



July 18th Meeting Summary

Members Present: Laura Golino de Lovato, Regina Amodeo, Amber Cook, Angelita Morillo, Vivien Lyon, Stephanie Phillips Bridges, Kristina Goodman, Matthew Maline, Ian Davie, Pippa Arend

Staff Present: Justin Barrieault, Ryan Davis, Antoinette Pietka, Molly Luft, Uma Krishnan, Rennin Davidson, Aurelia Moran, John Trinh, Mesha Jones

Others Present: Kathy Robson (*captioner*)

<i>Agenda Topic</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Recording Time</i>
Call to Order, Roll Call	Justin Barrieault (PHB)	0:00:00 – 0:05:00
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Roll was taken, quorum confirmed, and meeting was called to order.		
Staff Updates	Justin Barrieault (PHB)	0:05:00 – 0:09:11
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Rent assistance and the rental market data.Executive committee recruitment memo submitted to PHB leadership and Cmr. Rubio's office, but no further updates received. Christian and Ian still serving interim roles on executive committee until updates.Asked to reach out to Cmr. Rubio's office for updates on exec committee memo.		
Legislative Update	Justin Barrieault (PHB)	0:09:11 – 0:12:43
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Overview of recently passed SB 611 regarding rent increases.Comment regarding Oregon Law Center creating an informational one-pager about this.Comment on Oregon Housing & Community Services sending out an email clarifying the new bill and how to handle previous rent increases.		
Listening Session Review	Justin Barrieault (PHB)	0:12:43 – 0:43:05
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reviewed statistics of the 2023 RSC Listening Session (documents available from e-files). Among the stats: 119 individuals registered for event, 19 provided public testimony (9 were landlord advocates, 9 were tenant advocates), and 17 provided written testimony (13 landlord advocates, 4 tenant advocates).Common themes included barriers experienced by landlords, tenants needing more support, landlord education, need to coordinate efforts between landlords and tenants, and increasing the presence of landlord advocates on the RSC.Comments clarifying/discussing presence of landlord advocates on RSC. Clarified original representation goal and make-up of commission.Comments on the gap between the number of people who signed up to give testimony vs the number who actual spoke or provided written testimony.Comment on owner/renter representation based on measures taken by Pasadena, CA.Comment on the substance of testimonies made during the listening session. Points made regarding legal representation for landlords and for tenants.Comment on need/desire for landlord education regarding housing laws.		

Rental Rehabilitation Program Presentation	Molly Luft (PHB)	0:43:05 – 0:59:00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main elements of program include grants up to \$25,000 per unit for repair and rehabilitation of apartments units where conditions affecting habitation exist, qualification of ~80% of tenants at or below 60% Median Family Income, and 10-year agreement that rents may increase no greater than 3% per year and no higher than the HUD area minimum. • Ehabit and the Housing Bureau engaged 25 different area stakeholders and related orgs for input to the program and outreach support. • Outreach efforts included a website, mailings to various properties and Multifamily NW members, telephone outreach, engaging with Multnomah County Weatherization Team, and participating in SPECTRUM Multifamily NW event. • 92 properties identified for direct outreach, and of those 17 property owners/property managers expressed interest in learning more. Of the 17, only one owner indicated sufficient interest to advance to qualification. Several owners discontinued communication without clear signal of interest or disinterest. • Conclusions and observations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Program rent restraints in a market of rapidly rising rents made the financial benefits of the grants marginal. Current expectation for annual rent growth is 10%. Grants not considered attractive when compared to uncertainty and limitations of the program. ○ Few properties were identified that featured significant habitation related repair needs. Most property owners believed that they normally addressed these issues and instead focused on cosmetic upgrades. ○ 10-year horizon of program was considered too long to commit the property, esp. considering current market conditions. ○ Property owners generally believe that the City and County reporting requirements are onerous and are not enthusiastic about entering into long term contracts. • Challenges included translation services and staff costs. • Recommended next steps include using existing data to establish need for rental rehab program and proposed outcomes, and identifying changes that could be made to the 2017 pilot program model to make a future program successful. • Asked to outline what some of the eligible improvements or projects landlords could apply to. Some included mold and moisture, electrical hazards, and slip, trip & falls. 		
Recommendation Progress and RSC Pace	Laura Golino de Lovato (RSC)	0:59:00 – 1:27:56
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group discussion on challenges of only meeting six times per year and how that affects the commission's ability to achieve its goals. • Creation of subcommittees proposed and discussed. Subcommittee requirements clarified. Discussion on other ideas (e.g., shared Google docs) and how the Public Meeting Laws would govern or prevents those. • Discussed making a plan that entails making recommendations during meetings. • Asked about methods for commissioners to submit data requests to the Housing Bureau. • Vote taken on creating a subcommittee with the topic to be determined. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vote passed with a unanimous (10) vote in favor. • Discussion on the topic of the subcommittee. Ideas included anti-harassment and an enforcement mechanism in the RSO, eviction legal defense program, the rental registry, the Fair Housing Ordinance, property owners' fair housing concerns, rent affordability, feedback from RSC listening session testimonies. 		
Continue 14.6% Increase/Long-Term Rent Assistance Conversation	Laura Golino de Lovato (RSC)	1:32:25 – 2:12:45
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for lists to be written out when they are spoken during discussions. • Discussion on the topic choosing process for a subcommittee. • Recommendation proposed to ask City Council to stay connected with State legislators to determine if the rent increase cap of 10% from SB611 could be made even lower by the City. 		

- Recommendation proposed to ask the City to set aside somewhere in the \$10 million range for long-term rent assistance (longer than six months), then to work with the County to advocate for faster spending on supportive housing services funds being allocated to the long-term rent assistance vouchers.
- Comment on problems faced by owners over the rapid rehousing assistance program.
- Question on what the justification was for setting the mandatory relocation assistance at 10%.
- Question on why money is being poured into rent assistance when rents could be set so they are affordable. If rents matched wages, then rent assistance wouldn't be as necessary. What is an actionable recommendation that could be given to the City regarding this?
- Idea proposed of making a recommendation that if a tenant has to receive rent assistance twice in a 12-month period, that the property owner/landlord be required to meet with a mediator to discuss whether the rents are set at a fair/affordable rate. Group discussion on this topic followed.
- Comment made on how properties should be upkept to match what is charged in rent. Questioned if City could have a property upkeep enforcement.

Public Testimony

Justin Barrieault (PHB)

2:12:45 – 2:40:25

- One member of the public testified about his experience with City enforcement of codes.
- Ten written testimonies from the 2023 RSC Listening Session were read aloud.

Continued Discussion & Wrap-Up

Laura Golino de Lovato (RSC)

2:40:25 – 2:57:55

- Continued discussion on topic for subcommittee.
- Proposed created two subcommittees to cover more topics. One subcommittee to focus on the fair housing ordinance and another to focus on more of a broad topic related to rent prices and rent assistance.
- Discussion on creating an agenda item for the next full meeting to develop a recommendation to send to City Council regarding the 10% rent cap maximum and the rent assistance.
- Vote taken on creating a second subcommittee with the topic to be determined.
 - Vote passed with a unanimous (8) vote in favor.
- Concern raised about the number of people who sign up for giving public testimony who then don't attend the meetings when their testimony would be delivered.

Materials for all meetings will be posted on the Housing Bureau's website:

<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/phb/RSC>

Upcoming Public Meetings: RSC Executive Committee Meeting, Wednesday, August 23rd, 2:00pm – 3:00pm, virtual (Zoom)