

From: [Stevenson, Garrett](#)
To: [Acevedo, Gloria](#)
Cc: [Sabha, Tamer](#)
Subject: FW: Written comment for Finance Committee Jan 22nd, Item 6
Date: Monday, January 22, 2024 10:08:21 AM

From: Simon Gibbons
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 10:07 AM
To: Sabha, Tamer <tsabha@cityofpasadena.net>; Stevenson, Garrett <gstevenson@cityofpasadena.net>
Subject: Written comment for Finance Committee Jan 22nd, Item 6

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To the members of the City of Pasadena Finance Committee

Item 6 on today's agenda proposes a budget of \$2,876,232 for the Rent Stabilization Board, and notes that this will entail a "temporary negative cash balance for the department will occur until the Rental Housing Fee can be collected".

So far, the Rent Board has failed to meet any of its operational deadlines for providing advice, setting up hearings, hiring staff, or creating a rental registry. Instead they have focused on their own pay, to the extent that one member asked at the January 10th meeting whether it would be possible to halt rent payments on their office if money was needed for Board member salaries.

In view of the Board's consistent failure to meet its own deadlines, what is the City's plan to deal with funding the new Department if the rent registry is delayed even further?

Simon Gibbons (he, him)
Finance Officer
BT Shepherd LLC

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Affordable Housing Services

*1516 Navarro Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91103*

Mayor Victor Gordo and Other Members of Council
Pasadena City Council
100 Garfield Avenue
Pasadena, CA

Re: Item 15 - Budget for Rent Stabilization Board

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Measure H was never meant to be a stand alone, self perpetuating tenant protection. Its language anticipates that tenants availing themselves of Measure H protections should be able to avail themselves to legal remedies through the courts. Access to representation during the early operation of the charter amendment, during which time both landlords and tenants are likely to find the Measure's protections confusing, is especially important for landlords are likely to wrongfully pursue eviction sanctions.

Access to legal representation is hard to come by for residents of limited means. Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles, the legal services provider for Pasadena residents, offers only limited eviction defense services, e.g., assistance for tenants representing themselves in court. The Eviction Defense Network, which provides lower cost legal services for tenants reports that 90% of landlords are represented by legal counsel, while only 10% of tenants have attorneys in court. The Network also reports that 90% of unrepresented tenants facing eviction lose their cases.

The Rent Stabilization budget should be increased by at least \$200,000 to be used to provide representation to renters facing eviction. The availability of such legal assistance during the first year of the Measure's operation is critical, for it is during

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this time that many landlord mistakes/wrongful actions are likely to occur. It is especially important that the City contract with an entity that has expertise with the body of state and local landlord/tenant laws, for Measure H does not operate in isolation.

Finally, given that approximately 70% of the City's Latino and African American residents are tenants, providing legal services of this kind is important to preserve the fair housing rights of these populations.

Sincerely,

Michelle White

Michelle White
Executive Director

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Adam Bray-Ali
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 3:16 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Adam Bray-Ali
Subject: Public comment for items 14 and 15 on January 22, 2024 City Council meeting

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Good afternoon City Council Members,

For items #14 and #15 on the agenda for your council meeting this evening, there are two items related to the development and buildout of the rental housing board since their seating in the last 7 months.

Item #14 is a contract with a company that I have experience working with their products as 3DI manage the rental registry for the County of Los Angeles. Since these tools began rolling out in 2021, the experience in LA County is that they required registration in 2021 and 2022 and began charging landlords in 2023. From what I understand and have seen, there was a widespread challenge with getting the data and information collected and 'clean' to allow the billing and systems to be trustworthy. While I think this is probably the best option for a company to help the city with the registry required by Measure H and the city charter chapter 18.

It is unclear if the full costs of the service and support for Pasadena will be covered with this contract for the first year. Has the Rental Housing Board and their consulting company (BHYV) clarified how the contract will handle cost overruns, requests for changes and other details of a contract of this nature?

The database being developed and planned for the Rental Housing Board will, by its nature, be filled with extremely sensitive private information including names of tenants, rental amounts, ages, children, landlord names, addresses and other data to be determined. I am very concerned about the security of this data and the eventual concerns about privacy for all involved. The Charter Amendment language specifically states that this will be publicly available. **Now that the city is technically (kind of) in charge of the newly created department, have you ensured that the 3DI contract matches the requirements for data security that the city currently follows?**

For item #15, you are being asked to provide almost \$2,900,000 to further fund the start up and 6 months of costs in 2024 for the Rental Housing Board. As I attended the RHB meetings last year, it was very clear that this appointed Board is working towards creating an entity that they have now foisted onto the city in the form of a new department.

The cost structure that they have envisioned was crafted by a newly created consulting firm named BHYV that has zero local experience in Pasadena and had limited experiences in forming the budgets and costs other than mimicking the departments from cities where the consultants worked (see Senior Consultant Burton). While their proposed budget was developed, the RHB decided that they were not capable of managing this work and asked the city to take over the management by creating a new department in opposition to the actual wording and goals of Measure H. My concerns include a number of points but for tonight's discussion, I would be curious to hear discussion about these points:

1 - How is this budget going to work within the structure of hiring city employees and meeting the current systems in place for Pasadena city employees?

2- Why is the budget for the Rental Department being dictated by the Rental Housing Board and not the City Manager?

3 - Why is the Rental Department not located with or within the existing Housing Department that already is tasked with managing many adjacent city rules and regulations?

4 - Assuming that the entire budget for this new department and the rental housing board must be paid for by property landlords with no costs to be paid by renters or the general tax paying members of Pasadena, do these numbers match expectations from number 1 and the guidance of the City Manager?

5 - Measure H was voted by a less than 2/3rds of the voters. The costs are supposed to be based on 'fees' paid by landlords. How is the city handling their requirements to ensure that these new services being provided to landlords are actually being provided to landlords. If the majority of the budget for the department and board are being used for tenants, why are they not being assessed a fee for the services?

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Adam Bray-Ali

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Adam Bray-Ali

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage