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Suttle to gain OHA board majority

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Thanks to a resignation he sought, Mayor Jim Suttle is about to appoint a fourth person to the **Omaha Housing Authority** board - giving his selections a clear majority on key votes. With the replacement of William Begley, Suttle will have appointed four of the board's seven members. The regular swing vote had been a Mayor Mike Fahey appointee.

Suttle, in calling for Begley's removal, wrote that Begley has left some board meetings early and skipped others.

"Your presence at meetings is necessary to conduct important business," the mayor wrote in a certified letter dated March 7.

Begley, a retired businessman, has served on the board since 2001. He defended his actions in an interview this week, saying he left a few meetings early to meet with his sister's physician to discuss her health problems. She is in a rest home, Begley said.

He also said he skipped a couple of special meetings because the meetings had been rescheduled so often. The ones he missed, he assumed were canceled.

Suttle has the **authority** to remove Begley on his own, but Begley chose to resign. His last day on the board is March 31.

"I couldn't put up with it anymore," Begley said. "Why people are trying to destroy the **Omaha Housing Authority** is beyond my comprehension."

Aida Amoura, a spokeswoman for Suttle, said the mayor has received Begley's resignation letter.

She said the mayor does not yet have a replacement in mind. He's looking for someone with a business background.

Begley's resignation marks the latest change to the **housing** board, which is facing financial troubles because of a retroactive federal subsidy cut and internal debt. The mayor has said he is trying to clean house at OHA to improve **housing** conditions.

Executive Director Stan Timm resigned in January.

Earlier this month, board chairman Phil Wayne resigned, citing disagreements among his colleagues. Suttle appointed **Omaha** attorney Jennifer Taylor to replace him.

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