

# Trust?

Every time that Public Housing fails, and then wants to start over with a “new vision”, the politicians that support the latest incarnation make promises to the voters about how the proposed changes will reduce or even eliminate the crime and blight that plagued the previous versions. However, voters have learned not to trust politicians making such promises, because they have seen little or no improvement with each new incarnation.

The Mayor has been trying to convince the voters that “this time it will be different” by repeating the mantra that his version of public housing **will restrict eligibility to “veterans, seniors, disabled or working or training at least 30 hours a week”**. This sounds good, but how can anyone be sure that the residents will be restricted to people in those groups, that people who are not members of those groups **will NOT be allowed to live with eligible residents**, and that the politicians and/or the bureaucrats will not change the rules later when they think no one is looking?  
<http://galvestondailynews.com/story/312090>

The GHA was supposed to have “strict residency rules” BEFORE Hurricane Ike but the reality of how they actually screened who lived at their properties is described in the following paragraph from their own 5-year plan.

***“The struggle to maintain crime-free properties in Galveston requires constant vigilance. GHA has used operating funds for police services over baseline because the use of Capital Funds for physical improvements is crucial to its ability to maintain its properties. However, the money available for police services from operations is only around 25% of that provided through the former PHDEP grant and it is insufficient to manage the crime level on and around GHA’s public housing. Unfortunately, without a comprehensive policing program, problems that were once dealt with reoccur as felons return to their previous neighborhoods from prison. The drug crime causes fear in residents, high turnover and collection loss, property damage, a high volume of trash on the grounds and management turnover.”***

<http://www.galvestonogp.org/GHA/Executive%20Summary%20FFY08.pdf>

See Page 7

What does it say about the proposed move to “tighter screening criteria” when the Mayor tries to get a **special favor for a public housing applicant who has already failed the GHA’s current looser screening procedures**, based on the report excerpted above? Should the voters rely on the fact that the Mayor has promised to screen applicants much more rigidly as evidence of a whole new day in Public Housing?

Readers can only wonder what caused the person referred to in the following emails to fail the GHA screening criteria, which could not be described, since the emails are subject to open records requests. **We must applaud Interim Executive Director Mona Purgason for resisting the pressure to admit this lady regardless of her ineligibility!**

-----Original Message-----

From: Joe Jaworski [mailto:jjaworski@galvestonogp.org]  
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2011 5:02 PM  
To: ded@ghatx.org  
Subject: FW: [REDACTED]

Mona - i emailed this to harish and paula. Just located your email so i am sending to you to see what can we do for former [REDACTED]. See note below. Thanks! Joe

From: Mona Purgason [mailto:ded@ghatx.org]  
Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2011 10:37 AM  
To: 'Joe Jaworski'  
Cc: 'ed@ghatx.org'; 'paulaneff@ghatx.org'  
Subject: RE: [REDACTED]

Mayor Jaworski:

I looked into this and Ms. [REDACTED] was determined ineligible by staff as she did not meet the screening criteria regarding her previous tenancy. She does have the right to request an informal hearing within 10 days of the date of the denial letter she received if she wishes to review the information that determined her denial, and she was informed of this in writing with her denial letter.

If you need additional information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanks,  
Mona Purgason

-----Original Message-----

From: Joe Jaworski [mailto:Joe.Jaworski@cityofchicago.org]  
Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2011 10:47 AM  
To: Mona Purgason  
Cc: pneff@cityofchicago.org  
Subject: RE: R. [redacted] - [redacted]

Mona - help me out here. We need to be specific: What is the exact issue she failed? I have a former [redacted] representing her (not only as attorney; he is a family friend) and he is on me to do something. I need you specifically to call former [redacted] at [redacted] and explain in detail to him what the disqualifying issue is and what, if anything, can be done. Please do this today and let me know you've done it. This is something you can do for gha and for me to raise our profile with an opinion leader in the community. Please handle. Copying paula neff.

**From:** Mona Purgason [mailto:pneff@cityofchicago.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 31, 2011 9:34 AM  
**To:** 'Joe Jaworski'  
**Cc:** 'pneff@cityofchicago.org', 'Harish Krishnarao'  
**Subject:** RE: [redacted]

Mayor Jaworski,

I just wanted to update you on this issue. I'm sorry we were unable to connect via phone as I am limited to what can be discussed via email. Please note that I gave this my attention as did staff. Ms. [redacted] and her representatives were provided an opportunity to appeal the decision, however the previous infractions were such that the original decision was upheld. This appeal was conducted by a neutral QC staff not related to housing. Trust that we are very eager to provide housing to those who need it and we did try to work with the individual(s) to make that happen. I am available to discuss further if you would like.

Thank you,  
Mona Purgason