

**SEATTLE RENTERS' COMMISSION (SRC)
MINUTES**

August 7, 2024

6:15-7:45 PM

Webex, online

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 Dan Godfrey, Julissa Sanchez, Kate Rubin, and Lydia Felty

Commissioners not in attendance: Atif Osami

Meeting Guests: Montana Houston

Staff: Laura Jenkins & Francesca Murnan

Quorum: Yes

Public Comment: None

(Transcriber's Note: Seattle Renters' Commission meeting minutes are not an exact transcript and represent key points and the basis of discussion. The recording of the minutes is available upon request.)

Welcome and Introductions

Montana Houston introduced herself as the incoming Get Engaged Commissioner, highlighting her background in law and tenant advocacy. Staff explained the unique appointment process for Get Engaged candidates, noting that Montana's appointment is expected to be finalized in September.

Land and Labor Acknowledgement

Kate Rubin led the land and labor acknowledgment.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Approval of the agenda for August 7, 2024, and the minutes from May 15, 2024, and June 5, 2024.

City Council Updates

The Commission sent a letter to the City Council expressing concerns over the delay in appointing new commissioners, particularly highlighting the lack of Black representation. This delay has hindered the Commission's effectiveness and raised concerns about the performative nature of the Commission's role.

Ongoing advocacy efforts include a pending meeting request with Council Member Moore, which has yet to receive a response. The Commission discussed the challenges of advocacy, particularly with the upcoming budget season.

Legislative and Policy Issues

On Seattle's Minimum Wage Ordinance, the Commission acknowledged that Councilmember Hollingsworth recently withdrew legislation related to tipping and minimum wage. The Commission decided not to take action on this issue at the present time but recognized that it might need to be revisited.

Stay Out of Drug Areas (SODA) and Stay Out of Areas or Prostitution Areas (SOAP)

Regarding the Stay Out of Drug Areas (SODA) and Stay Out of Prostitution Areas (SOPA) Ordinances, the Commission discussed the potential negative impact on renters, particularly in limiting access to affordable housing and disproportionately affecting marginalized communities. The Commission agreed to draft a letter opposing these ordinances, with Lydia Felty and Julissa Sanchez leading the effort.

Seattle Renters' Rights Protection Letter

The Commission anticipated that Council Member Moore would introduce legislation to roll back key renter protections, including First-in-Time and school-year eviction moratoriums. To proactively counter this, the Commission voted to prepare a letter opposing any such legislation, with Kate Rubin taking the lead on drafting.

On the topic of Rent Stabilization, the Commission considered supporting statewide efforts, noting ongoing negotiations about rent cap percentages. The Commission decided to revisit this issue at a future meeting, pending more clarity on the proposed legislation.

Social Media and Public Engagement

The Commission discussed the management and content strategy for SRC's social media accounts, emphasizing the importance of aligning posts with the Commission's stated positions and actions. Dan Godfrey and Kate Rubin will collaborate on this strategy to ensure that social media content accurately reflects the Commission's stance on various issues.

Bylaws Review and Meeting Time Amendment

The Commission discussed the need to amend the bylaws to change the regular meeting time from 6:15 PM to 6:30 PM to accommodate member schedules. The process for amending bylaws was reviewed, with the understanding that any changes require a seven-day notice

before voting. The Commission plans to propose the meeting time change at the next meeting and will also consider a broader review of the bylaws to remove unnecessary constraints.

Initiative Support

The Commission discussed the importance of supporting Initiative 137, which addresses funding for social housing. The Commission expressed dissatisfaction with the City Council's failure to move the initiative forward to the ballot and voted to draft a letter in support of Initiative 137. The letter will also criticize the City Council for blocking the initiative's progress. Kate Rubin and Dan Godfrey will collaborate on this letter.

Next Steps and Adjournment

Members will continue working on drafted letters and the social media strategy. The next meeting may include a vote on the proposed bylaws amendments and further discussion on pending legislative issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 PM.