



THE CITIZEN S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR HOUSING MATTERS

Reply to: 104 Beacon St.
Hartford, CT. 06105
(203) 232-7748

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 25, 1988

Members present: Twenty-nine members of the Council were present. (See attached attendance sheet).

Others present: William Sadek, Chief Clerk for Housing Matters; Frances Califiore, Chief Housing Specialist, Vicki O'Donnell, Housing Prosecutor, Kathy Solazzo, Housing Specialist, Richard Preston, Housing Prosecutor

1. No smoking will be permitted in the meeting room before, during, or after the council meeting.
2. Minutes from January 28, 1988 were approved.
3. Financial Report: Cigna sent the Council \$35'0, but will not refund the Council next year. Rafie Podolsky asked for volunteers to seek funding. No one responded so the matter will be addressed at the next meeting. The Council's present balance is \$404.11.

Lynn Waters is compiling a booklet of biographies of council members. She was missing 12 out of 36. Those people were asked to give their biographical information to Ms. Waters at the end of the meeting.

4. Old Business:

a. There were rumors that the offices of the Chief Clerk for Housing Matters and the Chief Housing Specialist were going to be moved to a different location. However, at the present time they are still located in the New Haven and Hartford Housing Sessions. The Council recommended that they remain in their present locations.

b. Telephone book listings: (passed)

c. Hartford Prosecutor phone access: Vicki O'Donnell reported that she has two phone lines.

d. Hartford clerk's office renovations: Bob Kor reported that the Department of Public Works found that the Hartford Housing Court is in violation of the State Fire Code. The Council had objected to Judicial Department plans to limit access to the Housing Court office to staff only. Thereafter the Judicial Department agreed to build a small lobby with an open counter at the time the firewall is built.

e. Judicial complaint referral form letter: Dick Tenenbaum wrote a draft letter and sent it to Rafie Podolsky. The Council decided it is not appropriate for it to decide whether individual cases were handled well, but rather sub-

committee chairs will use the complaint form to refer complainants to the Judicial Review Council.

f. Housing code prosecution: Sheldon Hosen is looking for law school volunteers to research housing court prosecution cases, but so far has been unsuccessful.

g. Housing court open houses: Bob Kor said that a reception is being planned for Judge Doyle who sits in the Hartford Housing Court. The subcommittee will discuss possible dates. They will invite landlords, tenants and other interested parties to meet the judge. An open house has already been held for Judge Riefberg in the Norwalk/Bridgeport Housing Court.

h. March and September 1988 judicial assignments: Rafie Podolsky said that all three housing court judges will stay for the next term. However, we need to look for an eventual replacement for Judge Ramsey who is in his fifth term.

i. Other old business: Joe Wincze asked at the last meeting whether council members could sit in on mediation sessions with the housing court specialists. Fran Califiore responded that she would prefer to answer after she has talked to all of the housing specialists and can develop a state-wide policy. In any case, it was agreed that no one could sit in on a mediation session without the agreement of all the parties involved.

The Council is interested in monitoring the housing specialists to make sure they are dealing with pro se litigants fairly. It was suggested that a committee of three to four people form to meet with Ms. Califiore to decide if the Council should develop a system for review and, if so, to suggest a form. Joe Wincze, Sue Manchester, Diana Crouse, Linda Francois and Bob Kor volunteered to serve on this committee.

5. New business:

a. Housing code prosecution issues:

1. Monitoring studies: In 1981-82 the Council monitored the housing prosecution cases by looking at the court files to track the number of continuances, fines, nolle, penalties imposed, etc. The Council passed a motion that all subcommittees monitor housing prosecution cases for the purpose of information gathering. Rafie Podolsky, David Pels and Richard Margenot will draft an outline for the study.

2. There is a recurring allegation that the housing court prosecutors are not working full-time in housing court. Vicki O'Donnell assured the Council that the prosecutors in

Hartford, Bridgeport, and New Haven are working five days a week on housing prosecution. Richard Preston, who is based in New London, has only been on the job for two weeks, but he said that he only does housing cases three days a week. The other two days he does motor vehicle cases. Murray Czaczkes wants the Council to address the problem that Mr. Preston must cover such a large geographical area. It was decided that the non-housing court subcommittee would look into the issue.

3. The executive committee will look into why the States Attorney has failed to assign a housing prosecutor to Derby and northwestern Connecticut. David Pels recommended that the eastern and northwestern housing prosecutor issues be handled together.

b. Mailing lists: Subcommittees will update their mailing lists for open houses.

c. Non-housing court district issues:

Murray Czaczkes reported on the non-housing court subcommittee meeting held on February 19, 1988. The subcommittee made eight recommendations. (see attached).

In response Bill Sadek reported that pro se booklets for landlords will be available at housing courts and G.A. courts in the next three to four weeks. The bound volumes of housing court decisions are sent to the state law library with sufficient copies to be distributed to the J.D. libraries, but he doesn't know why there has been no follow-through on distribution.

5. d, e and f (possible courtroom moves, courtroom observation, and housing code inspector proposals) were passed due to lack of time.

g. Staffing issues:

There is concern that there are not enough housing specialists in the Hartford/New Britain court to handle the volume of cases. Fran Califiore is concerned about the problem, but she said that unless it is legislatively mandated and supported by appropriate funding, she foresees no additional staff.

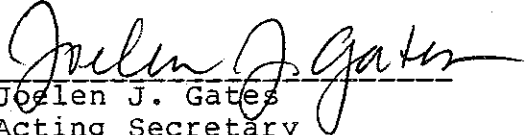
The Council recommends that the temporary assistant clerks in the housing courts be made permanent positions.

6. The Council will elect officers at the next meeting. The positions that are vacant are: chairperson, secretary, treasurer, and chairpersons from each of the four subcommittees.

7. At 4:10 the Council met in subcommittees to discuss monitoring of housing prosecution cases, updating open house and housing court mailing lists, and judicial recommendations.

REMINDER: IF A MEMBER MISSES THREE MEETINGS IN A ROW, HE OR SHE IS DEEMED TO HAVE RESIGNED. Rafie Podolsky will inform the Governor to appoint new members for anyone who chooses to resign.

Respectfully submitted,


Joelen J. Gates
Acting Secretary

ATTENDANCE

CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 25, 1988

PRESENT:

Diana Crouse
Mellanee Harris
Raphael Podolsky
William Mottolese
Richard Margenot
Glenn Falk
Linda Francois
Aura Diaz
Sue Manchester
Ken White
Fred Wallace
Vicki O'Donnell
Joe Zibbideo
Ethel Austin
David Pels
Richard Tenenbaum
Walt Simmers
Robert Kor
Murray Czaczkes
Peter Rotella
Sr. Susanne Gebrian
Anne Crouse
Joelen Gates
Peter Maffly-Kipp
Kevin Tierney
Lynn Waters
Sheldon Hosen
Bruce Fontanella
Joe Wincze

ABSENT:

Laura Boudreaux
Elaine DiNigris
Elliot Lane
Joseph Stafford
Sr. Virginia McCrossan
Patricia Wallace
Reginald Walker
Samuel Deibler
Elisabeth McKee

NON-MEMBERS:

William Boardman
Manfred Rehm

Meeting held on February 19, 1988, presided over by Murray Czaczkes
Attending: Anne Crouse, Joelen Gates, and Sr. Susanne Gebrian

EASTERN CONNECTICUT NON-HOUSING COURT DISTRICT

Recommendations:

1. Housing Investigators be hired.
2. Publicity be instituted for such booklets as "How To Do An Eviction," etc. so that the public becomes aware of their existence.
3. An investigation be made as to the feasibility of establishing a Housing Court in the N.E. section of Connecticut, with the exception of the Middletown area.
4. It is recommended that the Middletown area be included in the New Haven/Waterbury district.
5. It is recommended that housing opinions be made available in non-housing court clerk offices.
6. It is recommended that a deadline be established for ending the "training" in Hartford of ~~George~~ ^{Joelen Gates} Turnbull and Solazzo.
7. It is recommended that more precise guidelines be established for the exact role of the Housing Specialist.
8. A recommendation was made and approved that the Eastern Connecticut Non-Housing Court group meet every three months.