



# City of Ann Arbor

## Formal Minutes

### Renters Commission

301 E. Huron St.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
<http://a2gov.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

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Wednesday, May 7, 2025

4:30 PM

Electronic Meeting

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**SPECIAL MEETING Video & Audio Accessible: To listen or speak at public comment, call 877-853-5247 enter Meeting ID: 935-8080-1941 or to watch or speak at public comment join the meeting at: [a2gov.org/RentersCommissionMeeting](http://a2gov.org/RentersCommissionMeeting)**

**1 CALL TO ORDER**

*Chair Ratcliff called the meeting to order at 4:33 PM*

**2 ROLL CALL**

*Chair Ratcliff called the roll.*

**Present:** 8 - Jordan Else, Rosanita Ratcliff, Dandan Chen, Julia Goode, Kimberly Pitts, Barbara Wood, Hanna Larcinese, and Chris Boddy

**Absent:** 5 - Robert Droppleman, Travis Radina, Cynthia Harrison, Michelle Liao, and Faith Redwine-Otieno

**3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Moved by Goode, seconded by Larcinese, approved unanimously as presented.**

**4 PUBLIC COMMENT - THREE MINUTES PER SPEAKER**

*No speakers.*

**5 UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**5-A [25-0607](#) Green Rental Housing Ordinance Related Resolution**

**Attachments:** Green Rental Ordinance Resolution3-19-2025.pdf, Green Rental Ordinance Resolution 4-17-2025 2.pdf

**Moved by Larcinese, seconded by Boddy to approve the Resolution**

**Supporting a Phased Implementation of the Green Rental Ordinance with Targeted Assistance**

**Whereas, the City of Ann Arbor is committed to achieving carbon neutrality and improving housing conditions through policies such as the Green Rental Ordinance, which aims to enhance energy efficiency and sustainability in rental properties;**

**Whereas, the Ann Arbor Renters Commission strongly supports the goals of the Green Rental Ordinance, recognizing that energy-efficient housing contributes to both environmental sustainability and lower utility costs for tenants;**

**Whereas, successful implementation of the ordinance requires robust education and outreach efforts to ensure that landlords, particularly those who own smaller properties or older housing stock, have access to the necessary resources and guidance to comply without imposing additional financial burdens on tenants;**

**Whereas, the current economic conditions, including rising costs of living and financial constraints on both tenants and landlords, create challenges in implementing required upgrades without the risk of rent increases that would disproportionately impact tenants already struggling with affordability;**

**Whereas, the Renters Commission has received feedback from landlords of older properties indicating that their buildings may be unable to meet the requirements outlined in the ordinance's checklists or achieve HERS ratings without undergoing substantial and costly rehabilitation;**

**Whereas, the current level of routine code compliance enforcement conducted by Building Rental and Inspection Services is not sufficient to the satisfaction of the Renters Commission, particularly given ongoing concerns about tenant safety, habitability, and the consistency of inspections across rental properties;**

**Whereas, without increased staffing and resources, the additional responsibilities required to implement, monitor, and enforce the provisions of the Green Rental ordinance may further strain the division's capacity, potentially reducing the frequency and quality of core code compliance inspections over time;**

**Whereas, older housing stock and units rented at below-market rates often serve as critical sources of naturally occurring affordable housing, and premature enforcement of new requirements without financial assistance may risk displacement, disinvestment, or loss of affordability in these units;**

**Whereas, municipalities at the local, state, and federal levels have historically fallen short in providing sufficient and sustained financial assistance programs to support the rehabilitation of older housing stock, especially for small landlords and deeply affordable units;**

**Whereas, many of Ann Arbor's rental properties built before 1980 lack modern energy efficiency upgrades, and landlords of these properties (especially those renting below market rates) may face significant financial challenges in meeting the ordinance's requirements without assistance;**

**Whereas, on April 7, 2025, the Ann Arbor City Council approved the first reading of an ordinance to amend Chapter 34 (Gas Franchise), which proposes replacing it with a new Heating Franchise and adopting an accompanying Climate Action Agreement, under which DTE would provide \$500,000 in grants to support landlords in making energy efficiency improvements;**

**Whereas, rental properties priced at or below 80% of the city's fair market rent often house tenants who are most vulnerable to rent increases, and ensuring that these units are prioritized for financial assistance is essential to maintaining affordability while advancing sustainability goals;**

**Whereas, a phased approach that prioritizes education, outreach, and voluntary compliance in the first year would allow landlords to better understand the requirements, identify financial assistance opportunities, and develop plans to meet the ordinance's goals without unnecessary hardship;**

**Whereas, the long-term success of the Green Rental Ordinance depends on the City's commitment to providing sustained financial assistance targeted specifically toward rental housing built before 1980 and units priced at or below 80% of the city's fair market rent,**

ensuring that necessary upgrades can be made without displacing tenants or raising rents;

Resolved, that for the purposes of this resolution, “qualifying units” or “qualifying properties” shall refer exclusively to rental units built in 1980 or earlier and currently rented at or below 80% of the City’s fair market rent;

Resolved, that the Renters Commission requests that the City prioritize the development and promotion of financial resources, grants, and incentives exclusively for landlords of qualifying properties, to mitigate the risk that energy efficiency improvements will result in rent increases or the loss of affordable housing stock;

Resolved, the Renters Commission requests that qualifying properties shall receive a full 12-month voluntary compliance and education period beginning on the effective date of the ordinance, during which no enforcement of the ordinance shall occur, and that during this period, tenants of qualifying properties shall also be included in education and outreach efforts to ensure they understand their rights, protections, and the goals of the ordinance;

Resolved, that the Renters Commission requests that enforcement of the ordinance for qualifying properties remain suspended beyond the 12-month voluntary compliance period unless and until the City has established a financial assistance program that is fully operational open to applications, and ready to distribute funds to support compliance with the Green Rental Ordinance;

Resolved, that the Ann Arbor Renters Commission endorses the Green Rental Ordinance contingent upon the implementation of the conditions outlined in this resolution, including the creation of a fully operational financial assistance program, the guarantee of a one-year voluntary compliance and education period exclusively for qualifying properties, and the continued suspension of enforcement beyond that period if financial assistance has not yet been provided, to mitigate the risk that compliance costs will result in rent increases or the displacement of tenants;

Resolved, that the Renters Commission further requests that City Council conduct a comprehensive review one year after the financial assistance program is fully implemented and enforcement begins, which shall include:

- Feedback from the Office of Sustainability and Innovations (OSI), and from Building, Rental, and Inspection Services;
- Data on enforcement actions taken during and after the grace period;
- Data on financial assistance program implementation, including the number of applications received, amount of funds distributed, approval timelines, and any gaps between available funding and qualifying need;
- The operational impact of the ordinance on rental inspection staff and timelines;
- A detailed report on compliance waivers issued, including the criteria used to evaluate those waivers;

Resolved, that the Ann Arbor Renters Commission remains committed to both carbon neutrality and housing affordability and will continue to work collaboratively to ensure that policies supporting sustainability are implemented in ways that are equitable, effective, and considerate of economic realities

The vote was as follows with the chair declaring the motion approved:

**Yeas:** 6 - Landlord Advocate Droppleman, Ratcliff, Chen, Pitts, Larcinese, and Boddy

**Nays:** 0

**Absent:** 5 - Councilmember Radina, Councilmember Harrison, Liao, Wood, and HHSAB Rep Redwine-Otieno

**Recused:** 1 - Goode

**5-B**      **25-0610**      Budget/Rental Housing Related Resolution

**Attachments:**      Resolution to Expand Rental Inspection Staff 3-20-2025.pdf, Resolution to Expand Rental Inspection Staff 4-17-2025.pdf, Resolution to Expand Rental Inspection Staff 5-6-2025.pdf

**Moved by Chen, seconded by Wood to approve the Resolution to Expand Rental Inspection Staff**

**Whereas, The City of Ann Arbor is responsible for ensuring safe, habitable, and code-compliant rental housing through its rental inspection program;**

**Whereas, The number of rental units in Ann Arbor will continue increase significantly due to ongoing and future housing developments;**

**Whereas, The current number of rental inspectors has not kept pace with the increase in rental properties, leading to longer inspection timelines and potential gaps in enforcement;**

**Whereas, The Renters Commission has identified longstanding concerns about understaffing in the rental inspection program, which may compromise the City's ability to effectively enforce housing standards and protect tenant safety;**

**Whereas, Additional rental inspectors would help reduce inspection delays, improve compliance with housing codes, and ensure landlords maintain safe and habitable housing for tenants;**

**Whereas, A well-resourced rental inspection program aligns with the City's goals for housing equity, tenant protections, and proactive enforcement of rental standards;**

**Resolved, the Ann Arbor Renters Commission requests the City Council include funding for at least 3 additional rental inspectors in the upcoming FY26 budget to strengthen rental inspection capacity and maintain high standards for rental housing quality in Ann Arbor.**

**Resolved, That the City Council is encouraged to assess the long-term staffing needs of the rental inspection program and utilize strategies to ensure adequate enforcement resources as the rental market continues to expand.**

**The vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion passed.**

**Yeas:** 7 - Ratcliff, Chen, Goode, Pitts, Wood, Larcinese, and Boddy

**Nays:** 0

**Absent:** 5 - Landlord Advocate Droppleman, Councilmember Radina, Councilmember Harrison, Liao, and HHSAB Rep Redwine-Otieno

## **6 NEW BUSINESS**

**6-A**      [25-0952](#)      Rising Hope Resolution

**Attachments:**      Rising Hope Resolution.pdf

**Moved by Wood, seconded by Larcinese to approve the Resolution in Support of Full FY26 Funding for the Rising Hope Program**

**WHEREAS, housing stability is a fundamental component of community well-being, public health, and economic mobility; and**

**WHEREAS, the Rising Hope Program has, over the past two years, supported over 171 households in Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County through critical eviction prevention and housing stabilization services, including trauma-informed case management, peer support, rent and utility shut-off assistance, move-in support, and more; and**

**WHEREAS, nearly 70% of Rising Hope’s services have focused on eviction prevention, with the remainder supporting new move-ins—providing essential intervention in a local housing crisis that disproportionately impacts individuals with prior justice involvement; and**

**WHEREAS, Rising Hope provides uniquely flexible, rapid-response assistance that complements existing programs and fills critical service gaps, helping ensure that vulnerable households receive timely support to maintain housing stability; and**

**WHEREAS, last year the City of Ann Arbor allocated \$500,000 from its Marijuana Excise Tax Rebate to fund this essential program for one year (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025); and**

**WHEREAS, the City Administrator’s proposed FY26 budget identifies approximately \$600,000 in unallocated Marijuana Excise Tax rebate funding for City Council’s discretion; and**

**WHEREAS, Rising Hope has not yet been included in the proposed FY26 budget, and failure to secure ongoing support would disrupt or end services to households currently relying on this program for housing stability and eviction prevention; and**

**WHEREAS, investing the full \$616,000 in FY26 would allow a**

continuation of services furthering the City's equity goals and commitment to public safety, reentry support, and community resilience;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Ann Arbor Renters Commission formally urges City Council to allocate the full \$616,000 in Marijuana Excise Tax Rebate funds to the Rising Hope Program for Fiscal Year 2026 (beginning July 1, 2025); and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Commission recognizes Rising Hope as an evidence-based, community-driven model of housing stabilization and urges the City to integrate this program into Ann Arbor's long-term affordable housing and homelessness prevention strategy

The vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion approved

**Yeas:** 7 - Ratcliff, Chen, Goode, Pitts, Liao, Larcinese, and Boddy

**Nays:** 0

**Absent:** 5 - Landlord Advocate Droppleman, Councilmember Radina, Councilmember Harrison, Wood, and HHSAB Rep Redwine-Otieno

**6-B TEC Committee Discussion**

**7 ADJOURNMENT**

Commission public meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month. These meetings provide opportunities for the public to address the Commission. All persons are encouraged to participate in public meetings. Citizens requiring translation or sign language services or other reasonable accommodations may contact the City Clerk's office at 734.794.6140; via e-mail to: [cityclerk@a2gov.org](mailto:cityclerk@a2gov.org); or by written request addressed and mailed to: City Clerk's Office, 301 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104. Requests need to be received at least two (2) business days in advance of the meeting.

Renters Commission meeting agendas and packets are available from the Legislative Information Center on the City Clerk's page of the City's website (<http://a2gov.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx> ). These meetings are typically broadcast on Ann Arbor Community Television Network Comcast 16 / AT&T 99 live at 7:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM