



# FALL NEWSLETTER

## The Executive Director's Corner:

**Welcome Fall and soon to be Winter!!!** Most of you understand why I like winter so much. There are also several reasons why winter is a very serious time of the year. Electrical energy costs are higher than ever, and it doesn't look like things are going to get better any time soon. We must do our part and conserve. The WHA's energy costs are skyrocketing, and we must control them before we have to make drastic cuts in services. Each year we budget using a 3-year rolling base. This means that if past winter's energy costs are low and we have a spike like this year we will run out of money before the season is done. If that happens, we might have to reduce in other areas to absorb the overruns.

Please keep your windows closed and locked. Make sure your door seals are tight. Monitor your heat to verify it is at a temperature that is comfortable and not too high. If you are gone all day turn your heat down to the low 60's and back up when you return. That can save hundreds in oil and electric costs. If we find residents with windows open, you could be billed for excessive heat loss.

We are back out to bid on Phase IV of the Hyde Park kitchen and bath project. Bids will open in November and if the bids are accepted, we hope to start this work in January 2024. More to come and I will meet with the affected residents once the bidding is approved. Our roofing and siding project at 14-16 Ready Drive is being postponed and rebid in February 2024 in hope of getting better pricing for spring work.

**SMOKE FREE HOUSING** The WHA has been smoke free since 2017. Over the years residents have adjusted to the No Smoking Policy and are following it. I need to remind everyone that 25 feet is from all buildings and must be followed. If we find residents not following the policy, you will have only one meeting to remind you and then a notice to quit will be issued after that.

Thank you in advance for your continued support. Have a safe and enjoyable fall and winter.

### TEMPLETON HOUSING UPDATES

Let's welcome Gary Whitney back to the THA!

I want to have a paragraph in this newsletter for our Templeton Housing Authority residents and staff. We are working on repairs in Building 6 at Phoenix Court and design work for new Sprinkler and Egress upgrades at Tucker Building. There is a lot going on and more to come.

### FAMILY RECERTIFICATIONS DUE DATES

(This is for Family Units Only—The Elderly Units were completed in August)

It's that time again. Once a year, we are required by DHCD to redetermine your rents annually.

January 31, 2023

Paperwork is due back to the office.

April 1, 2023

Rents will become effective on this date.

Lisa Cormier will be mailing detailed information in November 2022. Again, this is for **Family Units Only**.

### MISCELLANEOUS REMINDERS

**POSTINGS:** Don't miss out! Check for new postings on the bulletin boards outside of the laundry room when you come to get your mail. Activities and important Notices are posted.

**TRASH:** Please break down cardboard boxes. Our trash vendor requires it.

**BLACK BEARS:** An excerpted announcement from the Department of Fish and Game, October 2022: With black bears actively trying to increase body fat ahead of the winter season, ...asking the public to help keep bears wild by removing all easily available food sources, such as bird seed feeders and unsecured trash cans.

**REMINDER TO ALL, SMOKING IS ALWAYS OFF THE THA PROPERTY...**

**Use HE soap only  
at Hyde Park and  
Ipswich Drive  
Laundries!!!**

**October 2023**



### Inside this issue:

<b>News from Daira Marcano-Ferrer</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>General Reminders</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>News from Cyndee LaFreniere</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>News from Kylie LaFreniere</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Executive Director's Corner</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Templeton Housing Updates</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Board of Commissioners</b>	<b>4</b>



## News from Daira Marcano-Ferrer

It is time to review your Medicare Plan

Medicare Annual Enrollment: October 15 – December 7

Margaret Short from Medicare Advisors will be with us at the Ipswich Drive Community Building on November 8, at 10:00 a.m. She will be holding a breakfast and will be bringing information about enrollment. Afterward, she will answer questions. If you have any questions, feel free to bring them forward that day. After breakfast, she will also be scheduling appointments for any help that you may require.

During the Medicare Annual Enrollment Period, you can:

- Switch from Medicare Advantage back to Original Medicare
- Unenroll from Original Medicare and enroll in Medicare Advantage
- Change from one Medicare Advantage plan to another
- Sign up for a Part D prescription drug plan
- Change from one Part D prescription plan to another
- Cancel your prescription drug coverage

Any changes you make during the Medicare Annual Enrollment Period will take effect on January 1st of the following year.

Please call Daira Marcano-Ferrer at 978-297-2280 ext. 304 if you have any questions or would like to sign up.

## General Reminders

**Ready Drive Tenants:** The new Propane Supplier for the 2023-2024 Heating season is R. J. McDonald. Their office number is 978-355-6649. Please make sure that your account has been set up for the upcoming heating season.

**REMINDER-** Burning candles is not allowed in WHA properties. Electric warmers are allowed instead. Please keep safe and do not burn candles.

**Ipswich Dr., Hyde Park Dr., and Congregant Tenants -** be sure to have your bedroom and bathroom emergency pull cords down to the floor. This will make them accessible should you fall and need to reach them

**Fuel Assistance-** If you are a tenant that is responsible for your own heating please contact Making Opportunity Count (MOC) at 978-342-4520.





## News from Cyndee LaFreniere

Happy Fall! I hope you all get a chance to get out and enjoy the beautiful foliage and fall activities. On a more serious note, I need to unfortunately discuss something that has become too frequent occurrence among some of our working families. We are finding that more of our working households are not timely reporting income or disclosing it at all. We have resources that provide us with this information and once we find unreported income, then we have to go back retroactively and charge the account. This often times results in a large balance being owed to the Housing Authority and potential legal action.

The housing programs we supply are government funded programs paid for through tax dollars and the rent paid is based on accurately reported income. Failure to report income both timely and accurately is a lease violation. Failure to report income is also fraud. It's incredibly frustrating to find this form of dishonesty. It is not fair for every other tenant who is held to the same accountability and does the right thing and abides by their lease.

Please review your lease and understand your tenant obligations and responsibilities. The last thing we want to do is to find out that a tenant has not reported their income, but we always find out – please don't be that person. Report all income timely and accurately and abide by the terms of your lease.

## General News from Kylie LaFreniere

I hope everyone is enjoying the fall season! It is now a good time for residents to prepare for the colder weather that is inevitably coming. Tenants should make sure that all windows are shut tightly and locked, which will help prevent drafts. When the heat is turned on, please remember to turn it down when you are away from your unit for long periods of time.

All state family tenants should be keeping up with lawn maintenance. Please make sure that leaves are removed from your yards, as doing this now will make things easier when it's time for spring cleanup. Now is also a great time for state family tenants to be considering a snow removal plan for the upcoming winter. This includes keeping the sidewalks and driveway clear of snow. You may have a contractor plow or shovel your own. Having a plan in place now will make things much less stressful when the snow finally comes.





Winchendon Housing Authority  
108 Ipswich Drive  
Winchendon, MA 01475  
Phone: 978-297-2280  
Fax: 978-297-0922  
Email: dconnor@winha.org

### ***Board of Commissioners:***

*Chairperson: Burton Gould, Jr.*

*Vice-Chairperson: David Johnson*

*Treasurer: Leston Goodrich*

*Asst. Treasurer: Jane Leavens*

*Secretary: Nancy Romanowski*

*Decent, Safe, Affordable Housing*

**[www.winha.org](http://www.winha.org)**

### **Family Tenants-**

**Be sure to watch your children when they are playing outside. Children are not to go on neighbors porches or use neighbor's belongings.**

## **Maintenance News**

Winter is just around the corner and there is still a lot to do before the first snow. Leaves need to be picked up and summer items placed in storage. **All resident owned AIR CONDITIONERS** should have been removed already. If we find some still installed, we will enter and remove them and charge you for the work. This includes all the state housing units as well.

Residents that have outside furniture and screen houses must have them down by November 15<sup>th</sup>. If your entrance is in an area where it must be snow blown or shoveled, we need to have the mats removed before snow. That way they will not be picked up by snowblower. All units at Pearl Drive need to have all items removed from in front of their units and walkways by November 15<sup>th</sup> as well. If any items are left, we will remove them and there will be a charge. Let's remember that we must remove snow from behind all the vehicles and clear open parking spaces before you move your vehicle. Working together will make the winter months much more enjoyable.

Trash disposal at all housing locations must be placed into plastic bags before they are brought to the storage areas or trash containers. We have been to locations that the loose trash has blown around and really made a mess for our Maintenance staff. We are finding rubber gloves and medical waste loose in the barrels of Hyde Park and Ipswich Drive. Please tell your homemakers and visiting nurses that you will be held accountable for the improper disposal of their trash.

All Pearl Dr. and Scattered site residents must bring their trash to the dumpster. If you leave bags on or near your door and an animal gets into it, you will be charged a minimum of \$25.00 for trash pick up. This is your on-ly

