



**MINUTES
OXFORD HOUSING ADVISORY COMMISSION
COLLEGE@ELM
FIRST FLOOR LOBBY
20 SOUTH ELM STREET**

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2025 AT 5:00 PM

Approval of Agenda

Date: Thursday, February 6, 2025

Location: College@Elm, First Floor Lobby

Time of Meeting: 5:00 pm start time

Members Present: Steve Schnable, Jason Bracken, Jock Pitts, Amber Franklin, Nicola Rodrigues, Cathryn Loucas, Anne Bailey, Shana Rosenberg

Staff Liaison: Jessica Greene

Approval of Agenda

First: Cathryn Loucas

Second: Jock Pitts

Approved

Approval of Minutes

1. Minutes from the December 10th, 2024, Meeting

Approval of Minutes

First: Amber Franklin

Second: Cathryn Loucas

Approved

Old Business

New Business

1. Review of Councilor Raghu's proposed housing legislation and staff's report on research conducted and their recommendations.

- **Review Proposed Legislation**

Staff presented research on proposed housing legislation from Councilor Raghu.

Summary of staff recommendation:

New legislation is not needed. Instead, apply more resources to use the current code.

1. Increase code enforcement staff.
2. Consider grant funding for property improvements
3. Consider increasing eviction diversion funding and providing grants for a housing stability program. This program would allow local nonprofits to hire a social worker to assist with housing. Helping tenants understand rights and assist with submitting code or legal complaints. Provide a legal fund to assist low-income residents with legal services.

Commission members and the public had robust discussions and asked many questions.

The following questions were asked for staff follow-up:

1. Can we require every lease to include tenant rights and landlord responsibilities, including who to call for service/assistance for property.
2. Do we visit every PVA apartment every 2 years with rental inspection or only a portion?
3. Can we require a certain amount of time for on-site property manager with decision-making capabilities? For example apartment complexes with X units just have onsite management x days a week.
4. What can we do if the property manager is absent when rent is due but rent is considered late?
5. What can we do if property management denies a person their lease or receipt for rent paid?
6. What can we do in the case of unlawful entry?
7. How do “set outs” work. Who is allowed to remove materials from an apartment after eviction?
8. If relations are suspected, what should the tenant do?
9. How many code enforcement calls did we have in 2024 and where? (Non-rental inspections)

Other comments:

1. Can we examine mobile home enforcement?
2. Can the police social service liaison do more direct case management?
3. Can tenants unionize?

Jason Bracken ideas:

Jason shared ideas in the meeting, they include the following:

Mandated tenants' bill of rights, that is mandated to be included with every lease, and every lease renewal.

- That states, in summary, without legalese, all the major rights of tenants, as well as resources for eviction diversion and legal resources that can specifically address eviction, how to make official complaints to different bodies (potentially with anonymous options, when in fear of reprisal), etc.. These resources would need to be updated yearly.

An anonymous option can include complaints to the city, automatically shared with council and staff.

Additional to a yearly education program, such as door knockers and a social media campaign, restating those tenant rights and resources. We should also have a dedicated City of Oxford page that permanently lists the Tenant's Bill of Rights and Resources, and is easily found on search engines.

Education can be provided during code enforcement efforts, such as inspections.

This should work in conjunction with an Eviction Diversion program, and increased code enforcement.

Discussed next steps regarding proposed legislation. Jessica will research answers to these question and report back. Goal is to identify where current code/legislation will work and where there are gaps.

Other Business:

Staff provided updates on Habitat Housing Development and RFP for Hester Rd. Asked the commission for 3 reviewers of the RFP. Anne, Jason and Steve volunteered. This will be in early March.

The March meeting maybe a review of RFP responses and/or interviews with finalists.

Steve brought up city goals for HAC. These will need to be addressed a future meeting.

2. Discussion on the location of future meetings.

Commission decided to continue using College@Elm for meeting location.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn 6:29 PM

First: Jason Bracken

Second: Shana Rosenberg

Approved

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 6, 5:00 PM College@Elm