



DATE: February 21, 2017

CATEGORY: Public Hearing

DEPT.: Unfinished Business

TITLE: **Community Stabilization and Fair Rent Act Rental Housing Committee Candidate Interview Process**

RECOMMENDATION

Review supplemental written questions and conduct second round of interviews with selected applicants for the Rental Housing Committee, and provide direction on preferred candidates and/or next steps.

BACKGROUND

The Community Stabilization and Fair Rent Act ("CSFRA"), was adopted by voters on November 8, 2016 to regulate rent increases and to provide just-cause eviction provisions. The effective date of the CSFRA is currently suspended due to a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO). While the TRO remains in effect, the City Council cannot appoint the Rental Housing Committee (RHC). However, City staff has continued preparing to implement the CSFRA, including the process to interview candidates for the RHC. The City received 22 applications, and after withdrawal of 5 candidates, the City Council initiated the interview process for 17 applicants on January 24, 2017. The City Council then decided 10 candidates should move forward in the selection process. On February 8, 2017, three written questions were provided to these 10 candidates, with instructions to submit the responses by 5:00 p.m. on February 13, 2017. Eight of the candidates provided responses by time set forth in the instructions. One candidate submitted responses later that day. The remaining candidate has withdrawn from the selection process. Pursuant to direction of the City Council, additional parts of the candidates' applications have been made available to the public and are attached to this report.

ANALYSIS

The purpose of this evening's meeting is to conduct a second round of interviews for selected candidates and to review their responses to the supplemental written questions. While no appointments will be made at this meeting, the City Council can

provide further direction to staff regarding their preferred candidates or other aspects of the selection process. If/when the CSFRA is effective, the Council will appoint five members and an alternate to the RHC.

Written Questions Provided

On February 8, 2017, three written questions were provided to the 10 candidates selected by the City Council.

The three written questions were:

1. Please describe your experience/expertise in financial management and assessing financial information or similar types of data as required in the CSFRA.
2. Do you see any parts of the CSFRA that require clarification or leave room for interpretation or discretion on the part of the RHC? If so, can you give an example and how would you address issue(s) that fall into that category and arrive at a determination?
3. How would you educate yourself on areas of housing law and rent stabilization you are not familiar with?

Interview of the RHC Candidates

A second round of interviews for the nine RHC candidates is scheduled for February 21, 2017, starting at 6:00 p.m. in the Plaza Conference Room at City Hall. The interviews will be audio recorded.

- Each candidate will be interviewed separately. The order of candidates was randomly drawn by the City Clerk.
- Each session is scheduled for 15 minutes.
- The City Councilmembers will further evaluate the candidates on their relevant experience, understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the RHC, and ability to implement the CSFRA.
- The Council may wish to consider asking follow-up questions based on the candidates' written answers to the supplemental questions, and/or discuss the

following sample questions, or any others they have in mind, and pick two to four for use during the interviews. Here are some samples:

- What is your general opinion on the provisions of the CSFRA?
- Please describe a section in the CSFRA that requires analytical or policymaking skills. What particular skills or experiences make you qualified to work reasonable and informed decisions that pertain to those sections?
- What do you think makes an effective committee and what is your experience with group decision making?
- Do you feel that it is possible for the Committee to make fair and balanced decisions regardless of the Committee composition? Why or why not?
- Are there any “Best Practices” that should be considered in implementing the rent stabilization program?

The appointment of members of the RHC cannot take place while the TRO is in effect; however, the City Council may provide direction to staff to return to the City Council at a public meeting if/when the CSFRA is in effect to complete the appointment process. Therefore, staff suggests the City Council consider developing a list of six final candidates (five members of the RHC and one alternate). In the event the CSFRA goes into effect, these final six candidates could then quickly be appointed at a public meeting

The following is the schedule for the February 21 interviews:

6:00 p.m. Orientation

6:30 p.m. Start Interviews

6:30 p.m.	Steven Hochstadt
6:45 p.m.	Gene Lee
7:00 p.m.	Joan MacDonald
7:15 p.m.	Matthew Grunewald
7:30 p.m.	Tom Means
7:45 p.m.	Break
8:00 p.m.	Evan Ortiz
8:15 p.m.	James Leonard
8:30 p.m.	Emily Ramos
8:45 p.m.	Julian Pardo de Zela

9:00 p.m. Deliberations

NEXT STEPS

Because the TRO remains in effect, the City Council will interview the applicants but will not appoint RHC members at this meeting. Once the interviews are completed, the City Council could choose to direct staff to bring the appointment of the RHC members back on a future agenda item if/when the CSFRA becomes effective. The hearing on the preliminary injunction is currently scheduled for March 14, 2017.

FISCAL IMPACT

Costs associated with the RHC are to be funded by fees set by the Committee. However, until the CSFRA goes into effect, the RHC is formed, and the fees are set, adopted, and collected, the City bears the cost of all work associated with implementation of the CSFRA. The City can and will seek reimbursement from the Committee. On February 14, the City Council approved a midyear budget adjustment of \$362,000 to fund initial costs of the program.

ALTERNATIVES – Provide other directions for the selection process.

PUBLIC NOTICING

The meeting agenda and Council report have been posted on the City's web page and announced on Channel 26 and cable television.

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