



# Portland Housing Bureau

Mayor Ted Wheeler • Director Shannon Callahan

Rental Services Commission

Portland Housing Bureau

421 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 500

Portland, OR 97204

**October 20, 2020**

Meeting Summary - **DRAFT**

**Members Present:** Christian Bryant, Ian Davies, Laura Golino De Lovato, Christina Goodman, Vivien Lyon, Allen Hines, Mike Nuss, Regina Amodeo, Shannon Olive, Matthew Maline

**Members Excused:** Kristina Holland, Marih Alyn-Claire

**Staff Present:** Matt Tschabold, Niki Gillespie, Tawnya Harris.

Audio for the “*recording time*” column below can be found under “[Meeting Recordings by Year](https://www.portlandoregon.gov/phb/76570)” here: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/phb/76570>

<b>Agenda Topic</b>	<b>Key Topics Covered</b>	<b>Recording Time</b>
<b>Call to Order, Roll Call</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting was called to order and roll call was taken at 2:33 pm.</li> <li>Approval of September meeting summary</li> </ul>	14:35 – 14:40
<b>Staff Update</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Niki Gillespie, covered the Covid-19 moratoriums which was passed and provided protection from April 1<sup>st</sup> until Sept 30<sup>th</sup>. Which prevents terminating rental agreements for non-payment of rent and terminations without cause. It also allows for a 6-month repayment period which has been extended until Dec 31<sup>st</sup>.</li> <li>Discussion on House Bills, county and City of Portland protection for renters.</li> <li>Niki announced a recruitment to fill the Rental Services Office Manager is underway.</li> </ul>	14:40 – 14:49
<b>Fair Housing Testing Audit Report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kristen Blume, Anirban Pal and Alan Lazo with Fair Housing Council of Oregon, presentation and overview: Approximately, \$2 million in contracts that the rental services office. One of those contracts is Fair Housing Council of Oregon here to share a report for last year’s audit testing and findings.</li> <li>Alan Lazo provided an overview of the FHCO non-profit organization, civil rights organization that covers fair housing throughout the state of Oregon. Members of the Fair Housing Advocacy Committee also do work at the state level around public policy. Fair housing law are civil rights laws that protect the rights of certain members of our community that are members of a protected classes which is a common framework for civil rights laws. Protected classes are race, color, national origin,</li> </ul>	14:50 – 15:43

	<p>religion, sex, meaning gender, disability, and families with children under the age of 18, FHCO classes at the state and local levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A big piece being worked on is that reporting around fair housings becomes a part of the federal consolidated plan and the analysis of impediments is intended to provide that research, analyze and identify impediments or barriers to the City and propose strategies and actions that the City and its consortium partners which include Gresham, Multnomah County and Home Forward to complete that planning process and eliminate and mitigate impediments to fair housing in the City of Portland.</li> <li>• Alan shared that testing is intended to mimic the experience of seeking housing, it allows important insight when talking about setting policy or looking at how we make investments.</li> <li>• There was a discussion on testing and findings. Alan shared the forms of testing conducted and the results from the previous year.</li> <li>• Kristen discussed with audit testing's and complaint-based testing, using platforms such as Craigslist or Apartments.com to ask testers to call to see if they are being treated differently based on a protected class, if they were given different information, etc. There are 3 categories used to when evaluating a test. If a test is positive, negative or inconclusive. They have also created a methodology to conduct email tests, data was not provided for the email tests during this presentation.</li> <li>• Discussion and presentation on History of Fair Housing Acts, refusal of Section 8, what constitutes a violation, also discussed the findings that are explicit legal, discrimination and what guides the testing conducted and what different treatments look like and how they might fit into categories related to violations.</li> <li>• Kristen stated they are encouraging support for having substantial equivalence in the State of Oregon, so when there is a finding of discrimination to conduct action or take legal action on the findings allowing for a partnership with the Department of Justice providing legal support.</li> <li>• Questions and Answer period on Section 8 vouchers, income limits, advertisement and the aggregated data similar to the DINL treatment that matches race, how tests are determined and how often training is facilitated.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Rent &amp; Household Assistance Program Update</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jennifer Chang and Leslie Goodlow, provided a presentation and overview of the Housing Assistance Program. City has received \$114 million to support the federal cares act to respond to Covid-19. The housing bureau allocated \$32 million to housing assistance and is implementing partnerships with the County, Home Forward and the Joint Office.</li> <li>• Jennifer provided a high level overview of the Rent Relief program, with a lot of impact in the people of color communities. Upon reviewing the local government resources wanted was a coordinated approach around a single program for rent relief focusing on BIPOC households.</li> </ul>	<p>15:43 – 16:02</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal is to focus on those on the brink of losing housing, and to direct those resources in a way that can support their stability and help maintain and keep them from losing their homes. The effort around planning the program had a community wide collaborative process.</li> <li>• There is about \$6.75 million that is being distributed through new network we're calling our expanded partner network of new culturally specific organizations that have a focus in reaching BIPOC communities. Jennifer provided a list of the expanded partner organizations.</li> <li>• Discussion on the funds allocation process, the application process, the time it will take to receive the funding, if there is a risk of losing funds, and how to obtain a list of the agencies.</li> <li>• Leslie Goodlow, discussed why BIPOC was chosen, purpose of the card assistance program to aid folks that are struggling due to the pandemic. The assistance program and distribution of the cards are focused into 3 components separate components: first is utilizing CBO's Community Based Organizations, that are primarily culturally specific with focus on BIPOC populations; houseless individuals currently working with the Joint office on; and a partnership with United Way.</li> <li>• Leslie also discussed how an individual can apply, requirements and intake process by the CBO's.</li> <li>• They anticipate the first batch of cards will be issued during the latter part of October.</li> <li>• Discussion on Cares Act Fund, number of cards and if they will be available next year with a different intake process.</li> </ul>	
<b>RSO Budget Update</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mike Johnson, provided an overview of the Portland Housing Bureau Budget and process. Shared the first part of the process is doing a check-in with each of the advisory committees and a community outreach event in early December. They are looking to received input from the advisory bodies and public to review the current adopted budget, and provide advice or thoughts on current programs, Rental Service Office, any new ideas on initiatives and other feedback.</li> <li>• Mike shared what staff are doing right now, and managers are beginning to develop their team budgets, also looking at potential new initiatives to adopt and proposals to develop budget discussions.</li> <li>• Mike also shared another part of the process is to report back to the advisory committees after all the input is formulated and what the projected budget will appear like in terms of new initiatives and suggested changes. City's actual budget kickoff takes place in late November. Anticipate having all of the advisory council feedback by the time the public meeting takes place in December. Request to have all feedback in by no later than December 1<sup>st</sup>.</li> </ul>	16:03 – 16:39
<b>Public Testimony</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amber Cook, received a violation notice in the summer accusing her of a few things from; smoking, drinking to vandalism and breaking and entry. She stated her behavior is nothing like this and is unsure why she</li> </ul>	16:39 – 16:42

	<p>received the notice. Also stated 3 other people have received a similar notice. Said she has disputed these claims, as they have no proof, also learned that she cannot do anything to have them rescind the letter or make them rescind the letter and the owners have decided to take her to court. She is looking for some assistance, attorney and some advice. She also stated that the PTU informed her that the RSC would be expanded with actual definitions for harassment and consequences for landlords who perpetrate harassment and she would really like to see this happen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mario Correa, North Portland Tenant Collective. Talked about eviction moratoriums, and that evictions are happening right now even with the moratoriums in place. The Pre-Covid eviction back log is being processed and for cause and landlord reason evictions are still being filed. Also, stated landlords are engaging in a lot of tactics, some legal and some illegal to force tenants to self-evict. Harassment, raising their rents, shutting off utilities and locking tenants out of their homes. All of which he feels is unacceptable. Shared his thoughts on what the City is doing to help renters and how it could be improved.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Discussion</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RSC Discussed, Fair Housing Testing, source of income being a protected class, educating property owners and residents. Fair ordinance in this situation is we have more requirements to meet and less educated owner base and even less education resident base. There is still a lack of inability to enforce anything. Question is how to do we use this information to empower the community to create a solution? Discussion about the intent and then the action steps to take. Meeting Adjourned.</li> </ul>	<p>16:42 – 16:57</p>