



## Tenant Services Committee

931 Yonge Street,  
Toronto, M4W 2H2

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The Tenant Services Committee (“TSC”) of the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (“TCHC”) held a virtual Public meeting on September 20, 2022, via WebEx, commencing at 10:01 a.m.

**TSC Directors Present:** John Campbell, Chair  
Marcel Charlebois  
Ubah Farah  
Councillor Paula Fletcher  
Debbie Douglas (10:01 a.m. – 10:29 a.m.)  
Mohammed Haque

**TSC Directors Absent:** Councillor Frances Nunziata

**Management Present:** Jag Sharma, President & Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”)  
Nadia Gouveia, Acting Chief Operating Officer (“COO”)  
Darragh Meagher, General Counsel & Corporate Secretary  
Jessica Hawes, Acting Chief Development Officer  
Allen Murray, Vice President, Facilities Management  
Paula Knight, Vice President, Strategic Planning and Communications  
Summer Nudel, Acting Commissioner of Housing Equity  
Richard Grotsch, Acting Senior Director, Business Operations  
Likwa Nkala, Acting Director, Programs and Partnerships  
Allan Britton, Acting Senior Director, Community Safety Unit

Julio Rigores, Manager, Engagement Refresh  
Christine Yan, Acting Assistant Corporate  
Secretary

**Guests Present:** Silvia Fraser, Director of Transformation, ModernTO  
(10:01 – 10:53 a.m.) Peter Harron, Director of Development, CreateTO

A quorum being present, Mr. Campbell, serving as Chair, called the meeting to order, and Ms. Yan served as recording secretary.

### **ITEM 1 CHAIR'S REMARKS**

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The Chair welcomed everyone to the TSC meeting, noted the Acknowledgement of the Land, and notified everyone that due to the need for social distancing to limit the spread of COVID-19, TCHC is holding this TSC meeting virtually.

### **DEPUTATIONS**

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The Chair polled for any depositions to be heard at the meeting. No written deputation was received. The following verbal deputation was presented:

- Item 10B – Tenant Complaints Process Update (*Veronika Hering*)

### **ITEM 2 APPROVAL OF PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA**

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The TSC resolved to prioritize Item 8 – Update on Tenant Led Improvements in Basement Spaces to be the first regular item for discussion.

*Motion carried* **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Mr. Charlebois, seconded by Ms. Farah and carried, the TSC approved the Public meeting agenda of the September 20, 2022 meeting, as amended.

### **ITEM 3 CHAIR'S POLL RE: CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

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The Chair requested members of the TSC to indicate any agenda item in which they had a conflict of interest, together with the nature of the interest. **No conflicts were declared.**

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<b>ITEM 8</b>	<b>UPDATE ON TENANT LED IMPROVEMENTS IN BASEMENT SPACES</b>	TSC:2022-48
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The above-captioned report (TSC:2022-48) was circulated to TSC members prior to the meeting.

Mr. Murray provided an overview of the report and was available to answer questions of the TSC. Highlights of the discussion include:

- Members reiterated the intention of the request is to allow parents to provide a safe space to keep their children indoor. Members enquired if a compromised position can be achieved where TCHC can lay out the types of renovations that tenants are allowed to make at their own expense following all the necessary conditions.
- Management indicated that TCHC would permit tenants to complete non-structural improvements to basement spaces which include painting of existing ceilings or walls, installation of drapes or window covering, installation of loose flooring/area rugs, general decorating and placement of furniture to permit virtual learning or work from home activities. Items that TCHC is not able to accommodate include renovations that require a building permit, such as putting up walls to create a separate room or conducting plumbing/electrical work, which present potential challenges in complying with the Building Code.
- There have been extensive conversations within TCHC (among Facilities Management, Legal, Risk and Insurance and Regional Staff) as well as with other external social housing providers in the development of this report.
- Management further elaborated that when the renovation work requires a building permit, as the building owner, TCHC will be responsible for securing the building permit and ensuring all Building Code requirements are met. TCHC would be required to submit the drawings and be responsible for monitoring the projects from start to finish,

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which TCHC is not staffed or resourced to undertake.

- In part, the need to secure building permit approval is driven by concerns that renovated basement space may be used as sleeping space, which may give rise to the need for TCHC, as the building owner, to ensure that any proposed renovation is undertaken in a manner that ensures compliance with the Fire Code. When the basement space is subdivided (as a result of the renovation), the challenge that would exist is the ongoing need to ensure that space is only used for a specific purpose without invading the privacy of a tenant, and TCHC has limited ability to do that as a landlord.
- From a risk and insurance perspective, TCHC's insurance provider continues to caution against permitting tenant led alternations to TCHC basement spaces, as such renovations may have insurance and liability concerns for TCHC.
- TCHC management also conducted an environmental scan of other social housing providers. Those social housing providers consulted reported that they do not have a policy permitting tenants to make alterations to basement spaces.
- It was suggested that TCHC engage architects to explore options for non-structural changes to basement spaces such as using modular walls to create spaces, which do not require a building permit.
- A question was asked on the anticipated demand for such type of basement alternations. Management provided that the demand may not be significant however even a small project still requires staff time to apply for the building permit, ensure the drawings are acceptable, work with the Building Department to arrange inspections, and oversee the project from start to completion. Legal agreements will be required to be an enforcement mechanism in the case that a tenant defaults on the obligation to repay. Additional costs that may incur include construction cost and permit cost if TCHC had to complete a renovation that had been abandoned by the tenant part way through the process and TCHC would not be able to recover.
- Members suggested that TCHC run a pilot project to entertain a few requests and determine the impact.
- A further question was raised on the implications of these improvements on rental as such basement alternations may create additional rooms.

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- Action item: Management to report back to the TSC on possible options for non-structural improvements such as temporary modular or movable room divisions, and the impact of these improvements on rental.

*Motion carried*      **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Ms. Farah, seconded by Ms. Douglas and carried, the TSC received Report TSC:2022-48, being the Update on Tenant Led Improvements in Basement Spaces report, for its information.

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**ITEM 4      CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC TSC MEETING OF JULY 6, 2022**

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*Motion carried*      **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Mr. Charlebois, seconded by Mr. Haque and carried, the TSC confirmed the above-captioned minutes without amendments.

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**ITEM 5      BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES AND ACTION ITEMS UPDATE**

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*Motion carried*      **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Ms. Farah, seconded by Mr. Haque and carried, the TSC received the matters reported as Business Arising from the Public Meeting Minutes and Action Items Update as of July 6, 2022 for its information.

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**ITEM 6      UPDATE ON MODERNT0** TSC:2022-50

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The above-captioned report (TSC:2022-50) was circulated to TSC members prior to the meeting.

Mr. Murray provided an overview of the report and was available to answer questions of the TSC. Highlights of the discussion include:

- The TSC resolved to refer this report to the Board of Directors at the

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September 29, 2022 Board meeting, as the relocation may give rise to other areas of concern such as accessibility of the relocated site, availability of public parking especially accessible parking spots, operational impact and staff implications.

- Action Item: Management to report back on the availability of public parking around the Metro Hall site, especially the availability of accessible parking spots.
- A question was asked around savings that will be achieved as a result of the relocation. It was provided that no cost will incur to TCHC in relation to occupying the space at the Metro Hall.
- ModernTO is working on a mobility ratio of 1% to 1.7% (approximately 2 to 3 days a week in the office) to accommodate a number of City agencies into the Metro Hall. ModernTO will continue working with City divisions and City agencies to understand the exact mobility ratio that would be applied based on the functional requirements, and allocate the space accordingly. TCHC is currently allocated a floor and a half at the Metro Hall site. Further adjustments may be made to accommodate TCHC's operational needs.

*Motion carried*

**ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Ms. Farah, seconded by Councillor Fletcher and carried, the TSC received Report TSC:2022-50, being the Update on ModernTO report, for its information and forwarded the report to the Board for its information.

**COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY SUB-COMMITTEE ("CSAC") CHAIR'S**

**ITEM 7**

**REPORT**

VERBAL REPORT

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The CSAC Chair provided an update on recent activities of the CSAC, highlighting that the Committee continues to work on the community safety work with a focus on supporting communities affected by chronic gun violence and vulnerabilities.

*Motion carried*      **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Mr. Haque, seconded by Ms. Farah and carried, the TSC received for its information the verbal report of the CSAC Chair.

**ITEM 9      OCHE BI-ANNUAL UPDATE – JANUARY TO JUNE 2022      TSC:2022-43**

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The above-captioned report (TSC:2022-43) was circulated to TSC members prior to the meeting.

Ms. Nudel provided an overview of the report and was available to answer questions of the TSC. Highlights of the discussion include:

- With respect to TCHC staff's compliance with the OCHE approach, the Operations Team, the OCHE and the Human Resources Team work together to make sure staff having difficulties following the OCHE approach get appropriate training and assistance. It was recommended that compliance with the OCHE approach be identified as a performance indicator for staff.
- It was recommended that communication to tenants be revised to soften the impact of the N4 letter. The Operations Team will work with the Communications Team and the Legal Services Team to develop a complementary letter that goes in the N4 package.
- It was identified that some cases have been resolved as a result of TCHC's ongoing work with tenants, while the files were being referred to the OCHE. The Operations Team is looking at lowering the amount of time it takes to send a file to the OCHE and improving process efficiency.
- Questions were asked about the percentage of units that are late on rent payment on a monthly basis and if the current system can identify habitual late payers, as such information may inform the extent of the problem and prioritize the hard-to-collect cases to the OCHE.
- The variety of rent payment methods was elaborated.

*Motion carried*      **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Mr. Charlebois, seconded by Mr. Haque and carried, the TSC received for information Report TSC:2022-43, being the OCHE Bi-Annual Update Report for January to June 2022, and forwarded it to the Board of Directors for its information.

**TCHC'S OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE**  
**ITEM 10A MEASURES** TSC:2022-44

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The above-captioned report (TSC:2022-44) was circulated to TSC members prior to the meeting.

Ms. Gouveia provided an overview of the report and was available to answer questions of the TSC. Highlights of the discussion include:

- Ms. Gouveia highlighted that the vacancy rate across TCHC in July 2022 was 2.42%, which has declined from 2.70% in June. Further work is underway to continue reducing the rate. The total arrears across TCHC for July 2022 was \$26.57 million, of which \$23.81 million were rent and parking arrears. TCHC is undertaking a review of the updated Arrears Collection Process to find efficiency and better address tenant concerns.
- Management has developed a fully operationalized "Tenancy Communications" channel that will support a larger Tenancy Management Community of Practice through regular updates and the development of best practices related to key tenancy management activities, including rent collection.
- In-person trainings will be offered to all frontline staff in relation to the new Arrears Collection Process, which include training on the process of escalating a file to the OCHE.

*Motion carried*      **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Councillor Fletcher, seconded by Ms. Farah and carried, the TSC received Report TSC:2022-44,



being the TCHC's Operational Performance Measures report, for its information.

**ITEM 10B TENANT COMPLAINTS PROCESS UPDATE TSC:2022-45**

The above-captioned report (TSC:2022-45) was circulated to TSC members prior to the meeting.

A verbal deputation was received from Veronika Hering with respect to this item.

Ms. Gouveia provided an overview of the report and was available to answer questions of the TSC. Highlights of the discussion include:

- Management provided that most of the tenants that the Solutions Team has worked with have found resolutions to their issues. The Operations Team will get in touch with the deputation to follow up on their issues.

*Motion carried*      **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Ms. Farah, seconded by Mr. Haque and carried, the TSC received Report TSC:2022-45, being the Tenant Complaints Process Update report, for its information.

**ITEM 10C TENANT ENGAGEMENT REFRESH UPDATE TSC:2022-46**

The above-captioned report (TSC:2022-46) was circulated to TSC members prior to the meeting.

*Motion carried*      **ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Ms. Farah, seconded by Mr. Haque and carried, the TSC received Report TSC:2022-46, being the Tenant Engagement Refresh Update report, for its information.

**VIOLENCE REDUCTION PROGRAM UPDATE**  
**ITEM 10D – Q2 2022** **TSC:2022-47**

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The above-captioned report (TSC:2022-47) was circulated to TSC members prior to the meeting.

Ms. Gouveia, Mr. Britton and Mr. Nkala provided an overview of the report and were available to answer questions of the TSC. Highlights of the discussion include:

- Staff further elaborated on the improvements observed in revitalization communities with Violence Reduction Programs (“VRP”), which include reduction in anti-social behaviours, enhanced feeling and perception of safety and security, and tenants especially young tenants being able to congregate safely in the public.
- With respect to the Community Safety Unit (“CSU”) staffing update, a class of 12 Special Constables has been deployed to the regions, many of whom bring a wide variety of diverse experiences and cultures. Another class with 10 to 15 new Special Constables will start their training on October 3.
- Questions were asked around the demographic characteristics of the newly recruited Special Constables. It was provided that TCHC embraces diversity and is working to ensure the organization has broad representation of equity-deserving groups across all divisions and at all levels in the organization. The Human Resources Team collects information through the hiring process where job applicants can respond to the demographic questions on a voluntary basis. However candidates are not obliged or compelled to respond to those questions. The Human Resources Team tracks, monitors and reports on diverse representation in the organization and will report back in the future on the representation of the TCHC workforce.
- TCHC has done significant recruitment outreach to indigenous communities and organizations as part of its commitment to advancing increased representation.
- A request was made to require job applicants for employment with TCHC to self-identify their demographic characteristics. Legal opinions will be consulted.

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- Action item: management to report back on TCHC's ability to require applicants for employment with TCHC to self-identify their demographic characteristics.

*Motion  
carried*

**ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Councillor Fletcher, seconded by Mr. Haque and carried, the TSC received Report TSC:2022-47, being the Violence Reduction Program Update report for the second quarter of 2022, for its information and directed TCHC management to report back on TCHC's ability to require applicants for employment with TCHC to self-identify their demographic characteristics.

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**ITEM 11      Q2 2022 TENANTS FIRST UPDATE**

TSC:2022-49

The above-captioned report (TSC:2022-49) was circulated to TSC members prior to the meeting.

*Motion  
carried*

**ON MOTION DULY MADE** by Mr. Haque, seconded by Ms. Farah and carried, the TSC received the information in Report TSC:2022-49, being the Tenants First Update report for the second quarter of 2022.

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**TERMINATION**

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was moved by Mr. Charlebois and seconded Councillor Fletcher. The public meeting terminated at 10:46 a.m.

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Secretary

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Chair, Tenant Services Committee