



City of Winooski

Vermont's Opportunity City

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Public Hearing: Voter-Proposed Charter Change for Just Cause Eviction Saturday, February 4, 2023, 1 PM at the O'Brien Community Center

MINUTES

Councilor Oakleaf called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM

Members Present:

Councilors: James Duncan, Bryn Oakleaf, Aurora Hurd & Thomas Renner

Officers Present:

Elaine Wang, City Manger; Paul Sarne, Communication Director & Jenny Willingham, City Clerk

Others Present:

Robert Millar, Padan Thapa, Prashant Singh, Meghan Downey, Andy Blanchet, Nora V. Aronds, Taylor Small, Charles Judge, Mohamed Diop, Conner Daley, Jack Commo, Wilondja Nganwa, Nick Brownell, Caitlyn Clark, Hassan Kulow, Siegfried Boyd Isidro-Cloudas and interpreters: Abdullahi Hassan, Symphorien Sikyalā, Do Mai Be, Samuel Dingba, Jeetan Khadka, Salmu Daoudi, Pougā Lubula, Sylvia DelCastillo.

Summary: Voters have petitioned for City to change its charter. This change could allow Winooski City Council to adopt a 'Just Cause Eviction' law. Residents can vote on this item on the Town Meeting Day election on March 7, 2023. The state would also need to approve the change. Then City Council would need to decide whether to create a Just Cause Eviction law.

The voter-proposed Charter Change for Just Cause Eviction was read in its entirety by Councilor James Duncan.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Charles Judge- Renter -Winooski

Expressed his support for the Just Cause Eviction petition.

Prashant Singh- Owner

From a Landlord perspective, he expressed not raising his rents.

Nick Brownell- Winooski

Provided an overview of his support for Just Cause Eviction.

Mohamed Diop – Renter-Winooski

Spoke as a resident as well as employee of Winooski School District regarding some of the challenges currently facing students along with their families. Mohamed was appreciative of the fact sheet in multiple languages.

Andy Blanchet- Renter-Winooski

Discussion ensued over her experiences with the need for renters to have protections. Raised the possibility of tracking evictions.

Robert Millar- Owner- Winooski

Stated this is just the beginning of the process for this Charter change.

Elaine Wang, City Manager-

Discussed the timeline of potential approval.

Siegfried Boyd Isidro-Cloudas

Spoke about concerns amongst landlords and tenants.

Councilor Renner

Explained the potential changes in the language.

Meghan Downey-Renter-Winooski

Expressed concern for various members of our community.

Salma Daoudi-Interpreter

Spoke about experiences and stability in regards to the renters in refugee resettlement communities.

Nora Aronds- Winooski

Spoke about access for people who are deaf or hearing impaired.

Taylor Small- Renter- Winooski -Representative

Provided an overview of the Legislative process to support a statewide eviction policy as well as the introduction of proposed charter amendment for Winooski.

Councilor Duncan –

Provided an overview of policies currently being utilized by the City to define habitable and safe housing.

Adjourn

The Public hearing closed by Councilor Oakleaf at 2:20 PM.

ATTEST: _____

City Clerk