

# Minneapolis housing director to take same post in St. Paul

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Staff Writers

Jon Gutzman, who is credited with rescuing a troubled Minneapolis Public Housing Agency, will quit his post in July to become executive director of the St. Paul Public Housing Agency.

Gutzman, 37, was selected unanimously Thursday by the St. Paul Board of Public Housing Commissioners after a national search. He replaces Marshall Anderson, who retired yesterday after heading the St. Paul agency for 20 years.

Anderson, 60, received high marks from St. Paul officials for running an agency that has maintained full or near-full occupancy during his tenure. The selection of Gutzman came after a second search because the committee couldn't reach a consensus on any of the applicants during its first search earlier this year.

St. Paul Housing Board members said Friday that they are elated by the hiring of Gutzman, one of four finalists chosen from about 65 applicants. The other three finalists were from other states.

"He's a local person who's familiar with both communities," said Roy Garza, a member of the search com-

mittee and the Housing Board. "He knows housing, he's familiar with HUD (the Department of Housing and Urban Development). He knows and understands the needs that poor people have."

When Gutzman became director of the Minneapolis agency in November 1984, 13 percent of the units were vacant despite waiting lists of hundreds of people. The vacancy rate among family housing units was 22 percent.

The problem was largely due to the agency's slowness in repairing, repainting and otherwise preparing vacated units for new occupants. Gutzman reduced the time it took to complete that work, and by May 1985 had reduced the vacancy rate in family housing units to 3 percent, which is considered full occupancy. He brought the entire public-housing stock up to full occupancy by January 1986.

Gutzman said the new job constitutes a promotion because the St. Paul agency is independent, while the Minneapolis agency is combined with the Minneapolis Community Development Agency. His salary is expected to rise from \$56,000 to about \$61,000.

"In St. Paul, I'm the chief of staff, while here, I'm just one of the staff,"

Gutzman said. "In St. Paul, there's also been a long history of accomplishments. (The St. Paul agency) is nationally recognized. They've had a consistent program."

Gutzman will head a staff of about 200 and will oversee management of a \$20 million budget and 4,400 public-housing units. He'll also inherit a waiting list of about 1,000 families looking for public housing. The majority are large families who need three, four or five-bedroom homes, of which the St. Paul agency has about 300.

The wait for large units is three to five years. Construction on about 25 such units is expected to start later this summer, "but that's just a drop in the bucket," Anderson said.

Public-housing agencies also face what Gutzman, Anderson and others say is a lack of commitment to public housing by the Reagan administration. Anderson said federal aid for housing maintenance in St. Paul has been cut from \$3 million to about \$1.3 million per year in recent years, and Gutzman agreed that will be a major challenge in the future.

"I think it's time the federal government got back into the development of public housing," he said.

## Body of woman missing from Detroit Lakes found in ditch

The body of a woman from Detroit Lakes, Minn., who had been missing since early this month was discovered in a highway ditch at the Otter Tail County line Thursday. Foul play is not suspected.

Leona Stephenson, 38, was discovered by horseback riders shortly after 10:15 p.m. in a ditch alongside Hwy. 59, north of Pelican Rapids, on the

## 75% of Minnesota business to pay less for workers comp

Associated Press

Seventy-five percent of Minnesota's employers will pay less in unemployment insurance taxes next year because of changes in state law, Jobs and Training Commissioner Joe Samargia said Friday.

The law passed by the Legislature in May will result in an 0.2 percent rate reduction next year, which will

have larger, more frequent layoffs pay higher taxes.

They also made more low-paid and part-time workers eligible for benefits. Currently, people who earn just more than \$1,400 in a 13-week period are eligible for unemployment insurance payments if they are laid off. After Jan. 1, people will be eligible if they earned at least \$1,000 in a 13-week period. In both cases, they also