



City of Portland Remote Rental Housing Advisory Committee

October 25, 2021

1. ZOOM MEETING INSTRUCTIONS

- a. The Rental Housing Advisory Committee will hold a remote meeting on Monday, October 25, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. This meeting will take place remotely using Zoom. Virtual meetings are allowed using emergency legislation approved by LD 2167; 1 M.R.S. §403B, that authorizes cities and towns to conduct meetings online.

Allow your computer to install the free Zoom app to get the best meeting experience. If you are not able to attend live, a recording will be uploaded to portlandmaine.gov/livestream the next day.

Join Zoom Meeting by clicking on the link below

Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device:

Please click this URL to join. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82774576181>

For public comment you will need to use the “raise your hand” feature. To “raise your hand” via the telephone, please hit *9. You will be unmuted by the host when it is time for public comment.

Webinar Meeting ID:

Webinar ID: 827 7457 6181

One tap mobile:

US: +16465588656,,82774576181# US (New York)

Telephone:

US: + 1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 558 8656

2. Review and Approval of the Minutes of the September 27, 2021 meeting

- a. Draft Minutes from September 27, 2021 meeting

Review, revise, and potentially approve recommendations to Housing & Economic

3. Development Committee on City's Tenant & Landlord Resources page:

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/2604/Tenant-Landlord-Resources>.

- a. Updates to City's "Tenant & Landlord Resources" Page

4. Discussion of recommendation to Housing & Economic Development Committee regarding publication of Rent Board and Housing Safely decisions
5. Discussion of issues surrounding Short Term Rentals, listings, and enforcement
6. Update on Rent Board activities and ordinance
7. Public Comment
 - a. Members of the public will be given an opportunity to address the Committee. Any person wishing to address the Committee shall give their name and address, and, if applicable, organization represented, and restrict comments to three (3) minutes.

NOTE: The Rental Housing Advisory Committee is not a grievance committee or complaint forum for landlord-tenant issues or dispute resolution. The duties of the Committee are: (1) to provide the Housing and Economic Development Committee with recommendations or proposals for improvements, modifications, or changes regarding landlord and tenant policy issues; and (2) to identify educational opportunities, seminars, and materials that would be useful to landlords and tenants.

8. Other Business

**Rental Housing Advisory Committee
Minutes of Special Remote Meeting held on September 27, 2021**

Committee attendance: Meredith Cook, Nora Graves, Wendy Harmon, Jeremy Lock, Chris Marot, Crow Norlander, and Regan Sweeney.

Staff attendance: Mary Davis and Victoria Volent

Item 1: Review and Approval of the Minutes of the August 30, 2021 Meeting

On motion made by Regan Sweeney, seconded by Meredith Cook, the Committee voted (6-0) to accept the minutes as published. (Crow Norlander abstained)

Item 2: Nomination and Election of Rental Housing Advisory Committee co-chairs

Chris Marot nominated Meredith Cook as tenant co-chair. Meredith Cook accepted the nomination. The Committee voted (6-0) (Meredith Cook abstained) to elect Meredith Cook as co-chair. Wendy Harmon nominated Regan Sweeney as landlord co-chair. Regan Sweeney accepted the nomination. The Committee voted (6-0) (Regan Sweeney abstained) to elect Regan Sweeney as co-chair.

Item 3: Review and suggest updates to City of Portland's page on Tenant & Landlord

Resources: <https://www.portlandmaine.gov/2604/Tenant-Landlord-Resources>

The Committee discussed updating the City of Portland's page on tenant and landlord resources. The Committee noted the information was outdated and should be updated. Though the Committee agreed it is not up to them to come up with the information to be updated, but members indicated they would like to see updates to information such as; landlord-tenant relief funds; eviction moratorium; activity of the Rent Board; rent control; and Maine State Housing Rent Relief. The Committee will submit comments to the co-chairs for a memo of requested changes to be discussed at the next meeting of the RHAC. The Committee did note the webpage under discussion is maintained by the Health and Human Services Department.

Item 4: Update on Rent Board activities and ordinance

The Committee held a discussion regarding the portion of the Act to Protect Tenants concerning the 90-day notice to tenants from landlords; ambiguity concerning rent increases for 2021; the Rent Board providing information to the public to aid in understanding their decisions as they interpretation the Ordinance; communication between the Rent Board and the RHAC; and renovation standards. Mary Davis joined the meeting in the midst of this discussion. The Committee noted they are a source of knowledge that may benefit the Rent Board if a formal communication channel was established by the City Council. They also

suggested establishing a symbiotic relationship to assist with disseminating information to the public. Any action undertaken by the RHAC would comply with their charge as outlined in the Ordinance.

Item 5: Public Comment

The meeting was opened to public comment, seeing no member of the public present, public comment was concluded.

Item 6: Other Business

The Committee agree to hold their next meeting on Monday, October 25, 2021

Motion by Meredith Cook to adjourn. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously (7-0).

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Victoria Volent

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Rental Housing Advisory Committee

TO: Housing and Economic Development Committee

DATE: October 25, 2021

SUBJECT: Updates to City's "Tenant & Landlord Resources" Page

INTRODUCTION:

In discussing the various challenges both tenants and landlords are facing during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and the resources available to help, the Rental Housing Advisory Committee (RHAC) recently identified an area where updates to the information the City is providing are needed.

When Portland tenants and landlords look for information about the changes to landlord/tenant laws as a result of the pandemic (eviction moratorium, etc.), or to see what resources are available, the City's "Tenant & Landlord Resources" page (<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/2604/Tenant-Landlord-Resources>) is usually the first (and sometimes only) place people look. It's the first result in Google searches for related terms, and since it's a City site, people automatically assume the information provided there is accurate and up to date. In this instance, much of the information on that page is out of date, and does not include new information or resources recently made available.

The page, as currently configured, also contains information about obtaining unemployment benefits, federal stimulus payments, and student loan relief. While that information, if current, is certainly helpful, it is not specifically relevant to rental housing.

RECOMMENDATION:

The RHAC recommends that the HEDC review information currently listed on the page and update the page with current information about the status of the various legal protections and resources available to tenants and landlords in Portland.

To the extent that the page as currently configured is published by the City's Health and Human Services Department, the RHAC recommends that the HEDC consider publishing its own page listing current information specific to rental housing in Portland.