



**City of Seattle
Seattle Renters' Commission**

SEATTLE RENTERS' COMMISSION (SRC) MEETING MINUTES

January 7, 2026

6:00 - 8:00pm

Webex Meeting and Seattle City Hall Room 370

Purpose: The Seattle Renters' Commission (SRC) was established to represent the interest of renters located in Seattle, to advise and make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on public policy matters of importance to renters citywide.

Commissioners in attendance: Kate Rubin, Kasey Burton, Allan Francis, Adora Blue, Sally Kinney, Sam Wolfson, Karen Taylor, Daniel Lugo, Lydia Felty, Angela O'Brien Andrew Ashiofu, Julissa Sanchez

Commissioners not in attendance: Liz Fite, Agni Bhattacharya

City Staff in attendance: Laura Jenkins from Seattle Department of Neighborhoods

Quorum: Yes

Public Comment: No

Transcriber's note: These minutes provide a summary of key points discussed. A full recording is available upon request.

Welcome

Meeting opened at 6:00pm with a land and labor acknowledgment.

Approval of the Agenda (1/7); Approval of the Minutes (11/24 and 12/3)

Agenda approved. 11/24 and 12/3 minutes approved.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Ratio Utility Billing Systems (RUBS)/Junk Fees

Rosie Cullen, with the Seattle Ban RUBS Campaign, provided an overview of the organization and their goals. After discussion, commissioners voted to approve working with the Seattle Ban RUBS campaign to write a letter in support of banning RUBS and in support of the campaign publicly (will be sent to the Seattle Mayor and Seattle City Council).

The commission also voted in favor of allowing any commissioner to work with the Seattle Ban RUBS campaign outside of the above workgroup and any commissioner can provide public comment on this topic as long as it aligns with the Seattle Ban RUBS campaign values.

Discussion and Vote on Seattle Social Housing Developer Board Appointments

The workgroup responsible for interviewing candidates reviewed their process and list of recommendations for the two vacant seats on the Seattle Social Housing Developer Board with the commission. They outlined the experiences of their priority recommendations.

The commission voted in favor of appointing Leah Salerno and Carl Nelson to the two vacant seats on the Seattle Social Housing Developer Board. Kasey Burton abstained from the vote.

- Staff liaison Laura Jenkins will follow up with the candidates and submit appointment paperwork to the City Clerk's Office. She will work to expedite the process as much as possible once she receives the Board roster.

Commissioners and staff liaison thanked the workgroup members for their time and effort to operate an application, application review, interview, and recommendation process in such a short period of time.

The commission discussed voting on priority backups to fill future vacancies but did not vote on this item to allow flexibility based on needs of the Board whenever a vacancy arises.

The commission voted in favor of allowing the appointments workgroup to put together messaging on behalf of the Renters' Commission to be sent to candidates who applied to fill the Seattle Social Housing Developer Board vacancies. Kasey Burton abstained.

Commissioners discussed which seats Leah Salerno and Carl Nelson would fill since the seats are tied to terms that end on different dates. The commission voted in favor of allowing the workgroup to inform Laura which Seattle Social Housing Developer Board vacant seat each candidate will fill. Kasey Burton abstained.

Smart Locks and Tenant Privacy Violation Concerns Conversation and Discussion

A renter emailed the commission a few months ago about smart locks and tenant privacy violation concerns. The commission voted at a previous meeting to respond to the individual and let them know they would be discussing the topic in early 2026.

The commission discussed this topic and voted in favor of establishing a workgroup to do some research and potentially create recommendations around the items mentioned in the community member's email and related to renter surveillance in general.

Unfinished/New Business

- Land and Labor Acknowledgements
 - The current land and labor acknowledgements the commission reads at the top of each meeting were created prior to any current commissioners joining the commission. Laura asked if the commission would like to review the acknowledgements and possibly update them as they see fit.
 - The commission voted in favor of establishing a workgroup to look into the current land and labor acknowledgements and consider/propose a new set of acknowledgements.
- Junk fees

- Kate Rubin provided background on the Stay Housed Stay Healthy Coalition and plans for conversations around junk fees.
 - The commission voted in favor of allowing members of the commission to participate in Stay Housed Stay Healthy Coalition meetings about renters protections including but not limited to banning junk fees. This will help members keep track of which commissioners attend the meeting so there isn't a violation of quorum.
 - Participation in these meetings may look like speaking on topics but any final decisions or statements on behalf of the commission would need to be voted on at a public Seattle Renters' Commission meeting.
- Workgroup updates
 - Laura will update the document that lists the commission's current and previous workgroups including their members, purpose, and status.
 - Bylaws Workgroup
 - The workgroup provided some updates on the progress to create draft changes to the bylaws. The workgroup will meet next on January 12th.
 - Renter Representation on Housing Provider Boards Workgroup
 - This workgroup is on hiatus.
 - A question about community members being part of workgroups came up. The commission will discuss this more at a later date and may include parameters in the bylaws about this topic.
 - There was some discussion about workgroup meetings and whether they are open to the public or not.
- City Budget Update
 - No updates. More information will be shared about the parameters of the commission's 2026 funding at the February meeting.
- Tabling at Events
 - The commission discussed resources and materials available for community tabling events including the [Renting in Seattle handbooks](#)
- Renters' Commission Fact Sheet
 - Allan created draft fact sheet language for the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods communications team to integrate into a flyer format.
 - A commission asked if the Renters' Commission has the ability to post items on the website. Laura confirmed that she can add information to the website and email at the request of the commission with advising from the Department of Neighborhoods communications team.
- Commissioner Expectations and Interests
 - Lydia outlined next steps relation to this topic. The commissioner expectations and interests are basically what all commissioners expect to get out of being on the commission and what they expect to be giving, including specific things members are interested in. Commissioners will keep this in mind once the bylaws are updated when each commissioner joins at least one standing committee.

- Recruitment and appointments
 - Laura provided background information about the anticipated vacancies at the end of February and how previous recruitment processes happened.
 - 4 commissioners are interested in reappointment, 3 vacancies are anticipated
 - The commission voted to establish a recruitment workgroup to review the current Renters' Commission application and provide feedback/suggested added questions ideally before the February 4 Renters' Commission meeting. Andrew Ashiofu abstained.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.

Decisions and Votes made during this meeting:

1. Work with the Seattle Ban RUBS campaign to write a letter in support of banning RUBS and in support of the campaign publicly.
2. Allow any commissioner to work with the Seattle Ban RUBS campaign outside of the above workgroup and any commissioner can provide public comment on this topic as long as it aligns with the Seattle Ban RUBS campaign values.
3. Appoint Leah Salerno and Carl Nelson to the two vacant seats on the Seattle Social Housing Developer Board.
4. Allow the appointments workgroup to put together messaging on behalf of the Renters' Commission to be sent to candidates who applied to fill the Seattle Social Housing Developer Board vacancies.
5. Allow the appointments workgroup to inform Laura which Seattle Social Housing Developer Board vacant seat each candidate will fill.
6. Establish a workgroup to do some research and potentially create recommendations around the items mentioned in the community member's email and related to renter surveillance in general.
7. Establish a workgroup to look into the current land and labor acknowledgements and consider/propose a new set of acknowledgements.
8. Allow members of the commission to participate in Stay Housed Stay Healthy Coalition meetings about renters protections including but not limited to banning junk fees.
9. Establish a recruitment workgroup to review the current Renters' Commission application and provide feedback/suggested added questions ideally before the February 4 Renters' Commission meeting.