

**MINUTES OF THE  
RENTERS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
MARCH 15, 2022**

**1. Ryan Moen called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.**

**Committee Members:** Yuka Kurokawa (Co-Chair)  
Ryan Moen (Co-Chair)  
Alieda Blandford  
Carrie Chapple  
Heather Kirkham  
Leslie Robinson  
Stefanie Hardman  
Ramya G N Reddy  
Trevor Premack  
Neha Cradle

**Regrets:** Councillor Potts  
Azmina Janmohamed

**Councillors Present:** Councillor Andrew

**Staff Present:** Andrea Hudson – Assistant Director, Community Planning  
Rory Stever – Staff Liaison, Tenant Assistance Planner  
Andrew Cusack – Senior Planner, Housing Policy  
Ayla Conklin – Planning Secretary

**2. Approval of Agenda**

**Motion:**

It was moved by Ryan Moen, seconded by Yuka Kurokawa, that the March 15, 2022 Agenda be approved.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**3. Adoption of Meeting Minutes**

February 15, 2022, Meeting Minutes

**Motion:**

It was moved by Ryan Moen, seconded by Alieda Blandford, that the February 15, 2022 Meeting Minutes be adopted as presented.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**4. Rental Property Standards of Maintenance (RPSOM) Bylaw**

Andrea Hudson, Assistant Director of Community Planning, presented information on the City's RPSOM Bylaw and implementation plan.

The committee discussed:

- The lack of City enforcement was brought forward at the end of the RPSOM discussion with RAC.
- There is still a lack of information on the City website on RPSOM enforcement and who tenants can contact for support. Recommendations have been made to start engagement on

- this bylaw which still has not been acted on.
- Concern that bylaws are enforced by officers for homeowners and business owners and not offered for tenants and people facing homelessness.
  - Tenants are responsible for paying fees and providing evidence to the Rental Tenancy Branch (RTB) to get an order put in place.
  - Are there other bylaws that the City does not enforce?
    - Staff present are not fully versed on Bylaw Services enforcement cases. Communications must go forward before fully assessing the bylaw. The initial goal was to report back to Council in July 2022, and this timeline will be extended for adequate engagement to take place first, then monitoring.
  - Tenants may not go through the court and RTB. How will the City monitor how tenants are effectively seeking enforcement and if they are successful?
    - Staff will be meeting with the province to discuss. Staff are open to suggestions for specific topics to be discussed with the province. The Tenant Assistance Planner is tracking inquiries.
  - Is the lack of bylaw capacity due to funding or staffing? How could we build capacity for enforcement?
    - The bylaw department lacks the resources to enforce this bylaw. The City is being thoughtful about the risks, objectives and ensuring resources are not duplicated.
  - Although there is the risk of tenant eviction, there is a higher risk of tenants living in terrible conditions.
    - Councillor Andrew: The bylaw department simply does not have the capacity to take on the enforcement of this bylaw. When this motion comes to Council, Council will confirm with the Manager of Bylaw Services what the constraints are. How can we best communicate the bylaw? There is a suggestion for this bylaw to be communicated to the tenant when there is a change or when they enter into a new tenancy agreement.
  - Is the renter resources web page live? How can someone access this information currently?
    - The RPSOM Bylaw and communications are on the City's website, but web page improvements to provide more extensive information and make it easier to find are still a work in progress. The web page will be live alongside the distribution of the Connect newsletter.
  - How does a motion get to Council?
    - If the motion is related to a policy initiative, the motion will be brought as part of the staff report to Council. If a motion is related to other matters, it can be brought forward by Councillor liaisons and by the tri-annual report.
  - Availability, high rent and quality of units. Are these the three points the committee is trying to address?
    - The work plan for 2022 is not to re-open the RPSOM bylaw. It is only to communicate and monitor this bylaw. There are other initiatives that encourage more supply.
  - The committee recently passed a motion related to the enforcement of the RPSOM bylaw in the February 2022 meeting.

**Motion:**

It was moved by Leslie Robinson, seconded by Ryan Moen,

WHEREAS the *Rental Housing Standard of Maintenance Bylaw* was enacted by the City of Victoria to take effect in January 2021;

And WHEREAS the City's bylaw enforcement department does not offer inspection nor enforcement services to tenants who are living in homes where bylaws are breached;

And WHEREAS tenants who wish to have this bylaw enforced are required to collect their own evidence and initiate a hearing by applying and paying a fee to the Residential Tenancy Branch;

And WHEREAS City of Victoria bylaws are the City's bylaw enforcement department which traditionally provides inspection and enforcement;

And WHEREAS homeowners with complaints about bylaw breaches are able to initiate inspections and enforcement services;

And WHEREAS disproportionate numbers of populations protected by the BC Human Rights legislation are tenants;

BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Victoria Renters' Advisory Committee agrees that the lack of bylaw enforcement services available to tenants that are otherwise available to homeowners is a human rights violation.

RAC ~~direct~~ request Council to address the *Rental Property Standards of Maintenance Bylaw* capacities in order to access municipal enforcement of the bylaw.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

The committee discussed:

- Suggestion for a new motion to clarify how and when this motion is going to Council.
- Preference to not go through the tri-annual report.
  - Staff will not be bringing any policies forward in the next while and this is how staff would bring a motion to Council. Councillor liaisons can bring motions forward as emerging issues. Council does review motions through the tri-annual report.

**Motion:**

It was moved by Leslie Robinson, seconded by Carrie Chapple, that the Renters' Advisory Committee ask that this motion be forwarded to Council as soon as possible.

**Discussion**

- Is it intentional to not specify who is bringing this motion to Council?
- It's still unclear how it goes to Council.
  - Staff further clarified how motions can go to Council.
- How did the AVICC motions go to Council?
  - Councillor Potts brought those motions forward as part of the other AVICC motions that Council was making.

**Friendly Amendment**

It was moved by Stefanie Hardman, seconded Leslie Robinson, to amend to include:

"brought forward by a Council liaison to Council as soon as possible".

**Amended Motion:**

It was moved by Leslie Robinson, seconded by Carrie Chapple, that the Renters' Advisory Committee ask that this motion be brought forward by a Council liaison to Council as soon as possible.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**5. Renters' Advisory Committee Work Plan 2022**

The committee to consider the 2022 work plan.

The committee discussed:

- Will there be more definitive timelines?
  - Many projects have multi-year timelines. When a project is ready to be brought to RAC, staff can provide more specific details.
- Suggestion to add a column that notes specific timelines to the work plan.
  - Many of the projects are concurrent and staff strategize the timing of when it comes to RAC. If staff want to bring a report to Council, RAC will be consulted ahead of time.
- Does the work plan include the *Rental Business Licensing Bylaw (RBLB)*?
  - The work plan item to monitor the *Residential Tenancy Act* amendments is related to this, per Council direction.
- Will there be an opportunity for RAC to further discuss RBLB?
  - If there is consultation required by RAC, it will be brought forward. RAC members can suggest agenda items ahead of time.
- Is there the ability to bring things forward as emerging issues?
  - Under Objective 4 there are emerging issues.
- Is there a review period during the year to regroup and add recommendations? Or is this the final opportunity?
  - Once the work plan is passed and ratified, you cannot add additional items. Other items can only come up as emerging issues.

**Motion:**

It was moved by Trevor Premack, seconded by Carrie Chapple that the Renters' Advisory Committee Work Plan for 2022 be approved.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **6. Parking Lot**

The committee discussed:

- An official apology was made to Councillor Andrew.
- Proposal to discuss with Councillor Andrew how motions make their way to Council.
  - Councillor Andrew: The previous motion relating to the enforcement of the RPSOM bylaw has not reached the Committee of the Whole yet.
    - Staff further clarified the three different ways that motions are forwarded to Council: Through staff within a report, the tri-annual report or by the Councillor liaisons as emerging issues.
  - Councillor Andrew: Suggestion for RAC to include details on specifically how they want a motion to go to Council so it is clear to the liaisons and staff what actions are required. The motion must be brought to Legislative Services on Monday to be added to the agenda for the Thursday meeting. It requires a seconder, likely Councillor Potts.
  - Councillor Andrew: Suggestion to amend the motion to remove "direct". Advisory committees do not direct Council and must follow the Terms of Reference.
    - Terms of Reference state "advice and recommendation".
- Suggestion to re-call the motion and amend the wording.

**Motion:**

It was moved by Ryan Moen, to recall the vote of the first motion in this meeting and replace "direct" with "request".

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **7. Adjournment**

### **Motion:**

It was moved by Ryan Moen, seconded by Yuka Kurokawa, that the Renters' Advisory Committee meeting of March 15, 2022 be adjourned at 8:07 P.M.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**