of the Human Capital Plan on July 12. Responses were due August 9, and we were hoping to receive responses that would help us achieve these goals.
6. Last Friday, I learned that one potential respondent, Neighborhood Centers, Inc. had decided not to respond to our RFP.
7. I then learned some very troubling information. Specifically, several local individuals have been conducting a campaign to persuade local service providers and agencies to basically keep NCI out of Galveston, and ultimately persuade NCI not to respond to our RFP. I am not going to disclose their names at this time. Instead we are going to provide their names to appropriate federal and state authorities.
8. I have also learned that the Galveston United Way is formulating a proposal. Recently the United Way’s Executive Director, Ms. Kenna Bush Kasten, sent out the following email to a number of local service providers:

[Read from text of E-mail]

9. Our Request for Proposal is governed by federal regulations designed to provide a transparent, free and fair bidding process. **They specifically forbid activities that seek to suppress or exclude persons or entities from bidding, or which otherwise improperly taint the bidding process.** If we become aware of such activities we are obligated to notify the appropriate authorities. As I just stated, we are doing so.

10. This conduct is regrettable. We really want to get moving on this plan. Now, we must stop, figure out what went wrong, put in controls to prevent this from happening again, and start over. We hope to get past this and re-issue our RFP in the near future. I strongly hope that NCI participates in that process, and hope that all local service providers will be willing to play on our team, no matter which quarterback we ultimately sign to get us across the goal line.