Commission Approval Date: 12-18-26
City Council Approval Date: 3-2-26

BYLAWS OF THE CITY OF ANN ARBOR RENTERS COMMISSION

Article 1
NAME

The name of this Commission is the Ann Arbor Renters Commission ("Commission").

Article 2
ENABLING AUTHORITY

The Commission was established by resolution R-21-362 of the Ann Arbor City Council on September 20, 2021.

Article 3
PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, AND DUTIES

3.1 The purpose of the Commission is to advise the City Council and City Administrator on matters affecting renters in the City. The Commission shall:

a. Monitor and evaluate trends in rental housing in the City using available statistical data and broad-based input from the Ann Arbor community, including renters and property owners.

b. Propose, evaluate, recommend, and respond to policies, practices, or laws that affect renters in the City, including, but not limited to: housing affordability, transportation access, land use, public health and safety, and economic development.

c. Monitor the enforcement and effectiveness of City legislation related to renters and renter protections, and provide periodic advice on priorities and strategies for strengthening enforcement and effectiveness of City renter protections.

d. Solicit input from stakeholders, such as landlords, renters, homeowners, realtors, and community groups, regarding proposed policies, practices, laws, recommendations, and other matters under consideration by the Commission.

e. Communicate regularly and work with other City boards and commissions and staff when considering or proposing to consider matters affecting renters that overlap with the purposes of those boards and commissions.

f. Consult with the City Attorney's Office as early as possible regarding proposed legislation and other legal matters within the Commission's purpose.

g. Consult with the City's Rental Housing Services Unit, through the City Administrator's designated Commission staff liaison, when considering or proposing to consider matters related to rental housing inspections, code enforcement, or other matters within the purview of the City's Rental Housing Services Unit.

h. Upon creation of the Commission, and annually thereafter, work with the City Administrator or their designated staff liaison to create and submit to City Council a work plan outlining and prioritizing matters the Commission expects to consider in the upcoming year; and at the end of each work plan year, submit an annual report to City Council detailing the matters considered by the Commission in the previous year;

3.2 The Commission is an advisory body limited to performing the tasks enumerated in its enabling resolution, these bylaws, and otherwise delegated to it by City Council.

Article 4
MEMBERSHIP

4.1 The Commission has 11 voting members appointed by the Mayor with the approval of City Council, appointed to 2-year terms, staggered so that approximately one half of the terms expire each year. The voting membership of the Commission should:

a. Be representative of various renter perspectives in the City, such as student, youth, low-income, LGBTQ, immigrant, persons with criminal records, persons receiving rental subsidies, cooperative or group housing, tenant advocacy groups, persons who have experienced homelessness, or historically underrepresented groups; and

b. Include one attorney with experience representing renters or advocating for renters' interests.

4.2 The Commission has the following nonvoting members and liaisons:

a. Two nonvoting members who are representatives from the City Council, appointed by the City Council.

b. No more than two nonvoting members who are representative of different landlord perspectives in the City, such as individual, corporate, student-focused, single family or duplex, or large apartment landlords.

c. The Ann Arbor Housing and Human Services Advisory Board shall designate a nonvoting liaison (and may designate alternates) to attend and participate in Commission meetings.

d. The University of Michigan may designate a nonvoting liaison (and may designate alternates) from Student Legal Services or another representative with knowledge of student housing issues to attend and participate in Commission meetings.

4.2 All members of the Commission serve without compensation.

4.3 Consistent with City Charter § 12.2, each member of the Commission shall be a registered elector of the City of Ann Arbor at the time of appointment, unless this requirement is waived by a resolution concurred in by at least 7 members of City Council.

4.4 Consistent with City Code § 1:171, the Mayor shall notify City Council of the expiration of a member's term at least 30 days prior and shall present to City Council all proposed reappointments no later than 60 days after the expiration of the term.

4.5 Consistent with City Code § 1:171, any vacancy on the Commission occurring in the middle of a term shall be filled for the remainder of the term in the same manner as for full-term appointments.

4.6 Members are expected to attend regularly scheduled meetings and to notify the Chair and staff liaison in advance if they expect to be tardy or absent. If a member misses more than 3 regularly scheduled meetings in a 12 month period, the Chair shall notify the Mayor and may recommend removal of the member.

4.7 Consistent with City Code § 1:171, a member of the Commission may be removed for cause by the Mayor with the approval of City Council.

4.8 Consistent with City Code § 1:171, when one or more City Council members are appointed as members of or liaisons to a board or commission, the board or commission shall designate a group consisting of the City Council members and one or more voting members of the board or commission to review applications for membership on the board or commission. This group may submit recommendations for appointments to the Mayor, or to City Council for appointments made by City Council, from among the applications reviewed.

Article 5
ETHICS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

5.1 A member of the Commission shall abstain from discussion or voting on any matter in which that member has a real or apparent conflict of interest. Decisions regarding conflicts of interest shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with reasonable application of the principles provided in this article. A conflict of interest shall at a minimum include, but is not necessarily limited to:

a. Discussing, voting on, or otherwise acting on a matter in which a member or any person in the member’s immediate family, the member’s partner, or an entity with whom the member has family or business ties has a direct financial or beneficial interest.

b. Discussing, voting on, or otherwise acting on a matter when the member's employee or employer is an applicant or agent for an applicant, or has a direct financial or beneficial interest in the outcome.

5.2 A member of the Commission shall not solicit or accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from persons or entities in a position to benefit from a decision of the Commission.

5.3 A member of the Commission shall not obtain, for the member or for any person with whom the member has business or family ties, any financial or beneficial interest in a matter which may be affected by a decision of the Commission. This restriction shall apply during the member's tenure on the Commission and for 1 year thereafter.

5.4 A member of the Commission shall disclose the general nature of all potential conflicts of interest, real or apparent, and, except when it violates a confidence, shall disclose all pertinent facts relating to the potential conflict. These disclosures shall be made prior to discussion and voting when possible and shall be recorded in the minutes of the proceedings. If the member believes that the potential conflict warrants recusal, the member may abstain from discussion and voting on the matter.

5.5 A member who cannot vote due to a conflict of interest shall, during deliberation and voting on the matter by the Commission, leave the meeting or the area where the members sit until action on the matter is concluded.

5.6 When a question has arisen as to whether a member is ineligible to participate in discussion or vote on a matter because of a conflict of interest, the Commission may determine that the member is ineligible due to a conflict of interest by a vote of a majority of the other members present. Upon such a determination, the ineligible member shall not participate in discussion or vote on the matter.

5.7 Members of the Commission shall complete an annual disclosure of organization affiliations that could conceivably present a conflict of interest and shall update this disclosure in writing at any time during the year when such affiliations change. The disclosure shall be provided to the staff liaison.

5.8 Members shall not act, hold themselves out, or permit themselves to be perceived as official representatives or spokespersons for the Commission without authorization from the Commission or the Chair. When communicating for personal purposes on matters that may relate to the Commission's business, members shall clearly indicate that their statements are made in a personal capacity and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission. Whenever a member is asked to speak on behalf of the Commission, the member shall seek permission of the Commission or the Chair in advance.

5.9 [DELETED]

5.10 Members of the Commission shall communicate with City staff through the Commission's designated staff liaison unless otherwise authorized by the City administration, and shall follow applicable City administrative policies.

5.11 Members shall conduct themselves in a fair, courteous, and understanding manner at all times in the discharge of their duties, and shall avoid exchanges or actions based upon personal differences. Members shall be respectful of other members, the public, petitioners, and City staff.

Article 6
OFFICERS

6.1 The officers of the Commission shall be a Chair and Vice-Chair. The officers shall be elected each year from among the voting members of the Commission. The officers shall be elected for a 1-year term. The term of each officer shall run from July 1 to June 30 of the following year. No member shall serve more than 3 consecutive full terms in the same office. Elections of officers shall be held no later than the month before the officer's term expires.

6.2 The Chair shall preside at all meetings and shall decide points of order and procedure, subject to the provisions of these bylaws. The Chair shall ensure that all meetings are conducted in an efficient and respectful manner. The Chair shall have the privilege of discussing and voting on all matters before the Commission. The Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence.

6.3 When an office becomes vacant before the expiration of the current term (whether by resignation, removal, incapacity, or other circumstance), the vacancy shall be filled by election in the same manner as for full-term officers and the new officer shall serve the remainder of the term. The replacement officer shall be elected at the next regularly scheduled meeting or as soon as practicable. The Vice-Chair may be elected as replacement Chair, in which case a replacement Vice-Chair shall be elected at the same time.

6.4 No member may hold more than 1 office at the same time.

Article 7
MEETINGS

7.1 The Commission shall schedule regular meetings. Consistent with the Open Meetings Act MCL § 15.265, the entire schedule of regular meetings for the upcoming year shall be posted within 10 days after the first meeting of the year. A change in the schedule of regular meetings must be approved by the Commission and notice of the change shall be posted within 3 days after the meeting at which the change is approved.

7.2 Special meetings may be called by the Chair or by the written concurrence of 3 voting members. Public notice of the special meeting shall be posted at least 18 hours prior to the scheduled starting time. Except when the special meeting is a rescheduled regular meeting, the purpose of the special meeting should be stated in the public notice and the Commission should not conduct any business beyond the purpose stated in the public notice, except by unanimous consent of the voting members present.

7.3 The Commission may hold nonvoting working meetings to carry on the work of the Commission. Public notice of the working meeting shall be posted at least 18 hours prior to the scheduled starting time.

7.4 Public notice of regularly scheduled committee meetings shall be posted in the same manner as the schedule of regular Commission meetings. Public notice of nonregularly scheduled or special committee meetings shall be posted at least 18 hours prior to the scheduled starting time.

7.5 Public notice of all meetings shall be posted at City Hall or at any location designated by the City Administrator or City Council.

7.6 When practicable, meetings shall be scheduled to allow the staff liaison to provide notice to all members of the Commission at least 48 hours in advance.

7.7 The Chair may cancel a meeting if there is no business on the agenda or if it is clear that a quorum will not be present. The Chair may cancel a meeting due to weather, emergency, or other circumstances that may substantially limit the ability of members of the Commission or the public to attend. The Chair shall give notice of cancellation to members of the Commission and the staff liaison as soon as possible and at least 2 hours prior to the scheduled meeting time, when practicable. The staff liaison shall post public notice of the cancellation as soon as practicable. Cancelled regular meetings may be rescheduled in the same manner as special meetings.

7.8 The presence of 5 voting members shall constitute a quorum. The concurring vote of a majority of all members present and eligible to vote is required for the Commission to act. The right to vote is limited to members of the Commission actually present at the time the vote is taken at a lawfully called meeting. A member who is not eligible to vote on a matter because of a conflict of interest shall not be counted in establishing a quorum for that matter.

7.9 Voting shall be by voice or a show of hands. The Chair shall declare the outcome of each vote. If the vote is not unanimous, any voting member may request a roll call vote, which shall be taken and recorded in the minutes.

7.10 The Commission shall keep minutes of all regular and special meetings in accordance with City administrative policies and direction.

7.11 All meetings of the Commission shall be open to the public and conducted in accordance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act (PA 267 of 1976), as amended. Closed sessions may be called for purposes listed in the Open Meetings Act. Consistent with City Council Resolution R-642-11-91, all meetings of the Commission's committees and subcommittees shall be open to the public in the spirit of section 3 of the Open Meetings Act.

7.12 Public comment shall be allowed at all meetings. An individual may speak for up to 3 minutes on any item open for public comment. The Chair may extend an individual's speaking time in the Chair's discretion. Public comment on non-agenda items may be limited in the Chair's discretion.

Article 8
AGENDA AND ORDER OF BUSINESS

8.1 An agenda for each meeting of the Commission shall be developed by the Chair and the staff liaison in consultation with members of the Commission as needed. To the extent practicable, agendas, resolutions, and materials for all regular meetings shall be made

available to the public and members of the Commission at least 48 hours before the meeting's scheduled starting time.

8.2 The order of business at regular meetings shall generally be as follows. When setting the agenda, the order of business may be adjusted by the Chair or staff liaison. The order of business may also be suspended or modified by a majority vote of those members present.

(1) Call to Order
(2) Roll Call
(3) Approval of Agenda
(4) Approval of Minutes
(5) Public Comment
(6) Regular Business
(7) Communications
(8) Adjournment

Article 9
COMMITTEES AND WORK GROUPS

9.1 The Commission may create standing or special committees to assist in the work of the Commission. Standing committees may, but need not be, described in the bylaws. Each committee shall include at least 1 member of the Commission and may include nonmembers in the Commission's discretion. Members of committees shall be appointed by the Chair and approved by the Commission. Prior to creating a committee, the Commission shall consult with City staff to review the necessity of the committee and whether adequate resources exist to support the committee.

9.2 Each committee should have clearly defined tasks, preferably in writing, and, except for standing committees, should have a specific timeframe in which to perform their delegated tasks. Committees shall be limited to performing the tasks delegated to them by the Commission and shall report to the Commission. Committees are subject to applicable City administrative policies and procedures.

9.3 The Commission may also create work groups or designate certain members to perform research or develop recommendations on specific topics without creating a committee.

Article 10
PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

10.1 The rules contained in the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall guide the Commission; however, parliamentary procedure shall be flexible and may be adjusted in the Chair's discretion to best serve the needs of the Commission. Nevertheless, all parliamentary procedures must be consistent with these bylaws and applicable City policies.

10.2 The Commission shall not adopt or follow any operating rules, regulations, guidelines, or procedures not expressly prescribed by these bylaws.

Article 11
AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

11.1 Amendments to these bylaws may be approved at any regular meeting by a two-thirds vote of all voting members currently serving on the Commission. Proposed amendments must have been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting to be considered. Proposed amendments must be submitted to the Office of the City Attorney for review prior to adoption by the Commission. After adoption by the Commission, the bylaws are not effective until approved by City Council.

11.2 These bylaws shall be reviewed annually by the Commission for possible amendment.

Article 12
MISCELLANEOUS

12.1 The City Administrator shall designate a staff member to be the liaison between the Commission and City staff. The City Administrator has final discretion regarding staffing.

12.2 The Ann Arbor City Attorney's Office shall be the legal consultant to the Commission.