

# Memorandum

To: Housing and Homelessness Commissioners

From: Savannah Clement, Housing Policy and Planning Analyst

Subject: September 6, 2018 HHC Meeting Cover Memo

Date: September 4, 2018

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Attached please find:

- The meeting agenda
- Item 1: Draft minutes of the July 25, 2018 meeting for approval
- Item 2: Memo and application for landlord-tenant services, administered by Metropolitan Tenants Organization and Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing

We look forward to seeing you on September 6<sup>th</sup>.



## **HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS COMMISSION**

**Thursday, September 6, 2018**

**7:00 PM**

**Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge, Room 2402**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM**
- 2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES July 25, 2018**
- 3. PUBLIC COMMENT**
- 5. METROPOLITAN TENANTS ORGANIZATION/LAWYERS' COMMITTEE FOR BETTER HOUSING APPLICATION FOR LANDLORD-TENANT SERVICES FUNDING**
- 6. STAFF REPORTS**
- 7. CHAIR'S REPORT**
- 8. NEW/OTHER BUSINESS**
- 9. ADJOURNMENT**

Next Meeting: October 4, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in room 2402

**Order & Agenda Items are subject to change.** Information about the Housing and Homelessness Commission is available at: [www.cityofevanston.org/government/agendas-minutes](http://www.cityofevanston.org/government/agendas-minutes). Questions may be directed to Savannah Clement at 847.448.8679.

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*DRAFT*

## MEETING MINUTES

### HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS COMMISSION

Wednesday, July 25, 2018, 7:00 P.M.

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, Room 2402

**Present:** Chair Ellen Cushing, Alderman Eleanor Revelle, Monika Bobo, Noelle Gilbreath, Moika Long, Mark Kruse, Larry Donoghue, Renee Phillips

**Absent:** Vice-Chair Geri Palmer

**Staff:** Sarah Flax, Housing and Grants Administrator; Savannah Clement, Housing Policy and Planning Analyst

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#### **Call to order**

Chair Ellen Cushing called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM with a quorum present.

#### **Approve minutes of June 19, 2018 meeting**

Larry moved for approval, and Noelle Gilbreath seconded; Monika Bobo abstained. The motion was approved 4-0.

#### **Public comment**

Tina Paden, Evanston landlord, provided public comment stating that she will not be taking tenants from the TBRA program anymore due to money owed to her by Connections for the Homeless.

#### **Connections for the Homeless application for renewal funding for the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program**

Betty Bogg, executive director of Connections for the Homeless, provided an overview of the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program. TBRA is a two year program designed to help families with children under the age of 18 increase income and achieve self-sufficiency through rental subsidies and case management. Connections works closely with families to build skills. A case manager meets with families at least once month to discuss financial situation. Families pay 30% of their household income toward the rent, and Connections pays the balance. All of the TBRA funds are pass through. Connections leverages additional funds for case management. The program has had a lot of success. Populations served in this program are often not able to be served in other programs, so the TBRA program fills a vital role. There are currently six people on waiting list, but the waiting list is not kept open all year - only when Connections is about to begin a new cohort.

All referrals for the TBRA program come through school districts 65 and 202. There are approximately 400 students from both districts combined that qualify as homeless under McKinney-Vento.

Question about the short waitlist. Connections doesn't keep waitlist open year round. Usually opens up in spring, and there are certain eligibility requirements. There is a narrow definition of eligibility for this program, but despite that demand is growing.

Commissioners requested a snapshot of the program since its inception. The first TBRA grant had rolling enrollment, so provided quarterly reports to the City Council Human Services Committee. Staff can send a previous TBRA report to the Commission.

Question about what Connections is doing to prevent other issues down the road with tenants and landlords. Connections does not dictate how people should live, but works with the families to help make good decisions. What consequences are there if tenants aren't paying rent? How will tenants learn if Connections comes in and helps? Connections tries to provide as much coaching and guidance as they can. They use evidence-based practices. When issues come up, case managers meet with families more often to figure out and address barriers. Connections does hold clients accountable, but it is not punitive.

Question about referrals - people could be shelters and told about the program, but have to be referred through schools. Individuals are not eligible for TBRA program, only families.

Connections does offer financial literacy. What else is Connections doing to prepare families for successful exits from the program? The focus of case management conversations is often on budgeting, and Connections has funded a savings incentive program to help families save and prepare to exit the program.

Is Connections promoting trade programs? Yes, sterile processing and other training programs are offered to families.

Is Connections doing anything around behavioral health? Connections is pursuing a grant to have someone onsite to provide therapy to families. Connections works in partnership with Trilogy and other mental health providers.

Question about whether there have been issues between Connections and other landlords. Betty Bogg said no, there have not.

Mark Kruse motioned to renew funding, Alderman Reville seconded, Moika Long voted no, and Larry Donoghue recused himself because he is on Connections' board. The motion was approved 6-1.

### **Emergency Solutions Grant funding allocations**

Sarah Flax provided background and overview of the Emergency Solutions Grant allocations. She said that ESG is very proscriptive regarding how it is used - it is capped on outreach and prevention expenditures. The federal government has prioritized the

bulk of the money for rapid re-housing. Any agency that receives ESG funds has to be a part of the Continuum of Care, and must have the capacity to administer the funds. The number of households served annually has gone down because households now receive longer subsidies (12 months from six months).

The Commission asked what other organizations apply for ESG funding? Sarah said that none have because only certain organizations have the capacity to deal with all of the compliance that comes with administering ESG. The Commission asked if there has ever been a request for proposals for ESG allocations? Sarah said no, but that doesn't mean other organizations can't get help for their clients with ESG funds. Family Promise and YMCA refer clients to Connections for ESG assistance. Administration of the program is very extensive and compliance heavy for the amount of money.

Question about how many households were served with ESG. Rapid Re-Housing - seven households were served.

Monika Bobo moved to approve the funding recommendation, Noelle Gilbreath seconded, Larry Donoghue recused himself because he is on Connections' board. The motion was approved 7-0.

#### **Affordable housing plan scope of work**

Commissioners like the principles, the idea of working with an outside agency or consultant, the HHC's role, and the sub-regional approach proposed in the scope of work. Commissioners are concerned about the rushed timeline proposed. Sustainable funding should be a goal in the plan.

Renee Phillips proposed putting together a letter to attract private small landlords to work with housing programs.

Commissioners asked: What's City Council's buy-in? Staff said will know more after July 30th City Council meeting. Staff would like get some kind of technical assistance for the plan.

What does City have in mind regarding Steering Committee? Separate from HHC, but would have some HHC members.

Commissioners think community engagement information sessions will be crucial to the plan. The Steering Committee and/or Commission could collect feedback from residents and include it in the plan's recommendations.

One suggestion is to provide a deadline to know whether or not the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) can assist with developing the plan. If CMAP cannot help, then develop a timeline for hiring a consultant. Commissioners recommended the City form a steering committee by a certain date.

**Staff Reports**

Staff provided updates on affordable housing work.

**Chair's Report**

Chair Ellen Cushing appreciates the feedback from commissioners on the previous City housing plans.

**New/Other Business**

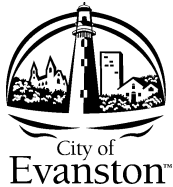
No new business.

**Adjournment**

Ald. Revelle motioned to adjourn, Mark Kruse seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting of the commission is Thursday, September 6, at 7:00 p.m. in room 2402.

Respectfully submitted,  
Savannah Clement, Housing Policy and Planning Analyst



# Memorandum

To: Housing and Homelessness Commission

From: Sarah Flax, Housing and Grants Administrator  
Savannah Clement, Housing Policy and Planning Analyst

Subject: Landlord-Tenant Services with Metropolitan Tenants Organization & Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing

Date: August 31, 2018

Recommended Action:

Staff recommends approval by the Housing and Homelessness Commission of a not to exceed \$70,000 contract with Metropolitan Tenants Organization (MTO) and Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing (LCBH) for landlord-tenant services. This recommendation will go to the Planning and Development Committee on September 17 for approval with an effective date of October 1, 2018.

Funding Source:

The funding source is the City's Affordable Housing Fund, 250.21.5465.65497. The Affordable Housing Fund has a current uncommitted cash balance of approximately \$600,000; including \$114,500 budgeted for housing services in 2018.

Summary:

The City released a Request for Applications (RFA) on June 28, 2018 for landlord-tenant services; applications were due July 31, 2018. An RFA for landlord-tenant services was issued in order to ensure the most efficient and effective delivery of services. City staff held a non-mandatory pre-application meeting to answer questions from prospective applicants on July 12, 2018, and posted answers to the questions on the City's website on July 20, 2018.

The RFA is for a 12-month contract. Through the RFA, the City provided a fee schedule (see attached "Exhibit A – Fee Schedule") for the basic scope of work and additional services. The additional services may be contracted for based on a variety of factors, including the cost for the basic scope. For example, tenant organizing is listed as an additional service, so bidding on that service was not required in order to be considered for the basic scope of work. Additionally, a bidder could have proposed an alternative scope of work that includes the basic scope of services and any additional services listed or not included in the RFA, with a rationale for the alternative service delivery format. A justification for the alternative proposal, as well as a cost structure, must have been provided in order to be considered.

The City only received one application in response to the RFA, a joint application from the Metropolitan Tenants Organization (MTO) and Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing (LCBH). MTO provided bids for the basic scope of services and all of the additional services listed. MTO proposed a fee of \$30,000 for the basic scope of work, and a combined fee of \$10,000 for group trainings, mediation services, and tenant organizing. In addition, MTO is proposing to pay \$30,000 to LCBH for legal consultation services and technical assistance to tenants writing letters to landlords asking for rent reductions/repairs, etc., free legal assistance for low-income tenants facing eviction, and litigation services to combat retaliation and illegal lockouts.

Since 2012, the City has provided funding to Open Communities, through 12-month agreements, to support its landlord-tenant work in Evanston. In 2017, Open Communities' received \$40,500 from the City to handle approximately 30 Evanston cases per month, disseminate information to landlords and tenants through trainings and documents posted on Open Communities' website, and provide mediation services to landlords and tenants when necessary.

MTO's proposed fee for assisting residents with landlord-tenant inquiries through its hotline and Evanston's 311 system, handling 30-35 cases per month, providing two trainings to landlords and tenants, and distributing information on its website about landlord-tenant rights and responsibilities is \$33,500. In addition, MTO has proposed providing mediation services and tenant organizing at \$1,500 and \$5,000, respectively. MTO is also proposing a partnership with LCBH, for legal consultation services, at an additional \$30,000 for the 12-month contract. This collaboration with LCBH will create more efficiency in service delivery by reducing intake redundancy and improving data collection. It will also more effectively help low-income tenants avoid displacement through free legal representation in eviction cases and illegal lockouts.

The MTO/LCBH landlord-tenant contract would run from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. The contract would include:

- Operate a free hotline for landlord-tenant inquiries Monday through Friday from 1-5 pm; for callers who call outside of those hours, MTO will return all calls within two business days
- Respond to landlord-tenant inquiries received through the City's 311 system
- Deliver information and assistance to landlords and tenants, including help with writing letters, strategies on how to resolve issues through negotiations, and referrals to other sources
- Work with the City to maintain current landlord-tenant information on the City's and MTO's websites
- Coordinate at least one two-hour training for Evanston tenants and/or small landlords
- Work with the City's Property Standards Division to provide at least one two-hour training to Evanston property managers
- Offer mediation services to landlords and tenants, as needed
- Identify potential buildings for tenant organizing if the tenants are facing common problems such as a foreclosure, poor maintenance, building security concerns, health hazards, etc.
- Provide direct legal services to low-income tenants, as necessary



Staff recommends funding all of the services proposed by MTO and LCBH at a not to exceed amount of \$70,000 for the 12-month contract beginning October 1, 2018. Staff proposes adding the two proposed trainings in MTO's application, and a \$10,000 legal retainer fee to the basic scope of work. This would result in a base contract amount of \$43,500 (\$30,000 for the basic scope of services listed in the RFA, \$1,750 for each training, and a \$10,000 legal retainer fee for Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing). The remaining \$26,500 in the contract would be for mediation services, tenant organizing and legal services. These would be reimbursable expenses billed to the City on a quarterly basis, up to \$26,500. Contract renewal may be considered in 2019, contingent on the delivery of services and subject to the availability of funding.

Attachments:

- MTO/LCBH application/qualifications narrative
- Exhibit A – Fee Schedule



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Chicago, IL 60616-1390  
Tel: 773/292-4980  
Hotline: 773/292-4988  
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[www.tenants-rights.org](http://www.tenants-rights.org)

July 23, 2018

City of Evanston, Housing and Grants Division  
Lorraine M. Morton Civic Center  
2100 Ridge Road, Room 3203  
Evanston, Illinois 60201

To Whom It May Concern:

**The Metropolitan Tenants Organization (MTO) is pleased to submit a proposal to perform Landlord-Tenant Services for the City of Evanston. MTO is the largest provider of services to tenants and tenants' organizations in the Chicago Metropolitan area. MTO has been providing services to renters for over 30 years and we believe positive relationships between tenants and landlords can make a difference in ensuring that housing is decent and affordable.**

**MTO proposed legal partner, the Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing (LCBH), has been in existence since 1980. LCBH is the only legal aid organization in Cook County that focuses on serving renters living in private, unsubsidized housing. LCBH has defended thousands of tenants in eviction court and helped them to avoid homelessness. Our proposed budget includes \$30,000 for LCBH to provide technical support to MTO and free legal representation and advice for Evanston tenants with low and moderate incomes.**

**Many cities across the country are creating programs that provide legal representation for tenants facing eviction. By partnering with LCBH, MTO will create an effective and efficient program that provides landlords and tenants greater awareness of their rights and responsibilities. Our program cannot stop all evictions, but it can greatly reduce the devastating impact that evictions have on individuals and communities.**

**As you consider our request, we hope that you will find the resources to slightly expand the program, which, in the long run will reduce other costs by preventing homelessness. Together MTO, LCBH and the City of Evanston can forge a partnership which will preserve affordable housing and stabilize tenants in their homes and communities.**

**If you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to contact me at 773-292-4980 x 226 or via email at [johnb@tenants-rights.org](mailto:johnb@tenants-rights.org).**

Sincerely,  
John Bartlett, Executive Director

**Landlord-Tenants Submission**  
**City of Evanston, Illinois**

**Qualifications and Experience of Team:**

**Metropolitan Tenants Organization (MTO)**

Currently, the Metropolitan Tenants Organization (MTO) has three interrelated program areas: Tenant Stabilization, Affordable Housing Preservation, and Advocacy.

**Tenant Stabilization** works with individual tenants to stabilize their housing situation. Our Tenant Stabilization program includes the Tenants' Rights Hotline, the Squared Away Chicago App, and the Healthy Homes Program.

The *Tenants' Rights Hotline* and the recently launched *Squared Away Chicago* app serve about 10,000 renters every year. The hotline and app empower renters to preserve and stabilize their housing situation by giving tenants tools and support needed to resolve current housing issues. When combined with the Hotline, the app makes it easy for tenants find out the law, communicate with their landlord, document their situation, and most importantly, solve their housing problems. These two services also act as the eyes and ears of the agency. They alert us to emerging issues. The hotline and app serve as portals to MTO's organizing and advocacy programs.

MTO's *Healthy Homes Program (HHP)* provides families with additional assistance to address home-based health hazards. MTO conducts home inspections to assess the problems, and provide information to tenants to help them identify, correct, and maintain a safe and healthy home. The *HHP* also acts as a means to bridge health care and housing by looking at prevention. MTO has developed partnerships with several agencies, health care providers, and universities including, Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), Sinai Urban Health Institute (SUHI), Loyola University, and funding from the Environment Protection Agency (EPA). This collaboration works with renters, particularly homes with children, to abate home-based health hazards like asthma triggers and lead.

**Affordable Housing Preservation Program (AHPP)** at MTO works to stabilize tenants and their connectedness with their communities by preserving affordable housing. MTO works in subsidized and market housing. Low-income renters face a variety of pressures and conditions that can lead to displacement. Deteriorating buildings, poor maintenance, foreclosures, and building owners opting out of affordable contract renewals are all reasons that may force tenants to relocate, thus affecting their stability. MTO's AHPP works to help renters address these issues and remain in affordable, stable, safe, and decent housing. MTO works in approximately 40 buildings every year with new and/or existing tenants' associations.

**Tenant Advocacy** at MTO is rooted in the organization's vision and values of nurturing movements of families advocating on their own behalf for positive change. Sometimes that change means promoting legislative policies and programs. Engagement of renting families takes place at all levels from the Tenant Hotline, the Squared Away Chicago app, walk-ins, or

networking at community events. Families learn about their housing rights and the interconnectedness to other rights such as health care and civil rights. As tenant leaders increase their skill sets through the experience of asserting their rights, MTO develops opportunities to engage them in city, state, and national policy campaigns. Through MTO renters are able to identify commonalities between their own experiences and those of renters from other parts of the city and region. They identify common issues and develop campaigns and organizing strategies to move issues forward. Emerging leaders are nurtured with training opportunities, as well as encouragement to take on positions of leadership in broader campaigns for institutional change.

Through these campaigns, renting families can meet with government officials and impact public and private rental housing policy. As they participate in broader social justice coalitions in which MTO participates, they experience the successes peoples' movements can have. This experience helps to build momentum and ownership over the process of positive social change.

A survey of MTO's program participants highlights our capacity to work with low-income households and individuals. Almost fifty-five percent of constituents have incomes at or below the poverty line, 71% are African American, 15% are Latino/Hispanic. Seventy-five percent of all people who use MTO's services are women. Fifteen percent of our constituents identify as immigrants and refugees.

Most of the service population lives in Cook County's poorest neighborhoods. Their homes are often in disrepair, with pests, heating problems, leaks, mold, etc. The women are often afraid to complain out of fear of eviction and the threat it poses to their families. Moving from home to home is a way of life. Even though moving costs money and harms their children's education, most of the women feel they have no choice.

MTO has the capacity to service Evanston's Spanish speaking population. MTO has 3 bi-lingual Spanish speaking staff. Should other languages be required MTO has relationships that can provide this assistance on an as needed basis.

MTO provides similar services for the City of Chicago and Cook County in its southern suburbs. For each, we provide renters with an information and referral phone help line, organize tenants' associations and host workshops on the tenant laws for the area. MTO has also had several EPA grants to assist renters around healthy homes issues such as lead paint hazards, pest, mold, etc.

### **Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing (LCBH)**

Since its founding in 1980, LCBH has provided direct legal assistance for low-income families facing eviction or other serious housing issues. As the needs of renters changed, so did LCBH's services. When Chicago's affordable housing supply rapidly declined, placing more renters at risk of homelessness, LCBH hired a social worker to help keep vulnerable families stable. When the foreclosure crisis placed entire buildings full of tenants at risk of eviction, LCBH intervened, winning settlements that awarded tenants financial damages and time to move. Drawing on its years of experience, LCBH helped to shape policies that protect Chicago's renters, such as the Residential Landlord and Tenant Ordinance (RLTO) and the Chicago's Protecting Tenants in

Foreclosed Rental Property Ordinance. This experience uniquely qualifies LCBH to provide consultation to the City of Evanston regarding its landlord-tenant or fair housing brochure as well as updates to its human rights ordinance.

LCBH primarily serves clients who are at-risk for homelessness, meaning that most clients are parents with minor children, seniors, or individuals with disabilities. As a result, LCBH reaches Chicago's most vulnerable citizens. In 2017, 70% of LCBH's clients were women, 67% were black/African American, 19% Hispanic/Latino, 11% white/Caucasian, and 2% multi-racial or other. Further, 43% of LCBH's clients identify as a person with a disability or a member of his/her household has a disability. 11% of clients are senior citizens. LCBH also has no bars to assisting undocumented renters.

LCBH ensures the cultural competency of its services by utilizing a client-centered approach and working closely with community-based organizations. This approach recognizes that clients come from many different backgrounds, that each has their own needs, which requires LCBH staff and attorneys to have the empathy, respect, and understanding necessary to allow every client to drive their own representation. For example, most of LCBH's clients are single African American women with children. LCBH educates its staff through in services that provide a broader prospective on the experiences of our clients. LCBH addresses language barriers by ensuring it has staff members and interns that are bilingual (Spanish speaking).

#### References

Leona Barth, City of Chicago MTO has had a contract with the City of Chicago to provide similar services since 1994. 312-744-0891- [Leona.Barth@cityofchicago.org](mailto:Leona.Barth@cityofchicago.org)

Pam White, Cook County, - MTO has had a contract with Cook County for close to 10 years. [pamela.white@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:pamela.white@cookcountyil.gov) (312) 603-1057

#### **Program Staff and Managers**

MTO has a dedicated and knowledgeable staff. The following positions will be assigned to the program:

Oversight of the program is vested in John Bartlett, MTO's Executive Director. John has 30-plus years of experience in nonprofit organizations dealing with tenant rights, including 20 years in management capacities at MTO. Mr. Bartlett is a trained professional mediator and has performed mediations for the US. Postal Service for the past 20 years.

MTO Assistant Director, Anita Lewis, will manage online staff. Ms. Lewis has been with the organization for almost 2 years and has 20 years of experience in affordable housing.

MTO's County Organizer, David Wilson, has worked with the organization 15 years. He answers calls from County residents and organizes tenants' associations in the County and the City. Mr. Wilson has organized and presented numerous Landlord and Tenants training seminars throughout his career. He has received high marks from participants for his thoroughness and capacity to relate to participants. Mr. Wilson has also been instrumental in organizing trainings

for HUD property managers. More than 80 managers attended the last training. Mr. Wilson is an expert in subsidized housing laws.

MTO's Hotline Coordinator, Lolita Davis, has been with the organization for 3 years. Ms. Davis has participated in trainings conducted by the Lawyers Committee for Better Housing and the National Alliance for HUD Tenants.

MTO Hotline Counselor, Javier Ruiz, is fully English/Spanish bilingual and has been working in service agencies in Chicago for several years.

MTO's Office Manager, Barette Barker, while not directly working with clients, will perform bookkeeping, billing and ordering supplies. She has been with the organization since 2015. She has 15 years of experience working in nonprofits

**LCBH staffing includes:**

LCBH's Executive Director, Mark Swartz, has been with LCBH for almost 10 years. He started up LCBH's Tenants in Foreclosure Intervention Project (TFIP), and then served as LCBH's Legal Director. Mr. Swartz graduated *cum laude* from the University of Wisconsin Law School.

LCBH Senior Attorney, Aileen C. Flanagan, attended Loyola University of Chicago Law School. Ms. Flanagan started at LCBH as a volunteer in 2010 and was recognized as the 2011 Tenant Advocate Volunteer of the Year. In 2012 she accepted a position as a full-time Staff Attorney with LCBH's Tenants in Foreclosure Intervention Project (TFIP). In addition to defending renters in eviction cases and filing affirmative renters' rights cases in Chicago, Ms. Flanagan manages the TFIP County initiative, providing education and financial information through its foreclosure prevention outreach program and managing the TFIP information helpline for Cook County renters.

LCBH Staff Attorney, Jonathon Raffensperger, represents tenants in eviction court, as well as in other litigation and non-litigation matters that relate to housing conditions and landlord-tenant issues. He is a graduate of Dartmouth College and the University of Chicago Law School and was admitted to practice in November 2010. Prior to joining LCBH, Jon was a litigation associate in private practice.

### **Fees**

Please see attached sheet

### **Contract**

MTO wishes to negotiate an exception to the insurance requirement of \$5,000,000. See Insurance section in Scope of Service.

### **M/W/EBE**

This is not applicable to MTO as the agency is a nonprofit and has no ownership. MTO's Board would qualify as 60% of MTO's board are people of color and 60% are women.

### **Project Proposal**



The Metropolitan Tenants Organization (MTO) proposes to partner with the Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing (LCBH) to provide Evanston tenants with comprehensive services that will stabilize and improve the living conditions of Evanston renters. MTO and LCBH have been providing tenants with services for well over 30 years. MTO and LCBH have worked together for decades as partners on many projects. This partnership will elevate the services to new standards. MTO will be the lead partner in the collaboration.

We believe with a small increase in the budget MTO and LCBH will be able to significantly increase the quantity and efficacy of services. Currently there are few free legal services available to Evanston renters. Most of these services are only available to subsidized tenants. The vast majority of low-income renters reside in private market. It is essential that when providing services that renters do not suffer any unintended consequences.

Since 2014, Evanston has averaged about 200 plus eviction filings every year. Half of those filings resulted in court ordered evictions. Displacement has severe consequences for tenants and in many cases can be avoided with minimal legal assistance. MTO and LCBH will institute an Evanston Eviction Prevention Program with the long-term goal of providing every renter with the service they will need to avoid eviction.

#### **Scope of Services:**

##### **Basic:**

MTO will operate a free help line for City of Evanston renters and landlords. The helpline will be open from 1 to 5 daily and will answer calls on a first come first served basis. MTO has the capacity to handle more than 30 cases every month. Callers will receive information that fosters a better understanding of and compliance with Evanston's Residential Landlord and Tenants Ordinance. For callers who do not call during helpline hours, MTO will return all calls within 48 hours. MTO will make two attempts to return the call.

Besides verbal information, all callers who request it will receive packets of information as follow-up which will include sample letters and other landlord tenant information. Information will be sent via mail or email. MTO will provide additional assistance to tenants and landlords which may include help in writing letters, strategies on how to resolve issues through negotiations, and referrals to other resources. Referrals include healthy homes services, homelessness prevention funding, and other resources, depending on the need. Callers can also request written information about the Evanston's RLTO and sample letters. The Hotline is a first line of defense in efforts to prevent homelessness and maintain Evanston's affordable rental housing.

MTO has extensive relationships with legal service providers as well as attorneys throughout the region. As a part of the contract MTO will make referrals to the best available free legal assistance provider. MTO is aware that for market rate tenants there are few resources which is why we are proposing that as a part of this contract, LCBH will provide direct legal services to low-income renters. By providing this service MTO and LCBH can make sure that low-income residents will receive the support they will need to avoid dislocation. Letters and legal information will resolve many issues, but sometimes it must be followed up with legal assistance, such as to defend against a wrongful eviction lawsuit.

The MTO-LCBH Partnership will coordinate and streamline legal referrals, reduce displacement, and make sure that renters have the tools and resources to avoid eviction and stay in their homes. MTO will act as a liaison between tenants and attorneys and work with renters to avoid eviction and unwanted displacement. The MTO-LCBH collaboration will decrease intake redundancy, create a smooth handoff of eviction cases, improve data collection and, in the end, increase tenant stability. Increased stability will have positive effects on both the families and their communities, including effects on education, health and employment.

MTO and LCBH will work with the City of Evanston to maintain current Landlord and Tenant information on the City of Evanston's website and MTO's website. MTO is currently investigating whether it is feasible to modify MTO's web app for Chicago to create a web app for Evanston that will contain downloadable and editable letter templates for rent reduction notices, 14-day termination notices, essential service notices, etc. Should it not be possible to change the web app, MTO will post all letters and information on its website, [www.tenants-rights.org](http://www.tenants-rights.org).

#### **Additional Services:**

MTO will organize and provide at least one two-hour training for Evanston tenants and/or small landlords. MTO routinely hosts trainings 20 to 30 trainings of this nature throughout the year. The trainings will provide an overview of Evanston's Residential Landlord and Tenants Ordinance as well as a questions and answer period to go over individual concerns. MTO will provide all participants with sample letters and other written materials.

MTO, at no cost to the City of Evanston, will participate in round tables of service provider networks and Evanston's Continuum of Care. Through participation in these forums MTO will expand outreach efforts to renters and will encourage renters to call as soon as problems arise and are easier to resolve rather than wait for a crisis which makes resolving problems more difficult. MTO is available to consult with the City of Evanston regarding emerging landlord and tenant's issues and help to develop a proactive response that may require programmatic or legislative fixes.

As a part of this agreement, MTO will organize a two-hour training for property managers. MTO will work with the City's Property Standards Division to conduct outreach to landlords, particularly small landlords and those with a history of poor performance. MTO will work with Taft West, Vice President of Technical Assistance and Sustainability for the Chicago Community Loan Fund and an LCBH board member, to facilitate the training.

On an as needed basis, MTO will provide mediation services for landlords and tenants. MTO's Executive Director is a professional mediator and can handle complex in-person disputes. MTO staff are able to work with tenants to communicate with landlords to develop win-win agreements. MTO will also conduct informal mediations/negotiations over the phone.

When there are building-wide repair or other problems, working with a tenants' association is often the most effective and efficient means of resolving disputes. When tenants call with a problem, they are asked if others in their building are facing a similar problem. A counselor will identify a building for organizing if the majority of tenants are facing a common problem such as a foreclosure, poor maintenance, building security concerns, health hazards, or other issues that may threaten the viability and affordability of the complex. In those cases, MTO's field



organizer will help residents form tenant associations, and provide the training and support needed to help resolve the issue(s) threatening the preservation of the building, while also working to keep it affordable.

Finally, LCBH's staff attorneys will provide high-quality eviction defense and pre-litigation to tenants who do not have an attorney. These services will include representation for low-income renters facing eviction as well as litigation services to combat retaliation and illegal lockouts. LCBH has extensive experience in this area. In 2017, LCBH represented 255 renters and their families in eviction court as well as represented 132 families in non-litigation matters.

In 2017, there were approximately 29,965 eviction filings in Cook County, with many more renters being “informally evicted” by a coercive landlord, poor conditions, or lockouts. LCBH is working on a forthcoming report analyzing Cook County eviction court records. Preliminary findings show that renters in eviction court without an attorney are at a huge disadvantage. When renters do not have an attorney, 36% of renters lose their case at their very first time in front of the judge; with an attorney, the likelihood of a renter losing at the first court date is nearly eliminated (3%). Renters without attorneys are a third more likely to get a judgment (62.7 v. 48.4) and represented renters are 80% more likely to get a dismissal (25.7 v. 47.0).

The impact of being evicted has lasting consequences. This is true even for those who paid their rent in a timely manner, but were evicted without cause, or where an eviction suit was merely filed and was either dismissed or adjudicated in favor of the tenant. And since many landlords and housing authorities refuse to take on persons with evictions on their record, families are often forced to relocate to neighborhoods with higher levels of poverty and violent crime, or accept units that are lower in quality, higher in cost, or both.

LCBH attorneys will provide consultation to make sure letters written by tenants to landlords regarding rent reductions, eviction notices, essential services and other issues are consistent with the provisions of Evanston’s Landlord Tenant Ordinance. When such letters are not effective at resolving a dispute, LCBH will assess the appropriateness of providing more in-depth legal services.

### **Service Delivery**

MTO will accept referrals by phone and email from City’s 311 system. MTO will also accept referrals from City’s website and from all other Evanston sources including governmental and nonprofit entities. On at least a monthly basis, MTO will provide onsite counseling in Evanston at a City of Evanston office/meeting space. We will acknowledge all call with 2 business days and resolve all simple requests within 5 days.

### **Reporting:**

Reports to funders are provided as specified. MTO will work with the City of Evanston to develop a report format. Reports will be turned in on a monthly basis.

Tracking and reporting are done primarily through dBase software and Microsoft Excel. MTO has developed mapping capabilities for the City of Chicago. We expect to be able to develop the same for Evanston. The exception to our monthly reporting cycle involves our Tenants Rights

Hotline, for which a weekly recap report is a regular Agenda item at our Friday All-Staff Meeting. This schedule recognizes the critical nature of the Hotline to our overall program, and focuses on Hotline staffing (both staff and volunteer), number of calls, and any anomalies in the types of calls (MTO's Hotline calls have historically served as an early warning system on the state of the rental housing market).

Additionally, the Hotline/Volunteer Supervisor and the Executive Director/Assistant Director meet no less than monthly to discuss benchmarks and any needed adjustments.

**Pricing**

Please see attached sheet.

**Insurance:**

MTO wishes to negotiate the comprehensive general liability requirement discussed in the RFP. MTO believes it creates a hardship to effectively and efficiently perform the services required. Currently, MTO maintains 1,000,000 combined single limit for each occurrence and can designate the City as Additional Insured. It would cost an additional \$4,000 to increase that to \$5,000,000 which would add unnecessary additional costs to the project, which MTO would then take on. We already have absorbed some of the costs of the project. We ask for a waiver from this exceedingly high amount of insurance. No other governmental agency, including the City of Chicago, requires such a large policy.



## Exhibit A - Fee Schedule

Fee Summary	
Total Staff Costs	\$66,954.90
Total Reimbursable Expenses	\$3,045.10
Total M/W/EBE Participation	\$0.00
<b>Total Project Cost:</b>	<b>\$70,000.00</b>

Fee Detail by Task				
Task 1: Basic Scope of Services (1.A.-C.)				
Assigned Staff	Firm Name	Avg. Hourly Rate	Project Hours	Proposed Cost
Lolita Davis	Metropolitan Tenants Org	\$23.34	300	\$7,002.00
Barette Barker	Metropolitan Tenants Org	\$24.02	84	\$2,017.00
Anita Lewis	Metropolitan Tenants Org	\$36.24	120	\$4,348.80
Javier Ruiz	Metropolitan Tenants Org	\$19.50	250	\$4,875.00
David Wilson	Metropolitan Tenants Org	\$24.37	300	\$7,311.00
John Bartlett	Metropolitan Tenants Org	\$42.49	50	\$2,124.50
<i>Total Reimbursable Expenses (e.g. printing, travel, supplies, etc)</i>				<i>\$2,321.70</i>
<b>Total Proposed Cost - Task 1</b>				<b>\$30,000</b>
Task 2: Landlord or Tenant Group Training (2.A.)				
Assigned Staff	Firm Name	Avg. Hourly Rate	Project Hours	Proposed Cost
David Wilson	Metropolitan Tenants Org	\$24.37	52	\$1,267.20
Anita Lewis	Metropolitan Tenants Org	\$36.24	10	\$362.40
<i>Total Reimbursable Expenses (e.g. printing, travel, supplies, etc)</i>				<i>\$120.40</i>
<b>Total Proposed Cost - Task 2</b>				<b>\$1,750.00</b>
Task 3: Property Managers Group Training (2.B.)				

Assigned Staff	Firm Name	Avg. Hourly Rate	Project Hours	Proposed Cost
David Wilson	Metropolitan Tenants Org	\$24.37	52	\$1,267.20
Anita Lewis	Metropolitan Tenants Org	\$36.24	10	\$362.40
<i>Total Reimbursable Expenses (e.g. printing, travel, supplies, etc)</i>				\$120.40
<b>Total Proposed Cost - Task 3</b>				<b>\$1,750.00</b>
<b>Task 4: Mediation Services (2.C.)</b>				
Assigned Staff	Firm Name	Avg. Hourly Rate	Project Hours	Proposed Cost
John Bartlett	Metropolitan Tenants Org	\$42.49	30	\$1,274.70
<i>Total Reimbursable Expenses (e.g. printing, travel, supplies, etc)</i>				\$225.30
<b>Total Proposed Cost - Task 4</b>				<b>\$1,500.00</b>
<b>Task 5: Tenant Organizing (2.D.)</b>				
Assigned Staff	Firm Name	Avg. Hourly Rate	Project Hours	Proposed Cost
David Wilson	Metropolitan Tenants Org	\$24.37	150	\$3,655.50
Anita Lewis	Metropolitan Tenants Org	\$36.24	30	\$1,087.20
<i>Total Reimbursable Expenses (e.g. printing, travel, supplies, etc)</i>				\$257.30
<b>Total Proposed Cost - Task 5</b>				<b>\$5,000</b>
<b>Task 6: Consulting Services (2.E.)</b>				
Assigned Staff	Firm Name	Avg. Hourly Rate	Project Hours	Proposed Cost
Mark Schwartz	Lawyers Committee for	\$100	300	\$30,000.00
				\$0.00
<i>Total Reimbursable Expenses (e.g. printing, travel, supplies, etc)</i>				\$0.00
<b>Total Proposed Cost - Task 6</b>				<b>\$30,000.00</b>