

**SEATTLE RENTERS' COMMISSION
MINUTES**

Thursday January 11, 2018

6:00 – 8:00 PM

Seattle City Hall, Rm L280 Boards & Commissions

Approved February 5, 2018

Commissioners Present: Jack Barker, Clifford Cawthon, Sherry Collier, Jessie Jacobs, Calvin Jones, David Mooney, ChrisTiana Obey Sumner (phone), Michael Padilla Ocampo, Laurie Rocello Torres

Commissioners Absent: Beverly Aarons, L. Curtis Blankinship, Daniela Lopez, Jessica Westgren

Commission Staff: Danielle Friedman, (DON)

Guests: John Howell – Cedar River Group

Seattle Renter's Commission meeting minutes are not an exact transcript, and represent key points and the basis of discussion.

Minutes Approval

There was a motion to approve the minutes from December 4, 2017, and it was seconded. The Commission voted, and the motion was approved.

Action: Working Group Report Out – Bylaws

- Ms. Collier shared that the proposals by other Commissioners were incorporated and are reflected in the second draft of the bylaws.
- There was a motion to adopt the current draft bylaws and it was seconded; the Commission voted unanimously, and the motion was passes.

Discussion: Draft Rules & Procedures

- Mr. Howell asked Commissioners to make comments about the draft rules and procedures and he is not asking for adoption of this document.
- He noted that there is some overlap between the bylaws and the rules and Rules & Procedures. Rules & Procedures are less formal than the by-laws, meant to provide the Commission norms on how to conduct their work and other additional procedures beyond the bylaws.
- A commissioner commented that it is great overall, and it was nice to see how the vision at the earlier meeting crystallizes.
- Ms. Sumner asked about how to approach when you provide personal feelings about a project you are leading or representing that concerns the Commissions work. Ms. Torres mentioned that if you get such an inquiry; to go ahead and coordinate with the chair or co-chair to prepare some talking points. Mr. Howell commented that a Commissioner can say about what he or she is working on, but when inquired about how the Commission feels about it, it is appropriate to mention that he or she does not have the authority to speak on behalf of the Commission.

- Ms. Daniela Lopez inquired about some inconsistencies on the bylaws (Article V; Section VII and Article VII; Section IV) regarding media communication.
- Mr. Cawthon commented about adding talking points that the Commission need to discuss on the work plan.
- Ms. Torres commented to further clarify and amend the bylaw specifying that the co-chair can speak about the Commission's process, but will need the approval of the full Commission to speak about the decision-making process, opinions and beliefs of the Commission.
- Mr. Cawthon commented about having an ad-hoc committee that is composed of 2 to 3 people that will review a position statement that will be coming out from the Commission. He also added if it is possible to add a dissention section on the position statement.
- Ms. Lopez commented that the role of this Commission is an advocacy group and it is important that any actions that comes from the Commission should be united to be influential in the issues presented to the Commission.
- Mr. Howell suggested that the Commission must decide in the future about how to go about discussing the majority point of view on a hot item issue as well as the dissenting point of view.
- Ms. Torres commented that having a progressive stacking approach in addition to the Robert's Rules of Order is beneficial to the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard and have an equitable procedure.

Public Comments

- There were no public comments.

Work Plan Update

- Mr. Howell noted that he received four work plans as of today. He reminded the Commissioners to submit them if they have not done so. The goal of the work plan is to get ideas on what the Commission would want to talk about as well as reaching out to City departments and City Council members on what is coming in the pipeline.
- Mr. Howell noted that he talked to the executive team of the Parks Department that may want to be involved with the Commission, and to the aide Council Member Kshama Sawant's office. He is scheduling meetings with Council Member Teresa Mosqueda's office, Office of Housing (OH), Seattle Department of Constructions & Inspections (SDCI), Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), and Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD).
- Council member Sawant is interested in talking about sponsoring the Economic Eviction Assistance that will be introduced in February/March 2018. Her office would like to have the Commission engaged in the rent control legislation that will be proposed in Olympia. He noted that if the Commission would like to be involved in these issues, the Commission will need to prioritize these items.
- The Parks Department has several ideas and suggested having the Renters Commission's advise on how to engage the renters in the work they do.

Commissioner Opportunity to Share

- Mr. Calvin Jones attended a public hearing meeting about the plan to build 200 affordable housing units at Fort Lawton in Magnolia. He suggested this Commission make a statement about what should be done with the land. He will send out an email about the draft statement to the Commission about Fort Lawton and will wait for feedback to discuss at the next meeting.
- Mr. Clifford Cawthon invited the Commission to attend a public meeting at the New Holly Community Center on January 30th where the King County Affordable Housing Task Force will discuss how to incentivize and initiate affordable housing across the county. He also shared that Council member Teresa Mosqueda is the chair of the Housing, Health, Energy, and Working Rights committee, and this

committee is important for this Commission to get legislations that is in the pipeline and she would like input from the Commission. The committee meets on the first and third Thursday at 9:30 am.

- Ms. ChrisTiana Obey Sumner invited the Commission to the Housing Committee meeting. The Office of Civil Rights is having a coalition of all commissions across the city that intersect on issues such as rent control, land lord behavior toward tenants, etc. that this Commission can partner with.
- NAME commented that she attended one of the public meetings by Capitol Hill Housing. They are planning a senior housing for the LGBT community, and she felt that Capitol Hill Housing maybe a good ally for the work that the Commission does.

Discussion: Work Plan Brainstorming

- Ms. Jacobs listed the following work plan items for the Commission to discuss: HALA, Lid 1-5 project, and a neighborhood affordability report which is crucial to the work this Commission will be doing in understanding the changing renter's landscape, housing and affordability in the City.
- Mr. Howell noted that there is no specific deadline for the work plan to be submitted. The purpose of the work plan is to collect the information and summarize all the ideas and to get into substance and move forward on the items the Commission would want to discuss and prioritize in the coming months.
- Mr. Cawthon would want to have the opportunity for this Commission to have a community meeting at South Park to discuss the issues the renters are having in their neighborhood. He also added having a central location for this Commission to access a list of landlords and violations. A comment was made that this may result it legal and liability issues. Mr. Cawthon suggested to do further research on this. Another work plan item suggested is to have the Commission form three subcommittees that will discuss affordable housing (definition of affordability), displacement, and discrimination issues.
- A commissioner suggested for the work plan to include other issues that impact renters including transportation, access to food and groceries as well as job opportunities.
- A commissioner suggested for the Commission to consider a stand on how to access excess Sound Transit land to create opportunities for affordable housing.
- A commissioner mentioned that she just joined a board for a Land Trust that does affordable housing at 23rd and Union. She suggested if the Commission would consider presenting their work to them and vice versa.
- A commissioner about the King County Detention Center at 12th and Alder which impacts the children of renters. She suggested the Commission consider the new generation of renters as a scope because it impacts child care, school access, disenfranchisement, etc.

Adjourn

No further business being before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:53 pm