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Housing authority faces funding cuts

MILLVILLE — The Millville Housing Authority anticipates bad news from the federal government in the new fiscal year.

Federal aid for daily operations, capital projects and administration of the Section 8 housing program all are expected to decline by 3 percent to 8 percent compared to the recently completed 2011 budget year, according to Executive Director Paul Dice.

On the upside, recent moves to take on commercial tenants at the authority's Jaycee Plaza will provide some replacement revenues.

"But I'm not saying it's going to be good in 2012," Dice told authority commissioners at a meeting last week. "It's going to become more critical."

The authority, which started its new budget year Oct. 1, anticipates getting \$1,618,693 in federal aid toward its operating costs. That would be a 5 percent reduction from the 2011 fiscal year.

In addition, the authority's capital fund grant would be \$432,000, a proposed 8 percent reduction.

The news is mixed for the Section 8 housing program. Funds for actual assistance are expected to be steady.

However, the authority's funding to administer Section 8 is expected to decline 3 percent from last year, to \$138,414.

Dice said trends in federal funding are jeopardizing public housing conditions nationally.

"This is why I believe preserving our housing stock is going to be the legacy of the authority," Dice said.

Dice said Metro Company LLC, a Jersey City consulting firm the authority uses, will report in December on options the authority has to raise money to pay for maintenance of its buildings.

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