

TCHC Tenant Advisory Committee
Thursday, May 15th, 2025
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Location: Committee Room 3
Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen Street West, 2nd Floor

Meeting Minutes

Organization	Participants
TAC Members	<p>Present In-Person: John Corso, Ines Garcia, Debbie Menezes, Tabitha David, Doug Maybank</p> <p>Present Online: Robert Benzanson, Petra Jeffers, Charmaine Roye, Tameka Richards, Abdul Rahman, Susel Munoz, Jorry Cross</p> <p>Not Present: Karlene Nation</p>
Non-Voting Members	<p>Not Present: Marcel Charlebois, Tenant Board Director, Ubah Farah, Tenant Board Director.</p>
TCHC Staff	<p>Present In-Person:</p> <p>Sean Baird, Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Pablo Vivanco, Director, Tenant Engagement</p> <p>Christine Aina, Manager, Tenant Engagement (Acting)</p> <p>Junior Taylor, Community Safety and Support Manager</p> <p>Gail Johnson, Community Safety and Support Manager</p> <p>Melissa Rodrigues, Business Planner, Tenant Engagement (Acting)</p> <p>Darragh Meagher, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary, Legal Services</p> <p>Sonia Chaabane, Assistant Corporate Secretary, Legal Services (Acting)</p> <p>Sonia Fung, Committee Secretary, Legal Services</p>

	<p>Iman Haji-Jama, Committee Secretary, Legal Services</p> <p>Not present: Alejandra Marulanda, Tenant Participation Coordinator, Tenant Engagement, Nadia Gouveia, Chief Operating Officer, Jenelle Estwick, Executive Assistant</p>
City of Toronto Staff	<p>Present In-Person: Emily Gaus, Housing Consultant, Housing Secretariat Anna Nguyen, Housing Consultant, Housing Secretariat, Zanib Habib, Programs Coordinator, Housing Secretariat,</p> <p>Not present: Jag Sharma, City Deputy Manager, Natalie Wythe, Programs Coordinator, Housing Secretariat</p>

Welcome, Introductions, Land, and African Ancestral Acknowledgments

- TCHC's CEO Sean Baird started the meeting by reading the Land and African Ancestral Acknowledgements.

Review of the TCHC Tenant Advisory Committee's Agenda, Minutes, and Action Items:

- Emily Gaus opened the floor for any questions regarding the agenda. May Agenda and April Meeting Minutes approved.
- Christine Aina provided Action Item overview.

Deputation Policy Update presentation provided by Darragh Meagher.

- TAC Member: Requested for items to be time stamped at board meeting video recordings for easy navigation.
- TCHC Staff: Will look into working with the city to explore this option.

- TAC Member: Spoke about their experience deputing over Zoom and felt there was backlash. The member asked if there was a way to depute to the Board in private?
- TCHC Staff: The Board's expectation is that everyone in the meeting should be treated with respect. The Chair's role is to manage the participants. Alternatively, deputations may be submitted in writing or there are also tenant directors who can liaison with tenants and the Board.
- TCHC Staff: This is something that can be discussed with the Board chair and governance committee around creating a safer space where tenants feel comfortable deputing.
- TCHC Staff: It is Important for tenants to inform the governance team about any concerns as there are mechanisms in place to hold tenants accountable.
- TAC Member: Asked if there was a way to depute anonymously?
- TCHC Staff: Deputations cannot be anonymous as it may become a dangerous tool for slander; it's important to put a name to the deputation that's submitted to a board.
- City Staff: City Clerks may have some best practices and TCHC is encouraged to connect with them
- TCHC Staff: Will speak to Board. However, it is important to hold tenants accountable for what is shared.
- TAC Member: Asked if tenants can depute in their first language if they do not speak English as Tenants who do not speak English as their first language may be hesitant to come forward to depute.
- TCHC Staff: This is something that can be explored in the future. As of now, if a request is made, accommodations would be made through using a translation service.
- TAC member suggested to feature a tenant who has deputed in the tenant newsletter.
- TAC Member: Shared that educating Tenants is important for communities to make deputations at the Board. It was suggested to promote deputations from groups of residents which would

provide comfort and confidence for individuals to depute independently in the future.

- TCHC Staff: Confirmed that group deputations are allowed.
- TAC Member: Asked if TCHC can hold mock deputations?
- TCHC Staff: Yes, can be done.
- TAC Member: It is important for the Board and TCHC to reiterate expectations of tenants who depute to help create a safer space for other tenants who may feel anxious about deputing.
- TAC Member: Asked if deputations influence decisions and stated that some tenants become tired of vocalizing needs and not hearing back.
- TCHC Staff: There are deputants that have a very strong impact and bring change. Deputing is an effective way to share opinions with the Board. The more tenants depute, the stronger relationship with the Board.
- TCHC Staff: Stated that the Board can be quite responsive. The most effective deputations are the ones that stay on topic.
- TCHC Staff: All Board reports that are posted online, have a staff contact. It was suggested that tenants call the contact and advise them of any concerns they have if choosing to depute at the Board. Staff are more likely to come to the Board meeting prepared with policy modifications.
- TAC Member: Requested that the Board members and TCHC staff use less formal language during Board meetings, it is important for tenants to know that informal language can be used in deputations so that the experience is not as intimidating.
- TAC Member: Suggested that TCHC promote Board meeting engagement, through the tenant newsletter. The TAC member also requested clear directions on how tenants can depute at the Board
- TCHC Staff: Informed the TAC, that the Communications team is working on a “how-to” guide for tenants who wish to depute.

- TAC Member: When tenants depute, they do not receive a response or follow up questions. This can cause tenants to feel uncomfortable and unheard.
- TCHC Staff: Acknowledged that Board deputations are a formal process and this happens often. However, it does not mean that TCHC management is not listening to deputations.
- TCHC Staff: Although it may not be apparent through the webcasting on YouTube, staff typically engage with the deputants offline.
- TAC Member: Not everyone is tech savvy. Is there a way to have information sessions for tenants?
- TAC Member: Inquiring to the length of time between that has passed between the review of the Deputation policy.
- TCHC Staff: Due to COVID, the review was put on hold. The team was focused on completing extensive tenant consultations on the policy.

Action Items and Wrap-up

- Pablo Vivanco provided an update on the TAC and YTAC recruitment timeline. Provided a forecast of upcoming committee meetings encouraging tenants to get involved.
- The Deputation policy will be going to the GCHRC July 2nd and to the Board July 28. Tenants are encouraged to apply for the tenant Board of Directors position.
- Emily Gaus closed meeting.