

Minutes of the Fairfax County Tenant-Landlord Commission

January 13, 2022

7:30 p.m.

Video Meeting

Chairperson Chamberlain
presiding

Attendance:

Commissioners: Chamberlain, Geier-Smith,
Islam, Otonde, Park

Absent:

Commissioners: Nair

Staff Attending:

Michael S. Liberman, Director
Cable and Consumer Services
Rebecca L. Makely, Director
Consumer Services Division
Susan C. Jones, Branch Chief
Consumer Affairs Branch
Melissa Pickham, Consumer Specialist
Consumer Affairs Branch

The electronic meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m. by Chairperson Chamberlain.

Quorum, Location, and Audibility of Members' Voices

Chairperson Chamberlain conducted a Roll Call to verify that a quorum of members was participating; and that each member's voice was clear, audible, and at an appropriate volume for all of the other members; and the location from which member was participating. The roll call was as follows:

Chairperson Chamberlain, Alexandria, VA
Commissioner Geier-Smith, Fairfax, VA
Commissioner Islam, New York, New York
Commissioner Otonde, Centreville, VA
Commissioner Park, Fairfax, VA

Chairperson Chamberlain passed the virtual gavel to Commissioner Geier-Smith. A motion was made by Chairperson Chamberlain that each member's voice was adequately heard by each member of the Tenant-Landlord Commission (Commission). This motion was seconded by Commissioner Islam. This motion passed unanimously, 5-0-0.

Need for an Electronic Meeting

A motion was made by Chairperson Chamberlain that the State of Emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic made it unsafe for the Commission to physically assemble and unsafe for

the public to physically attend any such meeting, and that as such, FOIA's usual procedures, which require the physical assembly of the Commission and the physical presence of the public, could not be implemented safely or practically. Chairperson Chamberlain further moved that the Commission conduct the meeting electronically through a dedicated video and audio-conferencing line, and that the public access the meeting by calling 571-429-5982 and entering access code 938 503 380# This motion was seconded by Commissioner Islam. This motion passed unanimously, 5-0-0.

Need to Dispense with FOIA's Usual Procedures to Assure Continuity in Government/Continue Operations

A motion was made by Chairperson Chamberlain that all of the matters addressed on the agenda addressed the Emergency itself, were necessary for continuity in Fairfax County government, and/or were statutorily required or necessary to continue operations and the discharge of the Commission's lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Islam. This motion passed unanimously, 5-0-0.

Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Geier-Smith to accept the minutes from December 9, 2021, to be approved by Commissioners who attended the meeting. Commissioner Islam seconded the motion. The minutes of the December 9, 2021, meeting were approved with a vote of 4-0-1.

Report of the Director

Director Liberman thanked the Commission for their continued commitment and staff for their support of the Tenant-Landlord Commission over the years.

Director Liberman announced that Rebecca L. Makely, will be the temporary Acting Director for the Department of Cable and Consumer Services effective, Saturday, January 15, 2022.

Director Makely introduced Consumer Specialist Melissa Pickham. Director Makely discussed current work being done on recruitment efforts to fill vacancies in Consumer Affairs.

Report of the Chairperson

Chairperson Chamberlain stated elections will held at the February 10, 2022, meeting.

Chairperson Chamberlain restated his concern about a landlord who lives outside of Fairfax that does not have a registered agent listed.

Chairperson Chamberlain asked Commissioners about their current experiences with late payments.

Chairperson Chamberlain inquired about history and trends of tenant-landlord arbitrations and staff responded.

Chairperson Chamberlain asked for data on property-managed complaints versus private landlord complaints. Staff to research and provide.

Commission Matters

Commissioner Geier-Smith had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Park had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Islam had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Ontonde had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Discussion on upcoming legislation session and possible tenant-landlord bill changes.

Old Business

Susan Jones, Branch Manager, Consumer Affairs reported that the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (VDHCD) is working on the requested translations.

New Business

- 1. 2022 Items of Interest.** Chairperson Chamberlain asked Commissioners to bring topics of interest to the February meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Geier-Smith and seconded by Commissioner Islam to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.