

Arlington County Tenant-Landlord Commission

Meeting notes – January 11, 2017

Members Present: Thomas Gibson, Catherine Burke, Michael Campbell, Kendon Krause- Chair, Kristen Clegg, Kirit Mookerjee, Mary Rouleau.

Call to order -Meeting called to order at 7:05 by Chair, Kendon Krause

Public Comment: There was no one for public comment

Approval of meeting notes from December – notes approved with the noted correction to the spelling of “Aleksandr Belinskiy” name.

1. Tenant Assistance Fund Policy (TAF) Review

Commissioners Campbell, Gibson and Butler were on the sub- committee that was formed to review the TAF. Commissioner Butler highlighted the changes that were proposed and the reason for the recommended changes. Overall, three changes are considered significant:

1. Elimination of the 40% cap for tenant contribution towards rent if the existing rent was higher. This requirement was determined to be advantageous particularly for self-employed residents and could result in a windfall, which is not intended for the use of County funds.
2. The duration of TAFs will be changed from the three-year minimum duration to the duration of renovations/construction plus 12 months.
3. Implementation of a \$60.00 per month per TAF recipient in off-site cases, a payment to developers as compensation for administering the TAF.

These changes were recognized as good to reduce the possibility of unintended consequences of a policy that was developed and was always intended to be reviewed every three years. There was consensus among Commission members to the recommended policy changes. Chair, Krause said she would draft a letter indicating Commission support and would circulate to other members for review before forwarding to the Board.

2. Code Enforcement request

The request made to the Code Enforcement Division in November and a subsequent response from Gary Greene was discussed. Staff informed the Commission that a new system OSAPI was being developed. However, there was uncertainty as to how this data collection system would provide the types of reports that the Commission was requesting. Chair, Krause offered to review the data request previously prepared by Commissioner Campbell and would make suggestions on how the data base can be configured to provide this information. Staff will follow up with Code enforcement staff about the request and to attend a meeting to inform/advise the Commission on what data and reports are available.

3. Volunteer opportunities for the Commission

Chair, Krause started a discussion about volunteer opportunities for the Commission. Suggested that having a presence at the Housing Commission meetings maybe useful to the Commission as there maybe items that may overlap both Commissions. Staff will forward the Housing Commission’s monthly agenda to the Chair who will determine whether a representative should attend.

Rotation suggested for members to attend tenant meetings at the Shelton. Staff will forward notice announcement from AHC to Commission members and a member will attend.

County Fair – discussion on presence at County Fair. This is a good opportunity to be visible to the community. Commission will plan on attending and plan presentation...tee shirts, giveaways etc. for the annual fair in August.

Joint facilities Advisory group has been formed. There may be a role for the Commission, if there are decisions related to land purchases for housing, this may be of interest to the Commission.

Communication –the following questions were posed with regard to publicity. Can the Commissions' role and function be made more visible through help from the County's communication staff? Can a flyer be included in County mail-outs to residents?

Chair Krause announced the addition of a section to the Agenda – The Chair's Report- she will use this to give updates and announcements.

Dennis Jaffre, Bravo gave an update on the utility report from the Shelton. There is still no resolve; a third party has been hired to assess the problem, in the interim no utility payments are being taken from residents.

Chair, Krause commented on the need to follow up with members of the public who speak during the public comment period. The Commission should follow up with a response. For example, Aleksandr Belinskiy. Commissioner Mookerjee had advised him to shorten his presentation to focus on what his specific concern is, so that the Commission can be more responsive. Commission Gibson also indicated that he had followed up with VHDA concerning Mr. Belinskiy's concern from the last meeting.

Calls Report – Staff reported that a meeting was held with staff including CPHD's IT staff and Commissioner Gibson attended (by phone) to determine what changes could be made to the calls data base. This could be available by February.

Proposed Land lord seminar – Staff announced the planning of this seminar and requested support from the Commission in marketing the event to be held in May.

Announcements – Commissioner Mookerjee reported on a letter that he had sent to the County Manager Board, requesting allocating funds in the upcoming budget for mediation services. He also advised that the Commission be vigilant about stated Board members' support for Affordable Housing as an important priority for the year.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.