

GREENFIELD

Housing Authority names interim director

By **ZACK DeLUCA**
Staff Writer

GREENFIELD — The Greenfield Housing Authority has announced the appointment of retired housing court Judge William H. Abrashkin to the position of interim executive director.

According to Greenfield Housing Authority Chair Butch Hawkins, Abrashkin's appointment enables the housing authority to improve operations while it seeks to identify a permanent director. Hawkins said Abrashkin has a substantial amount of experience in public housing administration, and recently provided guidance for both the Springfield Housing Authority and the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority.

"We are very excited to have him guide the Greenfield Housing Authority during this time and are looking forward to getting him up and running," Hawkins said.

Abrashkin is taking over the role of outgoing Executive Director Daniel Finn, who is retiring after six years in the

role, and 15 total years with the organization.

The Greenfield Housing Authority is continuing to consider applicants for a permanent hire, and originally had interviews lined up for later this month. Hawkins said the current health crisis will delay the interview process and he sent letters notifying applicants of this. He hopes to find a permanent hire within the next six months.

"We knew the process was going to be lengthened, and needed someone in management to deal with the current situation," Hawkins said.

Housing has been a central focus of Abrashkin's career. He worked first as an attorney, then as a housing court judge, later holding the position of executive director of the Springfield Housing Authority and spending a term as interim executive director of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority.

"The reason for this focus

is straightforward," Abrashkin said. "Housing in general, and affordable housing in particular, is central to the quality of people's lives, and to the fabric of the community. ... The Greenfield



ABRASHKIN

Housing Authority position is a continuation of this focus, and an opportunity to draw on the experience and knowledge of a long career to help, to the best of my ability, an agency that assists many people in need — elderly, disabled, low-income."

According to its website, the Greenfield Housing Authority's mission is "to provide safe, decent and sanitary housing conditions for low-income families and to manage resources efficiently. Its purpose is to promote personal, economic and social upward mobility, and to provide families the opportunity to make the transition from subsidized to non-subsidized housing."

Abrashkin said he wants to assist these members of the community, many of whom

have worked all their lives. The majority of residents who are not elderly or disabled work in the local economy, take home paychecks and pay taxes, but do not earn enough to afford market-rate housing.

While COVID-19 continues to present challenges to residents and staff, Abrashkin has immediately begun working to implement federal and state guidelines designed to ensure the health and safety of all housing authority members. Currently, Greenfield Housing Authority employees are working from home.

"I have only been in the position of interim executive director for a couple of weeks, but that's long enough for me to be greatly impressed by the skill and dedication of the Greenfield Housing Authority staff," he said. "Many work long hours above and beyond the call of duty to serve the public. It is a privilege to get to know and to work with them."

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