

Today's weather



HIGH: 81
LOW: 64

Sunrise: 6:35
Sunset: 8:32

THE GAZETTE

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\$2.50

Shelter offers update to county

Sara Crawford
The Gazette

MEDINA — Since Medina County's first emergency shelter opened in early 2025, its staff has welcomed 101 people to stay in the space.

"Next Step Up has 27 beds and two cribs," Medina Metropolitan Housing Authority Executive Director Skip Sipos said. "It's open 24 hours a day, every day of the calendar year. It serves men, women and children, and when necessary, their pets."

During the Medina County commissioners' meeting on Tuesday, Sipos presented the board with the data collected since the shelter's opening through July 31.

Sipos said of the 101 people who've stayed at the shelter, 12 of them were children.

As he presented, Sipos said that a household can consist of one or more people.

Since Next Step Up opened, 14 households have successfully exited the shelter and entered into a lease agreement of their own, Sipos said. Another 18 households have self-resolved and found alternative housing with friends or family members.

See **SHELTER, A2**

SHELTER

From **A1**

There have been three veterans who've obtained a voucher through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program.

Sipos said that 19 people have secured employment.

"On any given night, 26.2 of the 27 beds and two cribs are occupied," Sipos

said.

He said that guests stay at the shelter for an average of 32.57 days.

Sipos said a 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity was created to help with fundraising, so that the shelter isn't completely reliant on government funding. Since its creation, there have been several service organizations that have donated to Next Step Up, as have many individuals.

Next Step Up is also working with county organizations that provide services, such as the Medina County Health

Department, the Free Clinic of Medina County and Hope Recovery Community. They've also worked with the OSU Extension of Medina County and the Medina County District Library for some programming.

"For me, it's unbelievably impressive that we've had, in basically six months, folks entering into leases, gaining meaningful employment," Sipos said. "It's doing what it was planned to do."

Contact reporter Sara Crawford at (330) 721-4063 or scrawford@medina-gazette.com.