

Home Front

FALL-WINTER 2003



538 N. Detroit Street
Xenia, Ohio 45385
376-2908/429-7736
www.gmha.net

ATTENTION!
HOMEFRONT
newsletters are an
official means of
communication with
residents and
Section 8 Landlords
by GMHA.

Vision
*Housing That Works
To Enhance Life In
Greene County!*

Mission
*To provide quality
affordable housing
and services in an
efficient and cre-
ative manner.*

AGENCY WIDE

**Public Hearing on Updating
GMHA's Agency Plan
Thursday, December 4th
3:00 p.m. at GMHA**

Comments from any program participants and the public are welcome and will be forwarded to the GMHA Board of Commissioners, with an administrative assessment, when they vote on adoption of the Plan later in December.

Copies of the Plan and proposed changes are available for review in the public libraries of Beavercreek, Cedarville, Fairborn, Yellow Springs, and Xenia. It is also available in the GMHA office.

Submissions for the "Home Front" are welcome. Please send to GMHA,
Attention: Connie Paoliello.

WISE MANOR SECTION II Affordable New Homes

Sensible Shelter, a nonprofit associated with GMHA, has started the construction of Wise Manor Section II. Eleven new homes will be built. There will be three and four bedroom units with garages and feature several different floor plans and exteriors. The sales price for the homes are between \$116,000 and \$118,500. All applicants must have a household income between 50% and 80% of median income for the area and pay at least \$500 for the down payment. For a family of four, this means an income of between \$30,100 and \$48,150. Families near the 50% level will be eligible to receive an affordability subsidy of up to \$30,000 from the state of Ohio that will vary according to the household income.

Household Income Eligibility

	50%	80%
two people	\$24,100	\$38,550
three people	\$27,100	\$43,350
four people	\$30,100	\$48,150
five people	\$32,500	\$52,000
six people	\$34,900	\$55,850

GMHA HIGHLIGHTS

Agency Wide	Low Rent
Public Hearing 1	Upcoming Lease Changes 4
Wise Manor Section II 1-2	Reminders 4
Individual Development Account 2	Resident Advisory Board 4
Director's Corner 2-3	Moving To Work 4
Section 8	Project Total
Advisory Forum 3	Thank You Volunteers 5
Updates 3	Heart and Home Peer Support 5
	Section 8 Landlord Meetings 5

Agency Wide

[Wise Manor Section II continued...] Income eligible families who currently or recently received GMHA assistance will have top priority in applying for these homes. Other current Xenia residents or those working in Xenia who are first-time buyers have the next preference as applicants. Applications from local, eligible residents are encouraged, to ensure that these houses will be sold as soon as possible after construction is completed. To qualify, all eligible families must also complete a ten-hour homebuying class through the Greene County Dept. of Development and be pre-approved by a lender for the loan amount needed. Sky Bank will offer down payment incentives to home buyers who use its mortgage program.

Interested buyers who meet the income guidelines are encouraged to contact GMHA and request a Wise Manor Homeownership application. Call Keith GunderKline at 376-2908 or 429-7736 for more information.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT

The Individual Development Account (IDA) program is currently enrolling new participants. If you have a child living with you under age 18 and you are working, you may qualify for this program. GMHA will match your deposits 2:1 up to \$50 a month. Don't let this opportunity pass you by! If you are interested, please contact Bev Justice at 376-2908 or 429-7736.

Director's Corner

During the last few years, there have been significant changes in our Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. Prior to 9-11-2001, in order to lease all available units, GMHA gave out four vouchers for every voucher actually used. So, we only budgeted to cover 25% of the vouchers we issued. Immediately after 9-11, it changed drastically. Almost every voucher we issued was used. Suddenly, we were in a position of having to find the money to cover the over issued vouchers. Also prior to 9-11, about 30-35 voucher holders went off the program each month. This number dropped drastically after 9-11. Fortunately at that time, HUD provided funds for the additional vouchers as long as we had a plan and were making progress on reducing the number of vouchers issued.

We started our 2003 fiscal year having over issued vouchers, as did many other high performing housing authorities, in order to be at 100% lease-up. HUD told all public housing authorities that if they were not 100% leased, they would lose vouchers not used. Unfortunately, HUD changed the regulations in 2003, stating that they would no longer provide funds if a housing authority had over issued vouchers. Now, HUD through our Congress, has taken away most of our program reserves, which helped to cover rent increases and over leasing. HUD is now in the process of taking away our administrative operating reserves, which we earn by operating our program without a deficit. We are walking a knife's edge. If we are over 100% lease-up at the end of our fiscal year, HUD will not pay for anything above 100%. If we are under 100%, HUD will take away vouchers. We work very hard to stay within our voucher numbers and budget, but we need a cushion for factors beyond our control. Each year, HUD has awarded us the High Performer Status for our Section 8 Voucher Program. We have proved that we will work hard to make the program successful, but we must have program and operating reserves.

Director's Corner

This is just a brief summary of the difficulties in operating the program. It does not deal with the frustration of families on our waiting list an average of 23 months to receive housing assistance. We currently have 68 homeless families on our waiting list that are unlikely to receive assistance from us in this current fiscal year, April 2003 through March 2004. Our waiting list has almost doubled in the last year. The waiting list reflects the downturn in the economy. In Greene County, over 900 families are waiting for housing assistance with little hope for the near future. Please share your concerns with your Senators and Representatives.

Section 8

ADVISORY FORUM

All Section 8 residents are invited to an Advisory Forum Wednesday, December 3, 2003, 6:30 p.m. at GMHA.

Every year GMHA is required to update its Agency Plan and submit it to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). GMHA requests your input and feedback on any of the contents of this Plan. Though the complete Agency Plan is hundreds of pages long, the Section 8 Administrative Plan is the section most relevant to Section 8 residents. Copies are available for review in the public libraries of Beavercreek, Cedarville, Fairborn, Yellow Springs, and Xenia. It is also available in the GMHA office. Several additional copies of the Agency Plan will be available at the forum on December 3rd.

Examples of proposed changes this year:

1. Higher preference points given to applicants who are near elderly, and to persons displaced because of fire, natural disaster or government action.
2. Assistance will be terminated if a participant misses a scheduled unit inspection and does not reschedule the inspection.
3. Within 10 days of the change, families will be required to report all increases in income or decrease in allowable expenses.

All ideas, questions or concerns about GMHA's policies or plan are welcome. If you have any questions prior to the meeting, or will not be able to attend and wish to provide comments, please contact Keith GunderKline at GMHA by mail or call 376-2908 or 429-7736. Your ideas and feedback are important to us!

UPDATES

- If a termination notice is rescinded, a letter will be mailed to both the tenant and the landlord for notification.
 - Larger size units may be approved because of medical need when accompanied by a doctor's statement. GMHA will now require the doctor's statement be updated yearly with the recertification or again if the tenant transfers to a different unit.
 - After the first year of a lease, GMHA considers the tenant to be renting on a month to month basis. If another lease is signed, it is the responsibility of the landlord to inform GMHA by providing a copy of the new lease to GMHA. Tenants will not be allowed to receive a transfer voucher if they have signed a lease extension that has not expired unless the landlord approves the move. Requested rent increases on lease extensions must, as always, be approved by GMHA.
-

Low Rent

UPCOMING LEASE CHANGES

Low Rent residents will receive a letter in February 2004 with new lease changes. This letter will need to be signed and returned to GMHA. The proposed changes are listed below. If you have any comments or questions, please contact your Housing Manager.

- When a household member becomes an adult at age 18, all adult members of the household must execute a new lease within 14 calendar days of the 18 year olds birthday.
- Guests may not stay for more than 14 days in a twelve month period.
- Notify GMHA immediately of all water leaks, water intrusion, mold growth, or excessively high water bills. Failure to immediately report these items shall be considered to contribute to any damage that occurs which may increase potential financial liability for the resident. Actions required by GMHA to address water and mold issues that require resident cooperation must be implemented by the resident (i.e. running a dehumidifier provided by GMHA).

REMINDERS

- Rent is due on the first day of the month. Please make sure that a payment slip is attached to your check or money order. If your rent is received after the 10th of the month, a \$15 late fee will be charged. Please keep in mind that three late payments in one year are grounds for termination of housing assistance.
- All income changes must be reported within 10 days.
- Residents are not permitted to add anyone to the household without prior approval.
- Residents are only permitted to have one pet in the unit. A pet cannot be brought onto the property without first signing a pet agreement and paying a \$200 pet deposit.
- If you are required to complete Community Service, eight hours of volunteer service per month will be required. Forms need to be turned into your Housing Manager on a monthly basis.
- Any resident who is placed on a re-payment agreement will be required to attend the money management series through OSU extension.

MAINTENANCE REMINDERS



- Remove hoses from outside faucets to prevent pipes from freezing and breaking. Repairs needed from not removing hoses will be billed to the resident.
- Test your smoke detectors. (Push the test button and hold until you hear a beep.) All smoke detectors need to be operable at all times.
- Check your gutters to make sure they are clean. If they need cleaned and you are unable to clean them, please call in a work order.
- Remember, you are responsible for maintaining your premises. This includes raking leaves, shoveling snow, checking windows, door seals, and locks.

Resident Advisory Board

The first Annual Resident Advisory Board Community Fair Day was a great success. Thank you to all RAB members who worked so hard putting it together. GMHA encourages anyone interested in being on the RAB to contact J.C. Craig at 376-2908 or 429-7736.

Moving To Work

There have been 19 families who have graduated from the Moving to Work program. Eight of these families have purchased homes!!

Project Total

Project TOTAL (Teaching Our Tenants and Landlords) provides outreach case management to families and individuals who are experiencing homelessness or those who are at risk of eviction. Project TOTAL social workers conduct home visits and provide one on one case management to insure that families not only find permanent, stable housing, but also maintain housing for an extended period. Project TOTAL also provides information and support to Section 8 landlords.

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

Project TOTAL would like to thank the volunteers who assisted the Heart & Home Peer Support Group over the summer months. A BIG THANKS to Amanda, Clay and Andrea for providing child care for the youngsters this summer. Your help was much appreciated! Project TOTAL would also like to take this opportunity to thank Deanna Todd of Greene County Family and Children First for providing parenting education and information to the Support Group. If you are interested in volunteering with Project TOTAL please contact Mary Jo Post at 376-2908 or 429-7736.

HEART & HOME PEER SUPPORT CELEBRATES ACCOMPLISHMENTS



The Heart & Home Peer Support Group held closing ceremonies this past September. For almost two years, members of the Support Group met each week to share and learn from one another as well as to learn from guest speakers. The group ended with a celebration and a graduation ceremony at John Bryan State Park. They were honored for their commitment to the group and their dedication to remain in stable housing. Heartfelt congratulations to all Peer Support Members for the successes over the last two years.

SECTION 8 LANDLORD MEETINGS



Project TOTAL is dedicated to providing support, information and education to landlords who participate in the Section 8 program. Each month, Project Total invites landlords to meetings to discuss a variety of topics. Over the past few months, a variety of topics were discussed during these meetings. We would like to thank the following individuals for agreeing to be guest speakers and providing landlords with valuable information: Doug Wickline, Wickline's Garden Center; Byron Bonar, Western Ohio Legal Services; Liz Hale, Greene County Fair Housing; Margaret Burns, Greene County Combined Health District; and Detective Osburne, ACE Task Force.

Home Front

Greene Metropolitan Housing Authority
538 N. Detroit Street
Xenia, Ohio 45385
www.gmha.net

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
XENIA, OHIO
PERMIT #22



Board of Commissioners

Roger Saddler, Chair
Tammy Kozerman, Vice Chair
Marsha Bayless
Nancy Hadley
Cecil Brown
Susan Stiles, Executive Director

HOME FRONT
FALL-WINTER 2003

SPOTLIGHT

Check out the GMHA web site! It's loaded with helpful information.

WWW.GMHA.NET

NEW FACES AT GMHA

Kathy White - Administrative Support Manager

Dan Shover - Section 8 Inspector

Opal Castle, Zana Wheeler, Amanda Bailey - Resident Initiative Employees

GMHA application information is now available in SPANISH. Just ask at the front desk.