



City of Seattle
Seattle Renters' Commission

SEATTLE RENTERS' COMMISSION (SRC) MEETING MINUTES

April 1, 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, Sam Wolfson, Lydia Felty, Andrew Ashiofu, Liz Fite, Agni Bhattacharya, Daniel Lugo, Karen Taylor

Commissioners not in attendance: Angela O'Brien, Adora Blue, Julissa Sanchez

People with pending appointments in attendance: Sasha Wasserstrom, Elisabeth Benham

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 with a roll call of commissioners present and land and labor acknowledgments.

Approval of the Agenda (4/1); Approval of the Minutes (3/4)

4/1 Agenda approved. 3/4 minutes approved.

Public Comment

The commission voted on and approved that people with pending appointments, who joined the meeting, could participate fully in the discussions throughout the meeting. They still do not have voting power until their appointments are approved by a vote by full Seattle City Council.

Elisabeth Benham and Sasha Wasserstrom, whose Renters' Commission appointments are pending, introduced themselves.

Keisha Taylor, a new north Seattle Community Engagement Coordinator with the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, introduced herself. She will eventually be co-staffing the Community Involvement Commission.

CJ Emerson, with Seattle Gay News, introduced himself and provided a brief update about Seattle Gay News' effort to expand their reach and build connections this year. CJ said that anyone on the commission is welcome to email him.

Discussion and vote on remaining sections of Norms, Rules, and Procedures draft updates

Commissioners reviewed and discussed the remaining sections of the proposed Expectations, Meeting Procedures, Values & Practices, and Roles document (updated title from Norms, Rules, and Procedures) meant to guide the commission. This document serves as a complement to the SRC bylaws, laying out in more detail how the commission operates.

The commission voted on and approved the Meeting Procedures, Values & Practices, and Roles sections of the proposed document with amendments discussed during the meeting. The Expectations section was approved at the March 4, 2026 commission meeting. The commission agreed that they plan to create a conflict resolution process to supplement the Values & Practices portion of the document.

Note: The approved [Seattle Renters' Commission Expectations, Meeting Procedures, Values & Practices, and Roles document](#) is now posted on the commission's website.

Renters' Commission Co-chair Elections

After some discussion, the Renters' Commission voted on and approved moving forward with two co-chairs for the commission.

Lydia Felty nominated Kate Rubin to serve as a co-chair for the Seattle Renters' Commission. Kate Rubin nominated Lydia Felty to serve as a co-chair on the commission.

Commissioners voted on and approved Lydia Felty and Kate Rubin as co-chairs of the commission. Lydia and Kate will serve in the co-chairs roles through early 2027.

Workgroup and Committee Membership

Staff liaison Laura Jenkins shared committee membership survey results that indicated which of the four new committees (Partnerships & Relationships, Commission Development, Policy & Advocacy, and Outreach & Engagement) commissioners are interested in serving on. The newly elected co-chairs will use the responses from this survey to develop the membership of each committee. They may reach out to commissioners for additional input.

Four commissioners showed interest in being Vice Chairs of the committees. One commissioner is not interested in being Vice Chair.

Laura shared a tracking document that will show the members of each committee when they are finalized. She also mentioned a potential topic/item for one of the committees to focus on related to the commission's logo.

Unfinished/New Business

- Renters' Commission Budget
 - Liz Fite recapped the commission's 2026 budget and outcomes of an initial brainstorm by the budget workgroup.
 - The big idea that came out of workgroup is that the \$50,000 fund could be allocated equally amongst all of the committees. Everyone would get \$10,000 to empower the committee to brainstorm their own specific spending proposals for

the full commission review. Karen Taylor emphasized that some committees may end up needing more funding than others, so \$10,000 may not be exact for each committee.

- Once committee members are finalized, they will discuss possible budget proposals to bring back to the full commission.
- Appointments
 - Laura Jenkins provided an update on the current status of seven appointments/reappointments to the commission. Councilmember Foster plans to schedule a City Council committee vote on these appointments/reappointments later in April. A full Seattle City Council vote would happen after that initial vote by committee.
 - Recruitment for the Get Engaged position on the commission is open through late April. This person's term would start in September 2026. Agni Bhattacharya provided background on the Get Engaged program and his time serving in the Get Engaged role on the Renters' Commission.
 - Laura mentioned that she will be contacting the Commission Development Committee for assistance with finalizing onboarding materials to provide to new commissioners once they are confirmed. Any onboarding trainings that are available to new commissioners will be offered to the full commission.
- Seattle Social Housing Developer Board
 - Potential Partnership for Listening Session – Possible Vote
 - Kate Rubin provided an update that Seattle Social Housing is working on creating their tenant governance structure. They are considering doing some community listening sessions and potentially want to partner with the Seattle Renters' Commission.
 - Commissioners voted and approved allowing the Renters Commission to host or partner to host listening sessions for the Seattle Social Housing Developer tenant governance and about junk fees starting with a budget of up to \$4,000 per event.
 - Laura Jenkins also mentioned that two positions on the Seattle Social Housing Developer Board appointed by the Renters' Commission have terms expiring in late May. Laura will check in with the current members to see if they are interested in being reappointed. A vote on appointments/reappointments will likely be scheduled on the commission's May meeting agenda.
- The commission voted on and approved that the Outreach & Engagement Committee can determine when they table at different events without a vote of the full commission. The committee would still report back to the full commission on the events they table at.
- Workgroup updates
 - Bylaws
 - Bylaws work is mostly complete. The final piece is to create a conflict navigation document. That will be assigned to the Commission Development Committee.
 - Land and Labor Acknowledgements

- The Land and Labor Acknowledgements Workgroup hopes to have updated draft acknowledgements for the full commission's review at the May meeting.
 - Response to Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Communities
 - Workgroup notes on this topic will be shared with the Policy & Advocacy Committee. There is also discussion on potentially putting out a joint statement with the Human Rights Commission.
 - Smart Locks, Tenant Privacy, and Surveillance Cameras
 - The workgroup is drafting a letter to present proposals members have discussed (to be voted on by the full commission). Who the workgroup will meet with after the letter is finalized is still undecided.
 - Stay Housed Stay Healthy Coalition Meetings
 - Junk fees
 - Potential Partnership for Listening Session – Possible Vote
 - The Mayor's Office mentioned interest in potentially partnering with the Renters' Commission on junk fees listening sessions. See related vote above.
- Commissioner Commitments
 - This will be a new practice at commission meetings to provide space for commissioners to talk about what they plan to work on over the next month. Commissioners mentioned some of their upcoming work related to workgroups and committees.
- Focus for Future Presentation from Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI)
 - Laura encouraged commissioners to let her know if they have any input on specifics for an upcoming SDCI presentation.
- Civic Poet Joining June Renters' Commission Meeting
 - Dujie Tahat, Seattle Civic Poet, will be joining the commission's June meeting and encourages commissioners to come in person.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.

Decisions and Votes made during this meeting

1. The commission voted on and approved that people with pending appointments, who joined the meeting, could participate fully in the discussions (minus the ability to vote) throughout the meeting.
2. The commission voted on and approved the Meeting Procedures, Values & Practices, and Roles sections of the proposed document with amendments discussed during the meeting. The approved [Seattle Renters' Commission Expectations, Meeting Procedures, Values & Practices, and Roles document](#) is now posted on the commission's website.
3. The Renters' Commission voted on and approved moving forward with two co-chairs for the commission.
4. Commissioners voted on and approved Lydia Felty and Kate Rubin as co-chairs of the commission.

5. Commissioners voted and approved allowing the Renters Commission to host or partner to host listening sessions for the Seattle Social Housing Developer tenant governance and about junk fees starting with a budget of up to \$4,000 per event.
6. The commission voted on and approved that the Outreach & Engagement Committee can determine when they table at different events without a vote of the full commission.