



**City of Seattle
Seattle Renters' Commission**

SEATTLE RENTERS' COMMISSION (SRC) MEETING MINUTES

October 1, 2025

6:30 - 8:30pm

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, Lydia Felty, Allan Francis, Adora Blue, Liz Fite, Sally Kinney, Sam Wolfson, Karen Taylor, Andrew Ashiofu, Julissa Sanchez, Daniel Lugo, Angela O'Brien

Commissioners not in attendance: Agni Bhattacharya

City Staff in attendance: Cara Vallier and Isaac Horwith from Seattle Mayor's Office, Quinn Majeski and Maureen Roat from the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections, 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 6:30pm with a land and labor acknowledgment.

Announcements

- Meetings with Councilmembers
 - A few commissioners met with Councilmember Saka on September 24th. Commissioners who attended shared a recap. There was an ask for continued partnership that Laura will help coordinate.
 - The commission discussed who may be interested in attending a virtual meeting with Councilmember Juarez on Microsoft Teams. Interested commissioners will work with Laura on figuring out who the final four commissioners will be to attend.
- Meeting Attendance Tracker
 - Laura created a tracker at the request of the co-chairs to help with accountability for meeting attendance.
- Welcome Agni Bhattacharya – Get Engaged Commissioner
 - Commission now has 14 appointed commissioners. A quorum is now 8 commissioners.

Approval of the Agenda (10/1); Approval of the Minutes (8/27, 8/28, 9/3)

Agenda approved. 8/27, 8/28, 9/3 minutes approved.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE) Proposal Update and Possible Action

[Seattle Renters' Commission Letter Opposing Proposed Multifamily Tax Exemption \(MFTE\) Reauthorization Plan](#) sent on September 2 is currently linked on the Renters' Commission website.

Update from Retreat Planning Workgroup and Budget

The retreat planning group finalized the date of November 2nd for the commission's annual retreat.

- They booked the Capitol Hill Library meeting room for the retreat which will be in-person only.
- The planning group is still figuring out a facilitator and food.

The commission confirmed that spending for the retreat can begin (as voted on in a previous meeting).

Commissioner Kate Rubin proposed that any leftover funds from the commission's \$5,000 budget not spent on the retreat be spent to print additional translated copies of the Renting in Seattle handbook. Exact languages to be discussed at a later date. The commission voted on and approved this proposal.

Update from Renter Representation on Housing Provider Boards Workgroup

Commissioner Allan Francis provided background on this workgroup and mentioned that the group would be meeting on October 6th.

Commissioner Andrew Ashiofu asked what the pushback would be against such policies. The workgroup will discuss this question.

City Budget Discussion and Possible Action

Commissioners discussed the proposed 2026 City of Seattle budget. The commission voted on and approved forming a work group that will write a letter and send it to Council by October 9th related to the commission's recommended priorities on the Mayor's 2026 proposed budget including a raiding of Jumpstart, fully funding tenant services, fully funding rental assistance, decreasing funding from things like mass surveillance that harm renters, as well as addressing the tenant work group and the \$50,000 allotted to it.

Staff Liaison Laura Jenkins confirmed who she sends Renters' Commission statements and letters to once they are finalized: City Council and/or the Mayor depending on the Commission's preference and to the Seattle Renters' Commission email distribution list (2,000+ people). She also posts each statement online on the [commission's website](#).

- Commissioners asked if Laura would be able to send statements directly to media and other people the commission requests. Laura will check with the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Communications Team and follow up with the commission.

The commission talked about further discussing the City Budget after Council-proposed amendments are published.

Note: The letter was completed by the workgroup on October 9th. The [letter](#) is available online on the Renters' Commission website.

Mayor's Office Presentation and Discussion: Tenant Fee Legislation

Cara Vallier and Isaac Horwith from Seattle Mayor's Office and Quinn Majeski and Maureen Roat from the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) provided background to the commission about City of Seattle renter-related programs and possible tenant fee legislation.

The Mayor's Office asked SDCI to develop legislation addressing emergent issues in the rental housing space. Based on recurring complaints in Property Owner and Tenant Assistance, they identified the following issues:

- Holding Deposit Returns
 - Proposed Ordinance: Require landlords return a holding deposit within 3 business days if their policy provides for such returns, or if they failed to provide the policy in writing to the renter.
- Repair Request Fees
 - Proposed Ordinance: Prohibit landlords from charging a fee for a request to remedy a defective condition, including but not limited to repair or maintenance requests.
- Lease Renewal Fees
 - Proposed Ordinance: Prohibit landlords from charging a fee associated with renewal of a lease agreement.

The presenters discussed next steps including:

- Fees and Holding Deposit Legislation
 - Introduction of legislation
 - Council hearing and deliberation
 - Goal to have it heard before the end of the year.
- Broader Rental Fees and Transparency Engagement
 - The Mayor's Office would like to talk with the Renters' Commission in early 2026 about other possible rental fee legislation.

The commission appreciated the presentation. Commissioners were interested in why legislation around these specific fees was prioritized and why there wasn't broader legislation that mentions all fees instead of a couple specific ones.

The commission will discuss this topic at their November meeting to potentially vote on a formal position.

Unfinished/New Business

- Upcoming Seattle Renters' Commission Meetings
 - Laura will follow up via email on this topic since it is for awareness only.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.

Decisions and Votes made during this meeting:

1. The commission voted on and approved any leftover funds from the commission's \$5,000 budget not spent on the retreat be spent to print additional translated copies of the Renting in Seattle handbook. Exact languages to be discussed at a later date.

2. The commission voted on and approved forming a work group that will write a letter and send it to Council by October 9th related to the commission's recommended priorities on the Mayor's 2026 proposed budget.