

CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR HOUSING MATTERS  
MINUTES OF MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 23, 1981

The Citizen's Advisory Council for Housing Matters met on September 23, 1981 at the Housing Court, 83½ Lafayette Street, Hartford, Connecticut.

Members Present: Rafie Podolsky, Chairperson  
Susan Harkett-Turley  
Carol Maurer  
Jesse F. Collins  
Elain DeNigris

Also Present: Gerry Maine  
David Pels  
Ben Z. Rubin  
Linda DeJohn Bantell  
Fran Calafiore  
Donna Bristol  
Robert L. Senkow  
William Sadek  
Marie A. Langan

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Podolsky at 3:10 p.m.

The memo of June 24, 1981 and letter of July 20, 1981 to Judge Sponzo were accepted as minutes of the June 22, 1981 meeting.

A discussion of the Council's membership and a question of quorum was raised. Since the Council has no by-laws, it was felt that the Council should continue to function with members and interested persons present.

A resolution to honor Pat Augur as past chairperson was moved by Jesse Collins and seconded by Susan Harkett-Turley. Motion passed unanimously.

Election of Vice-Chairperson

Elaine DeNigris was unanimously elected Vice-Chairperson.

Relocation of Hartford Housing Court to 18 Trinity Street

Fran Calafiore reported that the Housing Court would be moving to new quarters at 18 Trinity Street, fourth floor, on the 23 through 26 of October.

Carol Maurer proposed a resolution that Chairperson Podolsky send a letter to Ron Voog in reference to the Council's recommendations that the waiting area of the new court be separated from the staff offices for privacy. The motion was approved unanimously.

Participation in Hiring of New Clerk for Hartford

Chairperson Podolsky reported that September 24 was the deadline for applications for the new clerk for Hartford. A committee to screen resumes was appointed; they include Chairperson Podolsky, David Pels and Donna Bristol.

Search for New Judge for January 1982

Judge Satter will not request reassignment to the Housing Court in January 1982. A committee to make recommendations on a new judge was appointed; they include David Pels, Gerry Maine and Donna Bristol.

Code Enforcement Report

The Code Enforcement Report was distributed and a discussion followed.

unanimously

A motion was made, seconded and passed that Chairman Podolsky send a letter to Judge Satter outlining the following:

- 1) cases continue to be nollled after first appearance.
- 2) no penalties imposed when property sold.
- 3) fines too low.
- 4) continuences too long.
- 5) cases closed out before corrections completed.

Other Business

The New Haven Court is to start October 1, 1981. As yet, no staff has been hired, no judge appointed and the Citizen's Advisory Council has not been appointed.

Carol Maurer asked that the purpose of the Advisory Council be defined as the first order of business at the next meeting.

Elaine DeNigris requested information on the court case in which Judge Spada ruled the owner had to pay the occupants for rent he collected during their occupancy of the building. David Pels reported that the owner was appealing.

David Pels reported that the forms to file a complaint regarding new "Lock Out" bill which goes into effect October 1, 1981 are available at the Housing Court.

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Ben Rubin reported that occupants of Manchester did not like having to go to Hartford for cases such as security deposits, etc. and asked if these cases could be handled in the Manchester court. It was explained that all housing issues had to be handled at the Housing Court.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

*Marie A. Langan*

Marie A. Langan  
Secretary to the Advisory Council

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# THE CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR HOUSING MATTERS

FOR THE HOUSING SESSION OF THE HARTFORD - NEW BRITAIN JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF THE SUPERIOR COURT

Respond to: 111 Oak Street  
Hartford, Connecticut 06106  
(203) 525-6604

September 10, 1981

## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

The purpose of this report is to bring you up to date on things that have been happening since last summer and to minimize the need to spend time reviewing matters at our meeting for which no additional review is necessary. Please read this report and the attached materials before our next meeting, if at all possible.

The trigger for the September 23 meeting is the imminent transfer of Bill Sadek to the New Haven housing court and the need to find a new housing court judge for January. I hope that we can focus our meeting on those two matters. I expect that the meeting will end no later than 5:00 p.m., and I hope that we will be done earlier.

(1) Election of vice-chairperson: Jesse Collins, who was drafted as vice-chairperson at our last meeting when he was absent, has refused to serve (although he is co-chairing the New Court Location Committee). We therefore need to find someone willing to be vice-chairperson.

(2) Council resignations: Carol Femia, Adriana Falcon Trafford and Robert Faucher have resigned from the Advisory Council. We are waiting for the Governor to replace them.

(3) Court relocation: The Hartford office of the housing court will move from 83 1/2 Lafayette St. to 18 Trinity St. in early November. Jesse Collins, Fran Calefiore, Bill Sadek and I met with the Judicial Department building people in an effort to get them to modify the facilities in accordance with Advisory Council recommendations (a copy of our proposals, based on our June 22 meeting, is attached). The original plans would have created very high noise levels because none of the walls go to the ceiling. We think that the Judicial Department has agreed to make some modifications to minimize these problems. It is unlikely that the Department will do anything to ease litigant parking problems. It does seem likely that the Advisory Council will at least have a desk at the court and may even have a small room. Although the new location is far from perfect, it is certainly a major improvement over the present location and, on balance, is probably adequate.

(4) Staffing: Bill Sadek will be leaving the housing court on October 1 to head the New Haven housing court. It is expected that he will maintain some part-time involvement in Hartford, at least until his successor is hired. We need a committee to participate in that hiring process. I have

attached our official description of the Advisory Council's role in staff hiring. It is expected that the Hartford clerk position will be advertised in the Connecticut Law Journal for September 15, with an application deadline of September 25.

(5) Judge: Judge Satter has indicated his intention to request a new assignment for January, 1982. This means that we have to find another judge. We will need another subcommittee for this purpose. We gathered a fair amount of information about judges last year, when we looked for a successor to Judge Spada; and we will therefore have some background when we start the search again.

(6) Housing code enforcement: Marie Langan has spent some time sampling housing code enforcement cases to see whether there have been any changes in the effectiveness of prosecution. She expects to have a written summary ready for our next meeting. In addition, Ray Weizalis has prepared a written statement of housing code enforcement policy. A copy is enclosed for your information and review.

(7) New Having Housing Court: There are very serious problems which have been developing in connection with the New Haven housing court. In spite of a fair amount of pressure, Gov. O'Neill has still not appointed the New Haven Citizen's Advisory Council. As a result, there is no official mechanism for citizen input into the selection of the judge and the hiring of the staff. By statute, the New Haven court must begin operations on October 1, thereby running the risk that the court will be put together in entirety by the Judicial Department without any public participation at all. In addition, the Citizen's Coalition for the New Haven Housing Court, which lobbied for its creation, has had a great deal of difficulty finding any New Haven area judge who is willing to take the assignment. All this raises questions as to whether an effective court will be put together in New Haven.

(8) Other agenda items: If there are other matters which you would like considered on September 23, I would appreciate your letting me know as soon as possible.

Respectfully submitted,



Raphael L. Podolsky  
Chairperson