

# OWNER UPDATE



Vol. 6 May 2011

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Board of Commissioners:

Jacqueline Adams  
Gerard J. Clark  
Warren McManus  
Anthony Pini  
James G. Stockard Jr.

Executive Director:

Gregory P. Russ

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"The mission of the Cambridge Housing Authority is to develop and manage safe, good quality, affordable housing for low-income individuals and families in a manner which promotes citizenship, community & self reliance."

## FEDERAL FUNDING FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE YEAR FINALLY PASSES

After a series of short-term continuing resolutions and an impending government shutdown the Congress and President agreed on a budget that will keep the government funded for the remainder of the federal fiscal year, which runs through September 30, 2011.

While some housing programs were significantly cut, HUD's core programs - the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program and public housing operating fund - survived relatively unscathed. This is heartening news given the nation's current fiscal constraints. It may also provide some clues as to how the Section 8 and public housing programs may fare in the fiscal year 2012 budget debates.

Unfortunately there were some large reductions to the public housing capital fund, and Housing Choice Voucher program administrative fees. CHA relies on each of these funding sources for the provision of safe, high quality affordable housing in Cambridge.

### **Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Fees**

CHA uses these fees to support the day-to-day administration of the voucher program. Administrative costs include Department salaries, office rent, staff computers and phone service. This fund was decreased from \$1.575 billion to \$1.45 billion. Depending on HUD's implementation schedule, this reduction will result in CHA receiving a 14 to 20% cut in administrative fee funding for the remainder of the year.

### **Veterans Supportive Housing Vouchers (VASH)**

The VASH program, which was initially slated for elimination, received \$50 million, a 33% cut from the previous year. CHA has sixty VASH vouchers for serving homeless vets.

### **Public Housing Capital Fund**

Perhaps the most troubling cut was to the Capital Fund. This is the fund housing authorities rely on to pay for significant (and usually long-overdue) repairs to their public housing developments. These are the types of repairs that grow more costly each year they are ignored; things like repairing leaky roofs, replacing old drafty windows and heating systems limping on well beyond their useful lives have ended. Leaving these items unaddressed not only increases the cost of repairing

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**Need to  
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them later, but also increases operating costs as drafty windows and inefficient heating systems increase energy costs. The final budget provides \$2.044 billion for the capital fund, \$456 million less than 2010. This is the lowest funding for the capital fund since 1999 and continues a disturbing disinvestment in the nation's public housing portfolio.

The final fiscal year 2011 budget also provides a sneak-peak of what to expect in the coming battle over the 2012 budget. If the pattern holds, we hope to see the nation's commitment to the Housing Choice Voucher, Project Based Assistance and public housing operating programs more-or-less honored. Unfortunately we can also expect significant cuts to the administrative fees provided to housing authorities to run their voucher programs and most troubling, continued underfunding of the public housing capital fund.

We will continue sharing news on the 2012 budget as things develop in the coming months. As always, CHA will continue communicating our funding concerns with our elected officials in Washington.

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## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: NEW ONLINE LISTING SERVICE & EXPIRING LEASES**

**Q: Can I list my available apartment on CHA's website?**

**A:** Yes. CHA's Listing Service went online this month. Now when owners send their listings to us they are available to apartment hunters at our Central Office and online. The listings appear on CHA's home page ([www.cambridge-housing.org](http://www.cambridge-housing.org)) and the For Voucher Holders page ([www.cambridge-housing.org/For-Voucher-Holders.aspx](http://www.cambridge-housing.org/For-Voucher-Holders.aspx)). Please email your available apartments to: [afernandes@cambridge-housing.org](mailto:afernandes@cambridge-housing.org) to get listed. It's free and easy!

**Q: Does CHA renew the lease with my tenant for me when it expires?**

**A:** No. The lease is between you and your tenant, just as it is with your non-assisted tenants. It is your responsibility to make sure that if a lease does not renew automatically, that you renew it with your tenant each year. CHA only asks that you send us a copy of the renewed lease for our records.

Please keep in mind that if you are requesting a rent increase along with the renewal that you do so at least thirty days prior to the lease termination date and that you send the increase request to your tenant and CHA. CHA will contact you if the increase request is declined or must be negotiated.