



# Portland Housing Bureau

Mayor Ted Wheeler • Director Shannon Callahan

## Rental Services Commission

Tuesday, March 19, 2019

2:30 – 5:00 pm

Portland Housing Bureau

421 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 500

Portland, OR 97204

**March 19, 2019**

Meeting Summary (approved)

**Members Present:** Margot Black, Christian Bryant (*via phone*), Christina Dirks, Ian Davie, Laura Golino de Lovato, Jessica Greenlee, Allen Hines, Katrina Holland, Deborah Imse, Yoni Kahn-Jochnowitz, Mike Nuss, Leah Sykes

**Staff Present:** Stacy Jeffries, Andrés Oswill, Matthew Tschabold, Kim McCarty

Audio for the “*recording time*” column below can be found under “[Meeting Recordings](#)” here:

<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/phb/76570>

<i>Agenda Topic</i>	<i>Key Topics Covered</i>	<i>Recording Time</i>
<b>Call to Order, Roll Call</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roll Call was taken</li> <li>Mike Nuss motioned to approve the February meeting summary</li> <li>Jessica Greenlee seconded the motion</li> <li>Meeting summary approved (Laura Golino de Lovato did not attend the February meeting and was the only abstention)</li> </ul>	00:00:00 – 00:03:00
<b>Staff Update</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raul Preciado Mendez has stepped down from the RSC so that someone who can attend more regularly can be recruited.</li> <li>Applications for a new Commissioner will be accepted until April 5<sup>th</sup>; Council will need to approve new appointment.</li> <li>Raul’s departure leaves a vacancy on the Rules &amp; Bylaws Committee. Deborah Imse motioned to appoint Laura Golino de Lovato; Yoni Kahn-Jochnowitz seconded the motion, and Laura’s appointment was unanimously approved.</li> <li>3 high-need rental services priorities were identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanding landlord training;</li> <li>Expanding culturally-specific tenant assistance; and</li> <li>Exploring meaningful mediation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Letters on the screening criteria/security deposit policies were sent via email; Council hearings on those policies are scheduled for April 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup></li> </ul>	00:03:01 – 00:10:15
<b>Landlord Training Update</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Megan Greenauer from the Bureau of Development Services gave an update on the landlord training RFP process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program began ~1988; was discontinued in 2017 by Commissioner Eudaly with a request to revamp;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	00:10:18 – 00:32:00

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Original goal of the training was to decrease crime; present goal is safe housing training for tenants and landlords.</li> <li>• Yoni Kahn requested that the new training be mandatory, and incorporate a separate component on what constitutes discrimination under the law. He feels the Fair Housing Council of Oregon is best equipped to handle this aspect of the training.</li> <li>• Katrina Holland asked about the timeline of the current RFP; Megan stressed that the timeline will depend on the contractor selected, but the hope is to move as quickly as possible (within the next year).</li> <li>• Jessica Greenlee inquired about funding sources, which are currently ~\$50K/year</li> <li>• Ian Davie and Megan Greenauer stressed that the previous training was canceled because it did not meet racial equity goals</li> <li>• Training was previously optional and free to the public twice a year</li> <li>• Ian Davie asked if the new training would be one session, or if it would be made up of different modules; Megan Greenauer stressed that there should be an online component</li> <li>• In response to a question from Katrina Holland, Megan said that no, BDS had not considered developing their own training and keeping it in-house, since they are not subject matter experts</li> <li>• Margot Black asked why this training lives in BDS, and not in PHB</li> <li>• Megan said she would follow up with Andrés Oswill regarding housing the training in PHB.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Meeting Overview</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ken Pryor, Manufactured Communities Resource Center, Oregon Housing and Community Services (not originally on the agenda), joined the conversation via phone to discuss a program in Marion County that promotes mediation between landlords and tenants in manufactured dwelling parks as a positive alternative to the court system.</li> <li>• Program relies heavily on park visits to educate people on what their rights are.</li> <li>• Jessica Greenlee inquired about the success rates of mediation; Ken replied that results had been overwhelmingly positive, and that he would pass more detailed information on to Andrés.</li> <li>• In response to a question from Margot Black, Ken indicated that landlords were usually the ones driving the mediation process.</li> <li>• Christina Dirks asked what stage disputes are typically at when they reach mediation; Ken replied that there wasn't anything they could do (mediation-wise) until there was an eviction notice.</li> <li>• Yoni Kahn asked Ken if he would recommend mediation for Portland, to which Ken replied yes, saying it forces people to communicate, and can't hurt.</li> </ul>	<p>00:32:00 – 1:05:00</p>

<p><b>Public Testimony</b></p>	<p><b>Ethan Harrison, Portland Tenants United</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethan encouraged the RSC to hold more community listening sessions.</li> <li>• They provided a snapshot of what tenants are experiencing on a day-to-day basis, based on calls received from PTU in February and March of this year. The calls indicated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tenants being exposed to asbestos;</li> <li>○ A Notice of Eviction being served through Facebook that gave the tenant 30 days to vacate (instead of the required 90 days); and</li> <li>○ A No-Cause notice being served with no mention of mandatory renter relocation assistance;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ethan expressed frustration with the pace at which the City is dealing with the housing emergency, and asked where tenants were supposed to go to find out about the law.</li> </ul>	<p>1:05:17 – 1:09:53</p>
<p><b>Services Discussion</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robust input from Commissioners on what the needs are related to landlord training revealed the following key points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Training should be moved to PHB;</li> <li>○ Training should be mandatory;</li> <li>○ There should be support for developing a module format;</li> <li>○ There should be opportunities for participants to take a refresher</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Additional input / questions / concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training should include a Fair Housing component, implicit bias training, an outline of best practices for housing providers, and a clear explanation of the for-cause eviction process;</li> <li>• Training should give housing providers information for a successful business model online and in-person, and should provide resources to both landlords and tenants, so that both parties understand their rights and responsibilities;</li> <li>• Training should be available for both groups (tenants and housing providers) and should include information on implicit unconscious bias and safety issues;</li> <li>• The question was raised of how in-depth the training should go. (Multifamily NW’s training on Chapter 90 alone requires an 8-hour class.) There were concerns of information overload, and the suggestion to narrow the focus and provide targeted modules.</li> <li>• There were questions regarding periodic mandatory renewal;</li> <li>• There were questions about the end goal of the training, and how tenants would be informed of their rights;</li> <li>• Instructors need to be paid and knowledgeable;</li> <li>• Specific instruction on Fair Housing needs to be offered at least every other year;</li> <li>• Certificates of completion should be offered, as well as the opportunity for a continuing education component;</li> </ul>	<p>1:10:00 – 2:25:36</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There could be a waiver for previously completed training; the key is exposure to understanding obligations as a housing provider;</li></ul> <p>Andrés Owill returned to the topic of mediation, providing a high-level overview of Marion County’s mandatory mediation program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Leah Sykes said that mediation was ideal when the landlord is looking for conflict resolution, but pointed out that Portland courts aren’t equipped for the volume the mediation process would add.</li><li>• Mike Nuss envisions mediation services being provided by PHB’s Rental Services Office, also citing concerns about capacity.</li><li>• Katrina Holland would like mediation to be mandatory for certain kinds of notices.</li><li>• Jessica Greenlee stated that an alternative to FED court is helpful and desirable to both parties.</li><li>• Ian Davie said that preserving legal rights is a key component of successful mediation.</li><li>• Margot Black would like to see advocates in PHB’s Rental Services Office to prevent court filings.</li><li>• Yoni said there was systemic underreporting of violations within certain groups, and stressed that people need to be comfortable coming forward.</li><li>• Margot Black would like to see in-house referrals, a tenant protections team, know-your-rights materials, and forms in multiple languages.</li></ul> <p><b>Next meeting: April 16, 2019</b></p> <p>The agenda will include a discussion of the fee structure for rental registration.</p>	
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