# COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

# *STRATEGY*

# *September 2013*

CITY COUNCIL

FOCUS AREA

Housing and Neighborhood Development

Strengthen Neighborhoods

## **SERVE THE CUSTOMER**

* Staff opened 3 fair housing complaints.

Complainant alleges discriminatory terms and conditions based on disability.

Complainant alleges discriminatory terms and conditions based on national origin.

Complainant alleges discriminatory terms and conditions, refusal to rent, and discriminatory coercion and intimidation based on race and familial status.

* Staff closed 1 fair housing case.

Complaint was conciliated. Complainant received the housing opportunity.

* Staff provided 2 fair housing trainings to 28 participants.
* 9/11: Hoskins Park Ministries
* 9/20: Apartment Association
* Staff participated in 4 Spanish Radio shows.
* Staff continued to develop partnership with Charlotte Housing Authority
* Staff collaborated with Greensboro Police Department on a Police Mediation Program of the City of Greensboro
* Staff participated in 5 Police Chain of Command Hearings
* Staff continued tasks with ERP.
* Staff provided support to CRC Leadership Committee
* Staff provided staff support to the CRC/CRB Task Force.
* Staff continues to work as Event Coordinator for the National Carolina Crime Stoppers Association Annual Training Conference which will be held at the Hilton Charlotte University Place, October 27 – 30, 2013.
* Staff provided Conflict Resolution/Diversity Training to 65 Mecklenburg County’s Child Support Enforcement Workers.
* Staff provided access to programs, services and activities that are currently inaccessible to residents with disabilities which is the most critical area for ADA action.
* City of Charlotte now has in-house expertise for CDOT and Engineering departments.
* Staff has ensured that certain barriers were removed and are now incompliance.
* Staff completed submission of all departments’ feedback to the consultant for Compliance Assessment Report.
* Staff met with CATS on CATS procedures – Lisa Flowers.
* Staff met with CDOT, CATS, E&PM and Planning on departmental partnership and ADA Survey.
* Staff provided update to Eric Campbell, Willie Ratchford, Carolyn Johnson, Anna Schelumes, Lisa Flowers and Stephanie Kelly regarding the ADA assessment.
* Staff finalized CATS ADA Assessment on 09/09/13.

**CITIZENS REVIEW BOARD:** On April 1, 2013 the CRC Director, in conjunction with the Chair and Attorney of the Citizens Review Board and the Chief of Police, presented to members of City Council a report on the process for receiving, investigation and adjudicating complaints against police officers. In response, CRC was asked to work with the City Manager’s Office, CMPD and the City Attorney’s Office to receive community feedback from various stakeholder groups on ways to improve the CRB Process. To date, the following has occurred:

* Press release has gone out to local electronic and print media
* CRC website has been updated to include a flow chart of the police complaint process and the CRB appeal process
* CRC/CRB Task Force has meet with and received report and recommendations from the Charlotte School of Law, CMPD Focus Group, and the Coalition for a Stronger CRB Process
* 83 citizens and 388 sworn CMPD officers have responded to a survey
* Community stakeholder meetings were held on July 9th and 11th at Covenant Presbyterian Church and the Beatties Ford Road Library respectively
* Stakeholder meeting held with the Charlotte School of Law and the Coalition for Reform of the Citizens Review Board
* Preliminary Report on Findings has been completed
* Presentation made to the City Council members of the Council-Manager Relations Committee (CMRC)
* CMRC directive to the CRC/CRB Task Force:
  + *Make CRB process recommendations to the CMRC at its meeting on September 23, 2013 -* ***Done***
  + *Provide the number of appeals annually to the CRB since 1997 -* ***Done***
  + *Presentation on the CRB Appeal Process -* ***Done***
  + *Presentation on CMPD’s Internal Affairs process -* ***Done***
  + *Presentation on the Civil Service Board Process –* ***Done***

The CRC/CRB Task Force Recommendations, listed below, were presented to and accepted by, the Council Manager Relations Committee on September 23, 2013. The CRC Director will now work with the City Manager and the City Attorney to finalize the recommendations as revisions to the current CRB Ordinance for presentation to the CMRC at its October meeting.

* Maintain the appellate structure of the Citizens Review Board (CRB) with no subpoena power or independent investigative responsibilities.
* Promote the availability of advocates who would assist citizens through the Internal Affairs investigative process and the CRB appeal process, including legal representation, if requested, from organizations such as the Mecklenburg County Bar Volunteer Lawyer Program.
* Extend the time a person has to file an appeal to the CRB from the current 7 days to 21 days.
* Change the standard of review to hold a full hearing from “a preponderance of the evidence” of an “abuse of discretion” to “substantial evidence that an error occurred in the investigation of the citizen’s complaint or the disciplinary decision concerning the officer.”
* Allow the CRB the option to have the accused officer(s), against whom a complaint has been filed, present at the initial meeting of the board if a majority of the board determines that the officer’s presence would be helpful.
* Increase the number of days that the CRB is required to hold a meeting after receiving an appeal from the current 30 days to 45 days – this will also allow an accused officer more time to be present if requested by a majority of the board.
* Require the CRB to provide information, in writing, to complainants on the reasons their appeal was denied or did not result in a hearing by the board, as long as such information is provided in accordance with applicable local and state law.
* Increase the visibility of the CRB by establishing a CRB website that would include, but not be limited to: the CMPD Annual Internal Affairs Report; CRB meeting minutes; Spanish and other language publications; a flow chart of the IAD and CRB processes; the CRB ordinance; definitions of CRB terms; the CRB appeal form in a format that may be completed electronically; a CMPD/IAD complaint form in a format that may be completed electronically; and board members’ names, occupation, appointing authority, and their term of appointment.
* Use the Government Channel, local electronic and print media and other communication tools (such as through neighborhood associations, churches and non-profit organizations) to educate the community on the CRB process, including the way police complaints are received and adjudicated. Include town hall and community meetings to educate citizens on the CRB process.
* Improve the CRB appeal form by providing more space (lines) on the form so that complainants may have adequate space to give more detail (rationale) on their request for an appeal.
* Provide legal, policy and cultural awareness training for current and future CRB appointees.
* CRB members should have the opportunity to request approval of the City Council to make recommended changes to the CRB process when a majority of the members feel it is necessary.

**MEN WHO CARE GLOBAL:** The CRC Director continues to work with Men Who Care Global (MWCG). MWCG provides time, guidance and assistance for young men of color who are 12-22 years of age to effect positive change in their lives. The goal is to create a sustainable community where every young male of color graduates high school, at a minimum, has access to a mentor and has viable employment opportunities. Members of MWCG were in uptown Charlotte on Memorial Day weekend to engage young people and assist CMPD in making sure that everyone had a good time and were safe; the group is looking to mentoring young men at a local middle school; and the organization’s job program is growing and young men are being trained in soft skills and assisted with employment opportunities. The group attended Ransom Middle School on the first day of school to help welcome students. Currently the men meet at Ransom every Wednesday morning at 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. to provide group mentoring to 25 young Black males.

**RACE MATTERS FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE:** The CRC director continues to partner and collaborate with staff of the 26th Judicial District, Race Matters for Juvenile Justice (RMJJ) and others to address disproportionality in our court system. The organization is currently working to build a collaboration of community stakeholders who will bring their constituencies to the table and partner in the Court’s effort to reduce disproportionality and disparate outcomes for children and families of color in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community.

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:** The CRC Director continues to work with Jill Dinwiddie of the ***eNOugh Domestic Violence Public Awareness Campaign*** whose purpose is to address domestic violence and enhance workplace safety and employee productivity for women. The Director is a member of the **eNOugh** force. The task force has been successful in raising funds to hire a full time staff person for the programs outreach campaign.

Enhance Customer Service

Develop Collaborative Solutions

## **RUN THE BUSINESS**

* CRC members provided 64 hours of community service, equivalent to $2,833.92 in-kind dollars.
* Staff provided translation services to 18 persons.
* The Dispute Settlement Program (DSP) mediated 82 cases saving 164 criminal justice hours and $3,630.96 in taxpayer dollars. $720.00 in reduced court fees were collected for the state.
* The Dispute Settlement Program (DSP) surveys clients in an effort to maintain and improve service delivery. Prior to mediation, 90% of clients believed going to court was their only option for resolving their dispute, 5% of clients believed their only option was to ignore their problem and 5% of clients believed their dispute could have been resolved by talking with the other party. After mediation, 10% of clients stated they would choose to go to court if they were involved in a future dispute and 5% of clients stated they would ignore future problems while 85% stated they would utilize mediation or talking to solve their problems.

## **DEVEL**

## **OP EMPLOYEES**

**Achieve Positive Employee Climate**

## **DEVELOP EMPLOYEES**

* Staff completed 27 hours of career development training during the month of September.