

COLUMBIA CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES
Regular Session
Common Council Chambers of City Hall, Columbia City, Indiana
November 18, 2025
5:00p.m.

Members Present: Matt Curry, Chair
Steffanie Powers, Secretary
Latricia Banuelos
Mike Malcolm
Jennifer O'Connor

Members Absent: Jennifer Duff
Bryan Graham

Also in Attendance: Chip Hill, Community Development Director; Leslee Robinson, Clerk-Treasurer

Call to order/Roll call/Minutes

Chair Matt Curry called the meeting to order. Attendance was as listed above. Matt Curry asked for a motion to approve the September 2025 minutes. Latricia Banuelos made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mike Malcolm. A voice vote was taken; passed unanimously.

Appointment and approval of Vice Chair

This matter was tabled until the next meeting when everyone could attend.

Landlord registration update

Mike Malcolm shared that he had presented the proposed landlord registration list to the ordinance committee and that Gary and LaRue were for it, but the other members were not supportive. Some feedback Mike received included that the fee for the landlords was too cheap, but he did not know whether there was a specific dollar amount suggested. They were going to check with other towns to see what they were charging. Matt Curry explained that the \$5/property amount was selected because that is what most other cities charged for their landlord registration lists; Mike Malcolm noted that Auburn was an outlier and charged \$150/property.

Clerk-Treasurer Leslee Robinson shared some concerns she had about a potential landlord registration list with the CCHA. She explained that it would be her department that would need to process the fees paid and maintain the database and her department does not have the staffing to manage it; they are at full capacity and are already busy trying to take on more for the department heads. The Clerk-Treasurer's office would not benefit financially from the funds collected as part of the landlord registration list, whereas Leslee's office does get paid through utilities. Leslee also expressed that she thought many landlords would not voluntarily pay the fee and questioned what benefit the landlords would get out of a landlord registration list, who would be the local contact, and who would make sure that the landlords paid and would follow up with them.

Matt Curry explained that the landlord registration fund would benefit landlords since fees collected would be put into a fund to help out landlords with maintenance and improvements to their properties.

Matt Curry also shared that the CCHA was told that code enforcement would be the one enforcing payment and noted that it could be set up so that landlords could pay the fee online, without going into the Clerk-Treasurer's office. Leslee stated that her office would still need to receipt in online payments and would need to notify dispatch about who had not paid and then dispatch would notify Scott (code enforcement). She also feared that her office could get angry calls from landlords and would not want to burden her staff with that; they already have to deal with their utility customers. Chip Hill added that from his experience, the majority of landlords were money-hungry and the fund would not get built up. Matt Curry noted that if we can get some landlords to make their properties look nicer, it could raise the property tax assessments of houses around them and help the city look better overall.

Matt Curry questioned whether it would be possible for the CCHA to allocate some money to the Clerk-Treasurer's office to help compensate them for their work with the landlord registration list. Chip Hill is going to look into the legality of that. Matt Curry asked Leslee Robinson what dollar amount would hypothetically make it worth it to her office. Leslee was unsure at this time. She recommended that the CCHA start compiling the list and talk with landlords and other realtors to get feedback about the ordinance.

Matt Curry noted that although some people have misconceptions, the CCHA members do not personally benefit financially from any fees or funds that are collected. For example, any profits made from selling a house go into the CCHA fund and back into CCHA programs and helping to beautify the community. Leslee Robinson suggested that the CCHA could do lunch with the Mayor to give the CCHA some exposure.

Mike Malcolm, who is the weights and measures inspector, shared that a couple years ago when the county passed an ordinance regarding fees for inspections, it took Laura only about two days to set up a database for this, it was not time-consuming to maintain, and they set it up so that payments could be made online.

Other

There were no new CCHA loan applications. It was noted that the house on Walnut Street had sold, and Leslee Robinson stated that she thought that there was a water leak on the property and she did not know that it was completely fixed. Matt Curry shared that Jennifer Duff knew who had bought the property and she thought that they would do a good job with it.

It was asked who Scott Leatherman reports to and Chip Hill answered that Leatherman reports to Gary Parrett. There was some discussion about the process when there is a code violation.

Adjournment

Mike Malcolm moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Matt Curry. The meeting was adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

Submitted by Steffanie Powers, Secretary