

TORONTO COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION
GOVERNANCE, COMMUNICATIONS AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MEETING
JULY 3, 2024

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WRITTEN DEPUTATIONS

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ITEM 10. DEPUTATION POLICY

DEPUTATION

I don't understand why the Deputation Policy was not attached to the staff report, to refresh their memory and compare it against the management report and recommendations. This would allow them to better understand the concerns being raised by tenants.

The legal department has determined after 14 years that the Deputation Policy does not need to be revised.

They could not be more wrong. If the power of a Deputation truly has the potential to change a committee decision on a report before them - today is that day.

This policy of all policies, as indicated in the title is intended for stakeholders. We the tenants are your primary stakeholders. The tenants have spoken and recommended the Deputation Policy needs to be revised.

As per past practice, this must include tenant consultation. While the policy must comply with standard policy requirements, it should be understood this is not about meeting the needs of staff, it must meet the needs of the Tenants.

Since its creation, the corporation made no attempt to make tenants aware of the policy – and quite frankly, there was not a lot of interest in having tenants depute before the board.

During tenant consultations in 2005 and 2010, the Policy was revised to reflect the needs of the board, tenants and the organizational structure in place at that time. The policy in its current form, meets none of this criteria.

Under Next Steps: It's not so much about TCH providing tenants the "opportunity" to depute as the "right" to Depute on items which directly impact them as provided for in the Shareholder's Agreement.

We the tenants don't want staff deciding what Tenants need in the policy or creating materials that work for staff – but not for tenants.

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Use of the language “deputants can provide the Board with information and clarify issues” – that is not the tenant perspective at all.

Tenants depute because reports before the board do not meet their needs or reflect the lived experience of tenants. Tenants have one-shot to make their case to the board, in hopes they will consider the recommendations before accepting or approving management reports.

Rarely does TCH include stakeholder feedback in reports – although it has committed to work on that going forward.

Deputation Policy states Tenant Reps will receive a copy of the Policy. Not true, never happened.

Deputation Policy says you can only depute once on the same item, it does not say deputants can depute on more than one item on the Agenda.

The Deputation Policy states the Policy is posted in Operating Unit Offices. Not true. Never happened. OU’s have been replaced by Service Hubs. The existing policy does not reflect the current organizational structure.

The Deputation Policy indicates materials will be posted on the website up to 10 days in advance. We all know that is not true. It was changed in February 2023 when legal staff revised the BOD Meeting Procedures. It is now no less than 7 days.

I am asking the Governance Committee to direct management to take the following actions:

1. Tenant Engagement staff create a tenant/staff working group for a specific period of time to design a Tenant Deputation Template
2. To work with Communications Staff to create a Permanent Community Poster
3. To provide training sessions for Tenant Reps and other members of the Tenant Engagement System, followed by general tenant information meetings portfolio wide.

Thank you.

Governance, communications and Human Resource Committee Meeting
Public Agenda July 3, 2024.

Item 10, Deputation Policy for stakeholders.

Written deputation from Jacqueline Yu.

Good morning, Madam Chair Douglas and Community Members.

My name is Jacqueline Yu and I am a tenant of TCHC.

Thank You for the opportunity to share my comment on item 10, deputation Policy for stakeholders. TCHC Policy is meant to be "inclusive" and that includes tenants where English is not their first language, reality is many TCHC tenants like myself even live in Canada for 50 years and still feel frustrated and embarrassed when I depute in TCHC Board/ Committees due to English not being my first language plus no knowledge of deputation Policy and don't know how it works efficiency within time limited.

I supported TAC Members' suggestion that TCHC create a Tenant -staff Position to assist tenants in preparing deputations or worksheets that would provide step by step instructions on how to prepare a deputation. I have long thought about which TCHC tenants have the ability and can contribute in a more meaningful way.

I would not hesitate to nominate Ms. Catherine Wilkinson as the perfect tenant- staff Position. Not only does she have knowledge and ability working with other passionate tenant advocates to help tenants understand their rights and resolve issues tenants face everyday. Her wisdom and knowledge really impressed myself and many TCHC tenants in my Community , Most importantly she knows policy well, unselfish , unbiased stood up to challenge TCHC management to ensure TCHC Community safety issues and tenants rights, transparency and accountability needs to be front of mind to also ensure good outcomes for tenants.

I would recommend this New tenant- staff Position workgroup to help design a deputation Template, and simple , straight forward instructions for tenants who wish to depute, and create a poster to promote this opportunity to all tenants and encourage more to come forward.

Those groups would be outside of TCHC engagement system , thereby not bound by their usual rules, it could function independent of TCHC , and become an adhoc group that reports back to TSC on issues arising (bringing the priorities identified by tenants) . Or perhaps there is a way within TCH to start such a group.

If My memory is correct , Ms. Wilkinson was the creator and editor of the Resident Connection Newsletter which was funded by TCHC, it was run entirely by tenants, for tenants and tenants like it .

Other Possibilities created tenant Ombudsman - so there's likely a variety of ways we could bring tenants to the forefront in identifying and resolving challenges tenants face.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my comments.