



Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chelsea Andrews
Executive Director

October 4, 2023

HOC AT-A-GLANCE: September 2023

September's highlights:

- McHAF funding for homebuyers
- High SEMAP performance rate
- Legislative Update
- Highlights from our Resident Services Division
- Updates from Housing Resource Division
- Updates from Mortgage Finance Division



ED SPOTLIGHTS:

- HOC released phase one of \$3.0M in funding from DHCA for our Montgomery County Homeownership Assistance Fund which will assist eligible homebuyers to purchase a home in Montgomery County.
- HOC received a high performance rating (92/100) for the Section 8 SEMAP



SECTION EIGHT MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (SEMAP)

The Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) measures the performance of the public housing agencies (PHAs) that administer the Housing Choice Voucher program in 14 key areas. SEMAP helps HUD target monitoring and assistance to PHA programs that need the most improvement.

ED SPOTLIGHTS:

- Resident Services Housing Supports Unit (“HSU”) competes annually for HUD’s Continuum of Care Notification of Funding Opportunity for our Permanent Supportive Housing programs.
- This year, the HSU was ranked in first and second place out of 14 competitors.
 - **1st Place:** McKinney 10 grant program
 - **2nd Place:** McKinney 14 grant program



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

Bill 38-23: County Right of First Refusal Legislation

- DHCA to update the County's Right of First Refusal (“ROFR”) law.
- The legislation would allow the Executive to create a pool of pre-qualified nonprofit developers. DHCA would assign the County's ROFR rights to the selected developer so they can purchase the property directly.
- The proposed legislation does not change HOC's independent ROFR rights however, there is a new restriction that would prevent a seller from requiring more than a 5% deposit from any entity exercising a ROFR right under the law.

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming

Workshops

- **September 20:** Facilitated the Fundamentals of Housing workshop
- **September 21:** Facilitated Resource Sharing workshop

Resident Well Being

- **Activities for Youth:**
 - **After-School Programs:** SON continued to facilitate the Safe Zones program at Cider Mill including a “Friday Girl Program” and a “Boys and Girls Program” on Saturdays.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

Resident Well Being

- **Activities for Youth and Families:**
 - **September 22:** Tanglewood Apartments ice cream social



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

Resident Well Being

- **Activities for Youth and Families:**
 - **September 26:** Meet & Greet at The Lindley and Strathmore Court
 - **September 29:** Cider Mill Tenant Association meeting



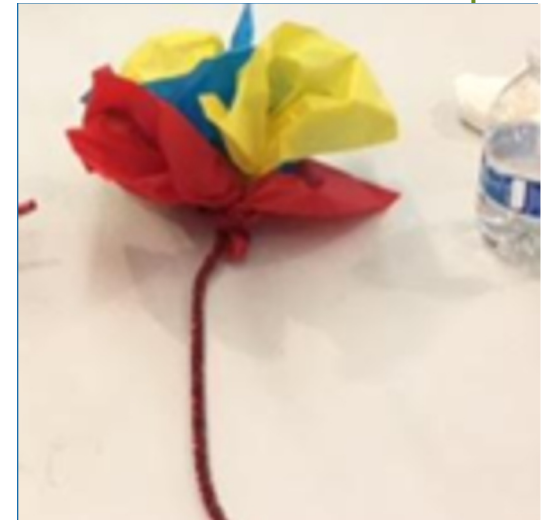
Tenant
Association
Meeting Here!

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

Resident Well Being

- **Activities for Seniors:**
 - **September 12:** Arts for the Aging at Waverly House
 - **September 20:** Arts for the Aging at Residences on the Lane

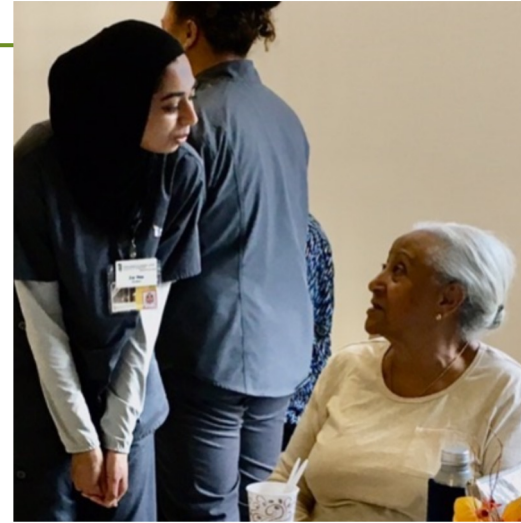


RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

Health and Wellness Activities

- **Community Clinicals:**
 - September 6 & 27: Residences on the Lane
 - September 11 & 18: Arcola Towers
 - September 15 & 22: Forest Oak Towers



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

Health and Wellness Activities (cont.)

- **Meet & Greets**
 - September 6: Residences on the Lane
 - September 15: Fair Oaks Towers
 - September 18: Arcola Towers
- **Senior Fitness**
 - September 11: Arcola Towers
 - September 22: Forest Oak Towers
- **Building Balance**
 - September 19: Arcola Towers



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

Health and Wellness Activities (cont.)

- **Community Services Wellness Event**
 - **September 21:** Forest Oak Towers
- **Police Talk Safety Event**
 - **September 25:** Residences on the Lane



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

Recreation

- **“Granola Bar Bingo” Bingo**
 - September 13: Waverly House
- **Arts and Crafts**
 - September 17: Waverly House
- **Bingo**
 - September 27: Residences on the Lane



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

Relocation and Re-Certification Assistance

- Assisted customers on an ongoing basis with relocations and other needs for RAD and renovation projects at Residences on the Lane, Stewartown Homes, Shady Grove Apartments, Willow Manor Apartments, Bauer Park, Town Center Olney, Sandy Spring, Willow Manor and Georgian Court.
- Provided outreach and assistance to customers who failed to submit all required documents for re-certification by the stated deadline.

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

Rental Assistance/Housing Stabilization

- Provided face-to-face and electronic outreach and assistance to customers with applications for rental assistance programs.
- The Housing Stabilization staff continued to process applications under the Emergency Assistance Program. Residents have received assistance for security deposits, rent, utilities, moving and storage. In addition, staff are processing cases identified as urgent.
- Thirty-eight (38) residents received assistance from the Services to Prevent Homelessness.

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

Food Assistance

- In partnership with the Food Access Initiative, facilitated a SNAP information session for HOC customers at Magruder's Discovery.
- Provided food and other resource support to 400 HOC customers.
- Continued to facilitate the Senior Nutrition Program, which provides meals and opportunities for seniors to socialize.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

HOC Academy

Youth Education/Enrichment:

- **Mad Science of Washington, DC** - STEM enrichment clubs began October 2 at Georgian Court, Stewartown Homes, Tanglewood Apartments and Towne Centre Place.
- **“STEAM Forward”** - HOC awarded a middle school youth a scholarship to participate in Montgomery College’s “A Day of Drones” on October 14.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

HOC Academy (cont.)

Adult Education and Workforce Development

- **September 18:** HOC Academy and Paradigm Multidisciplinary Real Estate Services hosted an information session for HOC customers.
- **September 20:** Holland & Knight Law Firm and HOC hosted a virtual information session on law careers as well as employment opportunities at their firm.
- SBSC alumni Cornelia Nguete, who legalized her business “Pods and Patios, LLC” in August, completed the trade name application this month.

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

HOC Academy (cont.)

Other Updates/Upcoming Events

- HOC Academy is sponsoring a 10-Week Small Business Strategy Course. Cohort #2 began the week of October 2nd and includes **15 customers**.
- In collaboration with HOC contractors, the academy will host several information sessions this program year for Section 3/HOC Works employment opportunities.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Financial Literacy

Financial Literacy Coach continued to work with HOC's customers and individuals on the Housing Path waitlist:

- Provided one-on-one financial literacy coaching to **36 HOC customers** and **13 individuals from the Housing Path waitlist**.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Supportive Housing

- Program served **358 participants** by conducting home visits with program participants, providing case management services, and paying rent and utilities.
- Continued to help Emergency Voucher recipients secure housing.
- Program staff continued to implement the Rent Supplement Program (“RSP”).
- Staff increased program participation to **277 this month, only twenty-three (23) people shy of the 300-person target** for the program.

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Fatherhood Initiative

- For the month of September, **44 fathers** were enrolled in the program.
- The upcoming cohort will begin on October 6, 2023.
- The Fatherhood Initiative Program hosted its first Open Basketball Gym Night as a recruitment strategy for the upcoming Grant Year (4).



HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATE:

Housing Choice Voucher (“HCV”) Program

- Current utilization rate is 97%.
- Currently, 140 families with issued vouchers are searching for suitable units to rent; and 149 contracts are pending execution.
- Two hundred (200) families were selected from the HCV waitlist last month.
- During September, the Division received six (6) requests for voucher extensions beyond the initial 90-day period.



HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATE:

RENTCafé Used to Support Online Annual Recertifications

- Customers with recertifications effective October 2023 required to submit electronic annual recertifications.
- Overall, **424 of 683** customers submitted their paperwork electronically.
- **Forty-five (45)** customers were recommended for program termination effective October 1, 2023.
- The Resident Services Counselors conducted outreach and **assisted 32 families with the recertification requirement** and overturn the termination.

HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATE:

RENTCafé Used to Support Online Annual Recertifications (cont.)

Termination proceedings will continue for **13 families** for the following reasons:

- 8 - Failed to respond to Counselor Outreach
- 1 - Ported to another jurisdiction
- 3 - No longer qualify and must pay full rent
- 1 - Deceased

Housing Resources Division will continue to work collaboratively with Resident Services to assist customers facing termination

HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATE:

Emergency Housing Vouchers (“EHVs”)

HOC has an allocation of **118 Emergency Housing Vouchers**.

- **One hundred and three (103)** families have successfully leased units
- **Six (6) families** with issued vouchers are searching for suitable units to rent.
- Staff are reviewing **four (4) certification packets** to determine program eligibility.
- HOC requested **one (1) additional referral** from HHS for the EHV Program.



HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATE:

Family Self Sufficiency (“FSS”)

- FSS Team resumed recruitment efforts to increase participation size from 346 to the **maximum baseline of 441**.
- There have been **ten (10) new enrollments** this month.
- FSS staff increased the frequency of the FSS information sessions to once per week.
- **Twelve (12) potential applicants** attended the most recent information session.

HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATE:

Family Self Sufficiency (“FSS”) (cont.)

- There were **four (4) graduates** from the FSS program this month.
- Amongst the four graduates, the **average earned income increased significantly by \$21,651.**
- The **average escrow payout was \$24,620.**
- The graduates obtained careers in the following fields: Healthcare, Retail Food Service, and Early Child Development.



MORTGAGE FINANCE UPDATE:

Single Family Mortgage Purchase Program

Montgomery County Homeownership Assistance Fund (“McHAF”)

- **\$3.0M in funding** from the Montgomery County DHCA to assist eligible homebuyers to purchase a home in Montgomery County.
- In combination with HOC’s Mortgage Purchase Program, the McHAF will provide substantial down payment and closing cost assistance.



MORTGAGE FINANCE UPDATE:

Single Family Mortgage Purchase Program (cont.)

Greater Capital Area Association of REALTORS® (“GCAAR”) Profession Webinar

- **September 6:** Mortgage Finance single-family staff presented their second webinar hosted by GCAAR and received “rave reviews”.
- With the opening of the McHAF closing costs and downpayment assistance program, members of the GCAAR community were excited to hear how these programs will assist their clients with purchasing their first home.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

THE END

