

# HOUSING

FROM A1

ment has no policy for dealing with the situation and that HUD officials have offered no specific recommendations.

In talking with other affected housing authorities in the area, Wartman said, "They aren't doing anything about it, either."

The Shawano County family in question first qualified for assistance in 1994 when the family included only a mother and three children. With a mother, father and one child now living there, both parents are employed at a casino, with a combined household income of \$108,000 a year.

Their four-bedroom house in Shawano would be available on a move-in basis to families earning no more than about \$48,000 a year. The family pays \$575 a month in rent and another estimated \$200 a month for utilities.

Although housing authority board members called the family's monthly costs comparable to other housing options in the market, they agreed that the situation represents a problem.

"If you earn \$108,000 and you live in public housing, that looks kind of funny," board member Clarence Natzke said.

Wartman assured members of the authority that this is the only public housing client in the county with a six-figure household income. The authority maintains 202 housing units of various

sizes at taxpayer expense to accommodate low-income individuals and families countywide.

Wartman also noted that while his agency sometimes has clients on waiting lists for housing to become available, he said there are currently no waiting lists and, in fact, he has some houses sitting empty.

When he learned last month about the family earning \$108,000, Wartman said, he called both parents aside and cautioned them that the authority's board members might take action to displace them. He urged the parents to start considering other housing options.

"I asked them, if you would, please possibly start looking," he said.

Board members on Friday agreed to consider setting new limits on how much a family's income can grow while they remain in public housing.

Wartman suggested disqualifying anyone whose household income increases by 40 percent, or perhaps 50 percent. He said he was uncertain of the best formula.

Board members agreed to spend a couple of months studying the issue before they take action.

Kohn expressed relief that the situation involves only one public housing family in Shawano County.

"It's obviously something that came up, and we need to monitor it," Kohn said. "It's a very small problem, but it still is there."