



Tenant Services Committee

931 Yonge Street,
Toronto, M4W 2H2

Page 1 of 13

The Tenant Services Committee (“TSC”) of the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (“TCHC”) held a virtual Public meeting on February 5, 2024 via Webex and in-person at 931 Yonge Street in the Main Floor Conference Room, commencing at 9:10 a.m.

TSC Directors Present: John Campbell (Chair) (in-person)
Marcel Charlebois (via Webex)
Debbie Douglas (via Webex)
Ubah Farah (via Webex)
Ziva Ferreira (via Webex)
Councillor Paula Fletcher (in-person)

Management Present: Tom Hunter, Interim President & Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”)
Nadia Gouveia, Acting Chief Operating Officer (“COO”)
Darragh Meagher, General Counsel & Corporate Secretary
Barbara Shulman, Chief People & Culture Officer
Jessica Hawes, Acting Chief Development Officer (“CDO”)
Allen Murray, Vice President, Facilities Management
Ada Wong, Acting Vice President, Strategic Planning & Communications
Melanie Martin, Interim Commission of Housing Equity
Lindsay Viets, Director, Operational Planning & Program Services
David Quigley, Manager, Community Safety Programs, Business Support and Parking Operations, Community Safety Unit

Tenant Services Committee
Public Minutes
February 5, 2024

John Kraljevic, General Manager, Central Operations
Julio Rigores, Manager, Engagement Refresh
Ceilidh Wilson, Assistant Corporate Secretary

Guest Present: Jenn St. Louis, Manager, Housing Stability Services, Housing Secretariat, City of Toronto

A quorum being present, Mr. Campbell, serving as Chair, called the meeting to order, and Ms. Wilson served as recording secretary.

ITEM 1 CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

DEPUTATIONS

The Chair polled for any depositions to be heard at the meeting. The following verbal depositions were presented:

- Item 6 – 2024 Public TSC Work Plan (*Catherine Wilkinson*)
- Item 8B – Tenancy Management Protocols for Community Safety Incidents (*Catherine Wilkinson, Ghassan Fayad and Milos Obradovic*)
- Item 8D – Tenant Engagement Refresh Update (*Catherine Wilkinson and Ghassan Fayad*)

The following written depositions were presented:

- Item 6 – 2024 Public TSC Work Plan (*Catherine Wilkinson*)
- Item 8B – Tenancy Management Protocols for Community Safety Incidents (*Veronika Hering and Catherine Wilkinson*)
- Item 8D – Tenant Engagement Refresh Update (*Catherine Wilkinson*)

ITEM 2 APPROVAL OF PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA

Motion carried **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Councillor Fletcher, seconded by Mr. Charlebois and carried, the TSC unanimously approved the Agenda for its Public Meeting of February 5, 2024.

ITEM 3 CHAIR’S POLL RE: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Chair requested members of the TSC to indicate any agenda item in which they had a conflict of interest, together with the nature of the interest. **No conflicts were declared.**

ITEM 4 CONFIRMATION OF TSC PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 27, 2023

Motion carried **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Councillor Fletcher, seconded by Ms. Douglas and carried, the TSC confirmed the above-captioned minutes as amended.

ITEM 5 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES AND ACTION ITEMS UPDATE

The above-captioned minutes and action items update were circulated to TSC members prior to the meeting.

Motion carried **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Councillor Fletcher, seconded by Ms. Douglas and carried, the TSC received the matters reported as Business Arising from the Public Meeting Minutes and Action Items Update.

ITEM 6 2024 PUBLIC TSC WORK PLAN TSC:2024-02

The above-captioned report was circulated to TSC members prior to the meeting.

A written deputation was received from Catherine Wilkinson with respect to this item after the meeting.

A verbal deputation was received from Catherine Wilkinson with respect to this item.

Mr. Meagher and Ms. Gouveia were available to answer questions of the TSC. Highlights of the discussion include:

- The annual work plans are set by the Board of Directors (the “Board”)

Tenant Services Committee
Public Minutes
 February 5, 2024

and its Committees. They are not reviewed by the Tenant Advisory Committee (“TAC”) in advance of being considered by the Board.

- If there are items that a Committee would like to add to their work plan, the work plan can be updated as appropriate at any time.
- Where there are policies scheduled for review that have significant impact on tenants, it is advisable that those be reviewed by the TAC prior to being presented to the Board.
- Client Care Centre data is incorporated into the quarterly Operational Performance Measures report. A full-year retrospective can be included in the year-end iteration of this report.
- A report on the Tenant Service Hubs is scheduled for April 2024.
- There are regular reports regarding community safety that are provided through the Community Safety Advisory Sub-Committee (“CSAC”).
- A joint report regarding the tenant use of air conditioning units will be brought back by Operations and Facilities Management and will reflect the changes to the provincial legislation.
- Action item: Management to revise the 2024 Public TSC Work Plan to incorporate feedback received at the February 5, 2024 TSC meeting prior to its submission to the Board of Directors for approval.

Motion carried

ON MOTION DULY MADE by Mr. Campbell and carried, the TSC approved, and recommended that the Board of Directors approve the 2024 Public TSC Work Plan provided as Attachment 1 to Report TSC:2024-02 as amended to reflect the TSC’s feedback.

**OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF
 HOUSING EQUITY’S 2023 WORK PLAN
 PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL**

ITEM 7

TSC:2024-03

The above-captioned report was circulated to TSC members prior to the meeting.

Ms. Martin was available to answer questions of the TSC. Highlights of the discussion include:

- There is a 45 day timeframe for OCHE staff to work with tenants who are referred to their office. In instances where OCHE staff make a

Tenant Services Committee
Public Minutes
 February 5, 2024

referral to an outside agency to support a tenant, the details of this referral will be provided, including contact information, in their report back to TCHC. TCHC staff have long-term carriage of all files returned from the OCHE and the expectation is that if the tenant falls back into arrears, frontline staff will reach out to resources to support the tenant and if unsuccessful, the file will be referred back to the OCHE.

- If a tenant breaches their repayment agreement, OCHE staff are notified, which can prompt a re-evaluation and referral back to the OCHE.
- In 2023, OCHE received 802 cases from TCHC and sent back 217 or 27% of files. OCHE retained 585 cases for review. Of the 217 sent back, only 39 or 18% returned to OCHE.
- The main reasons for return to OCHE included non-compliance with the arrears collection process or insufficient contact attempts.
- With respect to payment agreements, OCHE relies on TCHC to identify breaches. Currently, there is a 30% breach rate.
- OCHE plans to complete an analysis of the OCHE-brokered repayment agreements that are breached and include it in their next bi-annual report to the TSC.

Motion carried **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Councillor Fletcher, seconded by Mr. Charlebois and carried, the TSC reviewed and approved the OCHE 2023 Work Plan Performance Appraisal, as set out in Attachment 1 to Report TSC:2024-03, and forwarded it to the Board for its review and approval.

PROCESS UPDATE – OVERHOUSED

ITEM 8A HOUSEHOLDS TSC:2024-04

The above-captioned report was circulated to TSC members prior to the meeting.

Ms. Viets and Ms. St. Louis provided the TSC with a presentation in relation to this matter, highlights of which include:

- Project objectives;
- Definitions;
- City objective;

Tenant Services Committee
Public Minutes
February 5, 2024

Page 6 of 13

- Backlog of households;
- Previous process;
- New process;
- Reviews and exceptions;
- Next steps; and
- Risks.

Ms. Gouveia, Ms. Viets and Ms. St. Louis were available to answer questions of the TSC. Highlights of the discussion include:

- Households who are overhoused have a priority status on Rent Café.
- There is no priority status for households that are underhoused. Tenants who are in an underhoused situation have the option to apply to the centralized waiting list for an appropriately sized unit.
- TCHC is in the process of reviewing its Tenant Transfer Policy.
- The current plan to address the overhoused backlog does not involve coordination with other social housing providers.
- Approximately 2,100 households in the TCHC portfolio are overhoused and have been for on average eight to nine years.
- The one-year period begins when someone selects wards in Rent Cafe. If wards are not selected, they will be assigned to the applicant to prevent a further backlog of files.
- It was suggested that there may be more success working with tenants who are recently identified as being overhoused versus those who have been in an overhoused situation for many years. It was recommended that staff focus on working with the tenants who are more likely receptive to transferring prior to engaging with households that may be more resistant.
- Tenants who are overhoused would have been notified of that status during the annual review process. Communications are being drafted to the 2,100 overhoused households to notify them of the process changes.
- It will be important to identify an action plan for how to most effectively right-size the current list of households that are overhoused, which may or may not be based on chronology.
- The overhoused status is only applicable to rent-geared-to-income ("RGI") households. It does not apply to market households.
- In Rent Cafe, individuals engage in the system like new applicants, bidding on units they wish to move into. The 'One Offer' rule is

Tenant Services Committee
Public Minutes
February 5, 2024

Page 7 of 13

applicable only to units for which they have submitted a bid and received an offer.

- Tenants have provided their feedback regarding an underhoused priority as part of the Tenant Transfer Policy, and management will engage with TSC to gather their further input on this topic. The proposed changes to the Tenant Transfer Policy will be presented in the coming months.
- Efforts are made to reallocate individuals to locations closest to their current homes whenever possible, utilizing the one-year period to provide a range of offers. Where tenants have to move outside of their current neighbourhood, they are connected with their local Community Services Coordinator (“CSC”) to provide as much support as possible with integration into their new community.
- The City will continue to collaborate with TCHC to continuously monitor and adjust the plan as needed. The goal is to maintain housing stability for TCHC households, ensuring their active participation in the process and securing available housing for individuals on the centralized waitlist.
- Assistance with moving expenses is not currently accounted for in TCHC’s overall budget. It was suggested that providing this financial support may incentivize some households to move faster.
- RGI tenants are required to inform TCHC of any additions to or deletions from their households, which often occurs during the annual review as all household members’ income must be included in the rent calculation.
- Loss of eligibility as a result of being overhoused does not necessarily lead to an eviction. For example, some tenants may choose to remain in their current unit and pay market rent, or individuals may be added to a lease during the annual review, which allows the household to qualify to remain in the unit.
- A request for review often happens as a result of receiving a Notice of Decision or when the household receives a loss of eligibility notice. Tenants will often seek a review of their file.
- The City is flexible on timelines, reviewing applications after the deadline if there is a perceived housing stability issue. This approach is taken when individuals might not fully grasp how the process works.

Tenant Services Committee
Public Minutes
 February 5, 2024

- Tenants are not able to sublet their units, but they do have the option of bringing in a roommate. Any additional members added to the household composition will be included in the income reported for the purposes of rent calculation.
- Action item: When bringing this report to the Board of Directors' February 15, 2024 meeting, management to provide:
 - the number of households on the Overhoused waitlist broken out by the number of years they have been on the waitlist;
 - an action plan with the anticipated targets to be achieved in 2024;
 - the percentage of Overhoused households that request a review of their file; and
 - the number of households who moved as a result of the Overhoused pilot.

Motion carried

ON MOTION DULY MADE by Ms. Douglas and carried, the TSC received Report TSC:2024-04, being the Process Update regarding Overhoused Households report, for its information.

TENANCY MANAGEMENT PROTOCOLS FOR
ITEM 8B COMMUNITY SAFETY INCIDENTS TSC:2024-05

The above-captioned report was circulated to TSC members prior to the meeting.

Written deputations were received from Veronika Hering and Catherine Wilkinson [received after the meeting] with respect to this item and were circulated to the TSC.

Verbal deputations were received from Catherine Wilkinson, Ghassan Fayad and Milos Obradouc with respect to this item.

Mr. Quigley and Mr. Kraljevic provided the TSC with a presentation in relation to this matter, highlights of which include:

- Tenancy management – Anti-social behaviour;
- Background; and
- Work flow – Tenancy management (anti-social behaviour).

Tenant Services Committee
Public Minutes
February 5, 2024

Page 9 of 13

Ms. Gouveia, Mr. Quigley and Mr. Kraljvich were available to answer questions of the TSC. Highlights of the discussion include:

- While CSU's involvement may be required on a case-by-case basis, regional teams consistently lead in tenancy management matters.
- The CSU's role is to support tenants and assist the Tenancy Management team. The emphasis is on preserving tenancies while working to preserve the safety of the whole community.
- The CSU receives calls for service through various channels such as the Community Safety Unit call center, regional offices, and other points within TCHC.
- After providing assistance, CSU officers document the incident through an incident report and forward it to their supervisors to be reviewed for quality assurance. Subsequently, Community Safety Advisors ("CSA") review the reports for trends, patterns, and potential recommendations for ongoing controls to address anti-social behaviours.
- The severity of an incident determines the primary audience for the report. Less severe incidents are forwarded to Tenant Service Coordinators, while more serious incidents, like violence, go to Supervisors for review.
- CSAs are not Special Constables, but are part of the CSU and are hired by CSU leadership with support from People and Culture. CSAs ultimately report up to the Senior Director for the Community Safety Unit and the Chief Operating Officer.
- Incidents are categorized as isolated, ongoing, and/or violent. Serious matters like drug offenses are escalated to the General Manager for immediate action.
- Ongoing issues, such as noise disturbances and dog barking, are managed locally. If escalated, a safety report is added to HoMES and assigned to the local Tenant Service Coordinator to communicate with the tenant and address disruptive behaviour.
- Tenant Service Coordinators play a crucial role in daily communication with site staff, conducting tenancy management meetings, issuing warnings, collaborating with stakeholders, and connecting vulnerable tenants with support agencies.
- Community Services Coordinators ("CSC") are focused on connecting tenants to appropriate support agencies, participating in City tables such as SPIDER, and facilitating soft landings for tenants

Tenant Services Committee
Public Minutes
February 5, 2024

- facing eviction, except in cases involving guns, drugs, or serious assaults.
- The Tenancy Management General Manager reviews documented attempts by Tenant Service Coordinators and CSCs, provides feedback and ensures appropriate actions are taken. They also review files for Legal Services, assess actions taken on incidents, provide final sign-offs, and offer instructions to the service department.
 - Local staff collaborate with paralegals, who provide legal advice on risks and benefits, and prepare Notice of Termination and filings at the Landlord and Tenant Board (“LTB”). Paralegals attend hearings, identify required parties, and update tenancy management staff on timing for tribunal applications.
 - The review of the CSU is overseen by Social Development, Finance and Administration (“SDFa”) at the City. SDFa has informed the Community Safety Advisory Sub-Committee (“CSAC”) that an update report is scheduled for the CSAC meeting on March 25, 2024. Consultants hired by SDFa are actively working on setting up interviews and conducting research for the ongoing review.
 - CSAs work during regular business hours. Some of their duties include reviewing reports for trends, identifying issues within communities, conducting safety audits of communities, and meeting with stakeholders and tenants.
 - CSAs collaborate with their supervisors to implement directed patrols to address lower-level safety issues. Some issues requiring advanced strategies and involvement with Toronto Police Service (“TPS”) may take more time to coordinate and address.
 - Where a tenant is non-compliant with staff who are attempting to address their anti-social behaviour, Tenant Service Coordinators have access to local resources, site staff, supervisors, and CSAs to assist. For tenants who receive supports through agencies such as Fred Victor, Loft or Cota, staff can work in partnership with these agencies to manage difficult tenancies.
 - A Notice of Termination may be served for anti-social behaviour, with the intention of changing the tenant’s behaviour; eviction is not necessarily the desired outcome. In instances of ongoing disturbances, staff will make an efforts to work with the tenant to change their behaviour until the date of eviction, if necessary.

Tenant Services Committee
Public Minutes
 February 5, 2024

Page 11 of 13

- Where there are instances of issues with drugs, guns or serious assaults, staff will connect the tenant to supports, but ensuring staff's safety is the top priority.
- In cases where individuals are dissatisfied with the performance of Special Constables, supervisors are available 24/7 in the field, and a Duty Manager can be contacted through the CSU Dispatch Centre.
- General Managers have access to CCTV footage and management are working to extend that access to front-line staff by Q1 2024.
- An audit was conducted in 2020/2021 regarding the security implications of staff accessing video footage, resulting in a joint decision to remove CCTV access for frontline staff. Based on deputations and discussions at TSC, management were directed to explore the possibility of reinstating access for site staff, which is now underway.

Motion carried **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Mr. Charlebois, seconded by Ms. Ferreira and carried, the TSC received Report TSC:2024-05, being the Tenancy Management Protocols for Community Safety Incidents report and attached presentation, for its information.

ITEM 8C TENANT COMPLAINTS UPDATE TSC:2024-06

The above-captioned report was circulated to TSC members prior to the meeting.

Motion carried **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Ms. Douglas, seconded by Ms. Ferreira and carried, the TSC receive Report TSC:2024-06, being the Tenant Complaints Update report, for its information.

ITEM 8D TENANT ENGAGEMENT REFRESH UPDATE TSC:2024-07

The above-captioned report was circulated to TSC members prior to the meeting.

A written deputation was received from Catherine Wilkinson after the meeting with respect to this item and was circulated to the TSC.

Tenant Services Committee
Public Minutes
 February 5, 2024

Page 12 of 13

Verbal deputations were received from Catherine Wilkinson and Ghassan Fayad with respect to this item.

Ms. Gouveia was available to answer questions of the TSC. Highlights of the discussion include:

- The Tenant Advisory Committee (“TAC”) provides input, advice, and consultation regarding corporate policies, for example the Deputation Policy for Stakeholders, which has a direct impact on tenants.
- A dedicated group of TAC members and staff collaboratively sets the TAC agendas. There is currently no formal work plan for TAC, but they have set their agendas through to June of this year.
- The Tenant Survey is an example of a topic that would be presented to the TAC for their feedback.
- TAC has 18 members and the three Tenant Board Directors, for a total of 21 members. Three positions remain vacant, which City and TCHC staff are going through the recruitment process to fill.
- An eligibility list was created from the pool of qualified tenants who did not initially secure a spot in the first round of recruitment. TCHC and City staff are reviewing the eligibility list to identify qualified applicants rather than conducting a separate recruitment process.
- The decision was made, based on TAC’s feedback, to eliminate the requirement for tenants in arrears to have a repayment agreement in place in order to be eligible to participate in the tenant engagement system.
- The Executive Leadership Team (“ELT”) determined that rather than creating a one-size-fits-all approach to a tenant volunteer policy, it is preferable to have divisional volunteer policies that speak to the role of volunteers within each distinct area of the organization. There will be common elements to be included in each policy, but the specific details will vary across divisions.

Motion carried **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Councillor Fletcher, seconded by Ms. Farah and carried, the TSC received Report TSC:2024-07, being the Tenant Engagement Refresh Update report, for its information.

TERMINATION

Tenant Services Committee
Public Minutes
February 5, 2024

A motion to adjourn the meeting was moved by Mr. Charlebois. The TSC resolved to terminate the public meeting at 11:25 a.m.

Secretary

Chair, Tenant Services Committee