



Portland Housing Bureau

Mayor Ted Wheeler • Director Shannon Callahan

Rental Services Commission

Tuesday, April 16, 2019

2:30 – 5:00 pm

Portland Housing Bureau

421 SW 6th Ave., Suite 500

Portland, OR 97204

April 16, 2019

Meeting Summary - approved

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

Members Excused: Leah Sykes

Staff Present: Andrés Oswill, Stacy Jeffries, Matthew Tschabold

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

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

Agenda Topic	Key Topics Covered	Recording Time
Call to Order, Roll Call	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll call was taken. Yoni Kahn-Jochnowitz motioned to approve March 19th meeting summary; Laura Golino de Lovato and Deborah Imse seconded the motion. March 19th meeting summary unanimously approved. 	00:00:00 – 00:04:39
Staff Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RSC letters addressing proposed FAIR (Fair Access in Renting) ordinances have been submitted to Council and are part of the public record. RSC Rules & Bylaws Committee wants to address how RSC deals with public testimony. Deborah Imse: large gap between process and how the bylaws are written; wants those two things to be aligned. The Fair Housing Advocacy Committee (FHAC) meets May 14th to discuss Metro Bond; RSC is welcome to join. This will be an extra meeting; no quorum from RSC is required. Short, high-level summary of the findings of the Quality Rental Housing Work Group will be provided to RSC; Deborah Imse would like to know who is on that Work Group. 	00:04:40 – 00:14:14
Rental Registration Fee Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHB and the Revenue Division are leaning toward a flat fee for rental registration. Christian Bryant: Clarification that the fee amount will be decided by Council; RSC is only weighing in on the structure, not the fee amount. The following points were raised during discussion: 	00:14:17 – 00:44:57

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dividing budget by units to calculate flat fee; recalculating yearly; ○ Considering a fluctuating scale to incentivize housing in certain areas of the city (if no flat fee); ○ Basing fee structure on cost of services (mediation, etc.); ○ Determining when units under construction would be officially counted as units for registration purposes (would require clarification from Revenue); ○ Announcing fees 18 months in advance and doing a bi-annual re-evaluation; ○ Differentiating between affordable and market-rate units as part of fee structure; ○ Moving away from flat rate could result in increased collection costs; ○ Identifying city priorities (density, affordability, reducing vacancy/vacant lots, safe housing); evaluating proposal based on stated priorities; ○ Questions about whether mobile home lots will be included; ○ Questions about whether Revenue will track affordable units. 	
Commission Letters	<p>Andrés Oswill provided an overview of the following letters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to Council on fee structure and three specific services: (1) extending landlord training, (2) expanding culturally-specific tenant assistance, and (3) a voluntary mediation program. • Separate letter to the Director of the Housing Bureau with more detailed feedback on those three services, along with a complete list of other service ideas proposed by Commissioners. • Letters will be finalized and sent after today's (April 16th) meeting so that they can inform their respective conversations. 	00:45:03 – 00:46:15
Public Testimony	<p>Nico Serra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided testimony on the importance of including units' accessibility features in the City's rental registry. • Has been a renter since 2010; started using a wheelchair in 2012. Until last year, they had not lived in a wheelchair-accessible rental, due to (1) limited availability and (2) affordability of those units to people living on a Social Security budget. • Described having to crawl or scoot to access their bedroom; having to leave their power chair outside, where it became infested with rats. • Urged the RSC to encourage data collection on accessibility features and the inclusion of that data in the rental registry. Information could be collected through a simple checklist, or through a 2-page guide that the State has already developed. 	00:46:17 – 00:49:40
Fee Structure Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following points were raised during the continued discussion of a fee structure for rental registration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Carrots" for incentivizing accessibility; 	00:49:45 – 01:23:44

- Starting simple; revisiting down the road, accessing needs for new software to track specific items, etc.;
- Data collection and potential fair housing issues for landlords;
- Strong opinions that landlords should not be documenting race/gender;
- Questions about affordability distinction: recognized through federal, state, and/or local tax programs?
- Agreement that “affordability” is hard to define;
- Suggestion that data be collected on who’s attending landlord training; cross-reference that information with complaints coming in;
- Suggestion that a rating system should be made available to the public;
- Suggestion to concentrate on a few things in the beginning, make sure they’re done well, and expand from there.
- Interest in Minneapolis’ tiered structure for rental registration;
- Opinion that other cities have done the same work, and we would be served well by looking to them to see what worked and what didn’t.

Andrés Oswill asked Commissioners for feedback on letters to Council, Director

- Letters not indicative of how every Commission member feels; rather, they are a summary of the discussion on this topic
- Questions about how many people CAT’s tenant protections team assisted for a cost of \$250K; estimates were 100-150 at SEI; 40-60 at APANO; 80-100 at IRCO.
- This indicates how many people staff were able to serve – not the need for services. Katrina Holland estimates that 20% of the need is being met.
- Margot Black had questions about why the services being provided by CAT’s tenant protections team weren’t being offered in-house through PHB’s Rental Services Office, instead of being farmed out to other non-profits.
- Yoni Kahn-Jochnowitz pointed out that culturally-specific organizations already have the trust of certain communities that won’t feel comfortable contacting a government agency directly.
- Recommendation to add landlord hotline to services to prevent discrimination.

Next meeting: May 21, 2019

- Will focus on the Quality of Rental Housing Workgroup amendments; Beth will provide a high-level overview of recommendations from the report.
- Reminder that Commissioners and members of the public can contact Matthew Tschabold or Kim McCarty with questions about the scope and deliverables of PHB/Rental Services Office contracts.

Recording 2:
00:00:00 –
00:44:40