

MG Howard, MDW Commander, made opening comments

- It's 60 days since we last met. Our goals are to discover
  - o What has become better?
  - o What has become worse?
  - o What actions don't match our words? We want you to hold us accountable.

Col Spragg, Garrison Commander - (see slides attached)

- We will continue to hold town halls to prevent complacency
- We need avenues for residents to talk to for to hear directly from residents
- We want residents to hold FGGM accountable so we can hold Corvias accountable.
- Fort Meade was ground zero for the housing crisis. This issue isn't about one person. This crisis developed from a series of decisions and management decisions over time and it impacts every service member on every base.
- I can say we made a lot of progress. The housing forums are doing what we hoped they would do. We need residents on the team working together to solve this.
- (speaking of housing slide) This is a snapshot of the housing on base, how many homes we have and when they were built. Most of these (the homes on Fort Meade) are old homes.
- Our focus is always on the health and safety of our residents. We have a ways to go. The question is how will we get there?
- Mold is the bane of my existence. Corvias has hired an independent company, TRC Environmental and they are conducting Air Quality Tests for every home. If your home has not been inspected (he covered all the steps in the inspections notification process). The visual inspection can take up to three hour inspections. Then the AQT is taken.
- If visual inspection calls for remediation, depending on the severity, we may have to relocate the family.
- We all have concerns about the amount of time it takes to get the AQT results back. Can take up to 4 weeks. Once you get the results, you can sit down with someone from TRC to discuss the results
- We need to improve communication and we need every organization and every outlet we have to keep people informed of what we have going on.
- Long term, Corvias has agreed to build 150 new homes this year. When those homes are done, they will build 115 more.
- The history of the housing situation is that in the past, a garrison commander (and unit commander) was always involved in housing, housing inspections. When we became privatized, all of that stopped. We stopped the oversight. That was a mistake. Now the Army needs to revise existing regulations to outline what commanders need to do and respond accordingly.
- We started the housing forums in January. Since then we've made some specific changes.
  - Customer service training – Corvias hired a customer service training expert who is going to have ongoing training
  - Corvias employee IDs either on their person or their vehicles – residents complained that they were unable to identify who the Corvias workers were.
  - Established Kimbrough Hot Line for medical issues
  - The focus groups are working. The idea of focus establishing focus groups is being adopted by other installations

Col. Spragg opened for questions

- Resident speaking about mold – Mold is a huge issue but not the only issue. We should not just be talking about mold, we should be talking about all environmental issues. For example, duct cleaning. We discovered our air ducts have never been cleaned. When they were cleaned, they vacuumed out

black dust. When we asked to have ducts cleaned it took multiple calls. It is suggested that if you don't get results to get your chain of command involved. Why is there a necessity to get the chain of command involved?

Col. Spragg answer

- Home visits by commanders we conducted at the beginning of the housing issues were not just to see where you live. They were to establish a baseline so that we could begin a home record. We will follow Maryland environmental laws, maintenance of air ducts is a factor and we need to include that in our maintenance plans.
- Since we began the focus groups, the list of items Corvias is required to do for basic home maintenance went from a list of about six to about twenty.

LTC LeDoux from Kimbrough – Public Health Nurse

- Suggested if you or family member has health issues associated with housing, register for medical health registry – call the hotline, sign your family up so that any medical issues you may be having from housing are recorded. We want to find out what's going on in the houses and ensure you get the help you need. You should see your primary care physician.

Question – Is the registry for all branches here? Is the registry only for Army?

LTC LeDoux Answer – No, it's for all branches.

Question – Are you using this information to track long term issues or is this purely requesting personal medical information ...

Col. Burke – KACC Commander

- The Health Registry is an Army wide tracking which will help you track impacts for any health issues associated with housing issues. It will track throughout lifetime to see and track issues that come from housing.

JC Calder from Corvias

- Thanks for participating in focus groups. We've come a long way but we have a long way to go.
- We rolled out in-house work order call center. Now maintenance is done from here with people who are familiar with the properties and this is all done locally. We are still working out the kinks.
- MG Howard challenged us to create an app. We have launched the app. We have had 444 downloads of the app and 469 work orders filed through the app. The app allows you to track the work order, take pictures of the issue and send it to us. It is an effective tool.
- You asked for and we have instituted more resident events ... spring fair...welcome fairs
- Instituted customer service training for our employees (covered all items on Corvias slide)
- We know we need an increase focus on the EFMP programs, need to improve our resources for ADA homes.
- We have hired 26 people, maintenance and service techs and quality control maintenance managers.
- Hired an ombudsman – Darla will be a voice for residents.
- Air Quality tests and visual inspection – going on right now. TRC is helpful with talking through the test results. We know inspections are long and they are hard to schedule in your busy schedule but they are worth it.
- When it comes time for remediation, we know it's a significant thing for a family to relocate. We don't like to displace families but we try to move as quickly as we can.

## Question –

- Our house had lots of work orders, every time someone came in – the worker would not fix problem. Caulk over mold.
- Son has lung issues, continued mold problems ... we had to finally move off post.
- Where can I go when I don't get satisfaction? How can I elevate the issue so I'm not calling over and over?

## MG Howard

- Have we published something that outlines the steps to take?

## Col. Spragg

- Yes, the escalation process has been communication.
- Walked through escalation process
- ICE is a great way to go because those comments come straight to me
- Also use the 24/7 housing hotline

JC Calder – I'd like to meet with you to discuss what your issues.

## Questions from residents

- Results from AQT are too slow.
- Mold pamphlet – why is there carpet near a bathroom sink?
- The words, miscommunication are repeated over and over again within Corvias staff. I don't feel the Corvias maintenance teams are responding to me.
- (to MG Howard) You told me this stuff would be fixed. You looked at me and lied to me.
- Air duct cleaning needs to be a regular part of maintenance.
- Why should service member chains of commend come into this?

## Spragg responds

- It's good to have chains of command involved. We want to be able to work with you. Part of the reason we're in this mess is because we haven't had the chain of command involved.

## Questions and issues associated with EFMP

- Busy trying to care for family. EFMP families don't have time and energy to call over and over.
- Escalation is okay for others, but EFMP families are unable to manage these multiple calls. They need to be able to get the help they need with one call.

## MG Howard response

- multiple calls are not fine. That's broken. It's not okay.

## Resident

- It's difficult to get EFMP families into the discussion because those families can't get to these meeting. EFMP issues were raised at focus group meetings but we aren't there yet. How do you make it as easy as possible to get these things done?

## MG Howard response

- I don't think there's anyone here who doesn't agree with you

Col. Burke (KACC Cmdr)

- We need to lower the barriers and make it easy. We took a lot of feedback and we've already made some changes to smooth the process for our EFMP neighbors.

Aimee Stafford, Fort Meade Housing Office

- We hear you and understand you are looking for ways to make it easier for EFMP families to report all of their issues. Hopefully we can find an easier way.

-

Resident raised Issues with TRC and results of air quality tests

- TRC representative responds - We have a backlog of 1500 AQT results we have to work our way through. The tests are taken, which provide a lot of data. The data has to be reviewed. We have 20 to 30 thousands photos of this base that we have to wade through.
- We're doing what we can to get the information back to you.

MG Howard

- Army had to make decisions
- We could have done lessor testing with quicker results. (Chief of Staff of the Army) Gen Milley wanted the best tests available. We need to figure out how to prioritize results due so that families with health concerns get them sooner.
- When families check in (to Corvias) we need to identify what their specific medical needs are. Need to make necessary accommodations for these families

Resident Question

- When a family is moved to a hotel or a hospitality suite, who pays for that?  
JC – BAH. We have some hiccups. We know there are things to fix.

Overall Suggestions –

- Make cleaning air ducts a regular part of home maintenance
- Make registering with the Kimbrough health registry something that can be done online. (Issue is the registry is a series of questions and may not work well with an online form.)
- Establish a specific method for EFMP families to avoid multiple calls and escalations to get issues resolved.
- Establish a method to ensure EFMP families have the duct cleaning and AQT and results done on an accelerated basis.
- Establish a method for EFMP families to get priority. If things are a threat to the health of vulnerable people in the household, they should get priority.

MG Howard – We have some homework. We owe you some things. You need to hold us accountable. Introduced BG Jones, who will attend the next town hall meeting as the new MDW commander.