

ANNUAL REPORT MARCH 31,2012

**AMHERST HOUSING AUTHORITY
33 KELLOGG AVENUE
AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS**

Peter Jessop, Chair

Constance Kruger, Vice Chair

Paul Bobrowski, Treasurer

Judy Brooks, Assistant Treasurer

Joan Logan, Member

Denise LeDuc, Executive Director

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33 KELLOGG AVENUE
AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS 01002**

ANNUAL REPORT AMHERST HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Amherst Housing Authority respectfully submits its Annual Report to the citizens of the Town of Amherst, Mr. Aaron Gornstein, Undersecretary of the state Department of Housing and Community Development, the Secretary's Representative of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and State Auditor Suzanne Bump for the year ending March 31, 2012.

The members and staff of the Amherst Housing Authority reaffirm their continued commitment to serve all the citizens of Amherst, including those who reside in the several buildings that the Authority owns and also AHA tenants who reside in privately owned buildings in the Town of Amherst, and the voucher holders of the Federal Housing Choice Voucher Program.

Sincerely,

Peter Jessop
Chair

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

The voters of the Town of Amherst elect four members of the Board at large and the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts appoints one member. All members serve five-year terms. The members establish policies regulating the operation of the Amherst Housing Authority. Regular Board meetings are held on the fourth Monday of the month in the community room at Ann Whalen Apartments, or at other times as scheduled. Members of the Amherst Housing Authority Board of Commissioners are:

Commissioner	Term Expiration
Paul Bobrowski	April 2015
Constance Kruger(Governor's Appointee)	April 2012
Joan Ross Logan	April 2012
Peter Jessop	April 2014
Judy Brooks	April 2016

In April 2011, Judy Brooks was elected to a 5 year term. Peter Jessop is the Authority's appointee to the Town's Community Preservation Act committee.

At their annual meeting in April, Peter Jessop was elected Chair, Constance Kruger Vice Chair, Paul Bobrowski Treasurer, and Judy Brooks Assistant Treasurer.

AMHERST HOUSING AUTHORITY HIGHLIGHTS

During this past year, Donna Crabtree, Executive Director, retired from AHA after 33 years on December 31, 2011. The AHA Board of Commissioners convened a subcommittee of commissioners and one staff representative to conduct a search for a replacement Executive Director. Twenty-nine applications were received, with four candidates selected to be interviewed. Denise LeDuc, was chosen to succeed Ms. Crabtree as the new Executive Director effective January 3, 2012.

705 Rehabilitation Project

Construction began on the first phase of the 705 rehab project that had been awarded in the prior fiscal year. Four units located at Olympia Drive have been rehabbed with the \$363,846.00 that was awarded from the Town of Amherst Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. A grant from Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds was received in the amount of \$150,000 to replace the furnace systems in the 705 family units. These funds comprise part of the mixed financing for the rehab of the 705 family housing units. The second phase of the project is being bid and will be completed in fiscal year 2013.

Pomeroy Lane Cooperative

The Authority completed the first year of the management agreement with Pomeroy Lane Cooperative. The Coop was funded by DHCD to rehab the units and executed the buyout from the limited partnership.

Main Street

The Authority continued its current management agreement with Valley Main Street LLC.

Capital Funds

DHCD which had allocated \$662,254.00 in the previous fiscal year to the Authority for capital improvements at the state-aided housing developments has begun to roll-out software and training on how to access the funds. Our capital plan was approved by the Board at the January 2012 meeting and subsequently sent to DHCD for approval. The Authority received \$25,673 from the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for various improvements at Watson Farms Apartments.

The AHA continues to improve its existing management, maintenance, and rental assistance programs and to emphasize preventative maintenance. In addition to the actual day-to-day management, maintenance, and administration of the Authority's programs, the AHA staff provides information to the general public and to local and state agencies and boards.

AMHERST HOUSING AUTHORITY STAFF

Administrative Personnel

Executive Director	Denise LeDuc
Housing Manager	Nancy Schroeder
Director of Housing Programs	Debbie Turgeon
Assistant Housing Manager	Chris Warren
Program Specialist	Angela Russell
Bookkeeper	Lowell LaPorte
Support Service Coordinator	Juana Trujillo
Housing Specialist	Janna Tetreault
Applications Clerk	Eleanor Mielosyk *
Recertification Clerk	Joan Bechtold *

Maintenance Personnel

Maintenance Mechanic	John Summers
Maintenance Laborer	Marc Fleury
Groundskeeper/Custodian	Dana Glazier
Maintenance Laborer	Chad Howard

Contract Staff

Fee Accountant	Gary DePace
Counsel-State Programs	Patricia LaFore, Esq.

* Part-time

AMHERST HOUSING AUTHORITY HOUSING

NAME OF BUILDING	# OF UNITS	FUNDING TYPE	BUILDING NUMBER	DATE OF OCCUPANCY
<u>ELDERLY/ HANDICAPPED</u>				
Chestnut Court Apts.	30	State	667-1	1962
Ann Whalen Apts.	80	State	667-2	1975
Jean Elder House	23	State-Private	667-3	1980
<u>FAMILY</u>				
Watson Farms Apts.	15	Federal	085-1	1982
Stanley St.	2	State	705-2	1988
Jenks St.	4	State	705-3	1989
Olympia Drive	4	State	705-1	1992
Fairfield St.	6	State	705-1	1992
Bridge St./ Market Hill	6	State	705-1	1992
99 Bridge Street	4	Private	Section 8 vouchers	2003
Tamarack Drive	4	Private	Section 8 vouchers	2006
<u>HANDICAPPED</u>				
John C. Nutting	5	State	689-1	1981
Moreau House	8	State	698-2	1990
TOTAL UNITS OWNED	191			

HOUSING UNDER MANAGEMENT CONTRACT

NAME OF BUILDING	# OF UNITS	FUNDING TYPE	BUILDING NUMBER	DATE OF OCCUPANCY
Valley Main Street 683/687	11	Private	Section 8 Vouchers and HOME	2008
Pomeroy Lane Cooperative	25	Private	Section 8 Vouchers & Market Rents	2011 (management contract)
TOTAL UNITS	36			

RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS UNDER CONTRACT

NAME OF PROGRAM	UNITS	TYPE
Section 8 Rental	413	Federal
Mass. Rental Voucher Program **	10	State
Department of Mental Health Subsidy Program	3	State
Federal Public Housing	15	Federal
TOTAL	441	

** Six (6) vouchers are currently frozen by DHCD

Maintenance/Capital Improvements

The maintenance staff prepared 23 vacant units for occupancy and completed a total of 1016 work orders. The staff also maintains the grounds and buildings at the Authority's fourteen properties.

Management

The Authority maintained 6 waiting lists. The waiting lists for Watson Farms and the Project Based Section 8 apartments at Bridge Street and Tamarack Streets were closed as of April 12, 2011. AHA staff processed 182 income recertification's; signed leases with 23 new households residing in AHA owned property and conducted 257 unit inspections.

Rental Assistance Programs

The AHA administers four rental assistance programs: the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP), the Alternative Housing Voucher Program (AHVP), and the Department of Mental Health Subsidy Program all funded by the Department of Housing and Community Development. All of these programs permit eligible households to occupy privately owned units. The Authority pays part of the monthly rent directly to the owner. Over 120 local owners participate in the programs.

AHA staff issued 42 Section 8 Housing Choice vouchers, completed 871 annual or interim income recertification's and leased 36 new families on the program. The Authority also completed 5 MRVP and AHVP income recertifications. In FY 2012 AHA was returning to full leasing after a previous year of a funding shortfall. Once AHA was aware of its financial resources for the Federal Fiscal Year, AHA began implementing measures to lease up its annual authorized units. Significant outreach was done with other local housing authorities, as well as issuing vouchers to participants on the waiting list the AHA was not able to fully lease up to its' authorized annual units during the Federal Fiscal Year.

The AHA did continue to work with families and did fully lease up all 413 of the vouchers by March 1, 2012. The AHA also began to respond to the housing issues posed at a local complex, Rolling Green Apartments, whose affordability restrictions are coming to an end. In addition, the AHA has identified other affordability issues for current program participants, applicants have begun to make legislators aware of the issues that impact Amherst program participants.

There were 541 housing inspections completed during the year which include annual, move-in, and special inspections of units leased through the Section 8 and conventional housing programs.

The Authority received a 100% high performer rating by HUD for the Section 8 Management Assistance Program.

Resident Services

The Support Service Program, through its Coordinator Juana Trujillo, arranges for counseling, individual assessments, support, and crisis intervention to elderly and disabled residents. The program also provides a number of educational forums for residents.

Ann Whalen Wellness Program received funding from Highland Valley Elder Services (\$10,000), and the Senior Aide Program. This funding allows the Wellness Program to continue and provide a daily breakfast program, smoking cessation workshops, social events, weekly health clinics, food distribution program, and a Health Navigator program. The Social Services Coordinator works with staff from the Center for Human Development, the UMass and the Elms College Nursing Programs and the UMass Community Service Office to maintain these programs.

Several residents from Ann Whalen and Chestnut Court Apartments continue to be very active in gardening. They have provided many hours of labor enhancing the landscape with flowers and shrubs at both developments.

Mixed Population Service Coordination

	Elderly	Young/ disabled	Total
New Cases Served this period	57	23	80
Total cases served			413
<u>Service Type</u>			
Benefit Assistance	400	325	725
Case Management	365	265	630
Domestic Violence Issue	0	0	0
Drug/Alcohol Problem	200	275	475
Employment/Voc. Services	410	220	630
Financial Problem	360	280	640
Group Activities/Function	670	545	1,215
Health and Safety Threats	337	260	597
Hoarding	225	275	500
Home/Healthcare Provider	420	320	740
Housekeeping	360	289	649
Individual Information Sharing	790	610	1,400
Isolation Problem	225	190	415
Language Related	750	605	1,355
Lease Related Issues	45	55	100
Legal Issues	40	90	130
Maintenance Problems	290	240	530
Medical Problems	675	455	1,130
Mental Health Problems	225	235	460
Mental Retardation Problem	0	105	105
Neighbor Dispute	295	275	570
Nursing Home Placement	280	122	402
Nutrition Related	535	380	915
Personal Hygiene	325	300	625
Reasonable Accommodation Issue	200	101	301
Rent Arrears Issue	0	0	0
Tenant Move	142	110	252
Transportation Problem	360	305	665
Unauthorized Guest	165	195	360
Other	0	0	0
Total	9,089	7,427	16,516