



OPEN MEETING LAW COMPLAINT FORM

Office of the Attorney General
One Ashburton Place
Boston, MA 02108

Please note that all fields are required unless otherwise noted.

Your Contact Information:

First Name: Deanne Last Name: Indrisano

Address: 23 Emerald Street

City: Medford State: MA Zip Code: 02155

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Email: Rhette904@Comcast.net

Organization or Media Affiliation (if any): N/A

Are you filing the complaint in your capacity as an individual, representative of an organization, or media?

(For statistical purposes only)

☒ Individual

☐ Organization

☐ Media

Public Body that is the subject of this complaint:

☒ City/Town

☐ County

☐ Regional/District

☐ State

Name of Public Body (including city/town, county or region, if applicable): Medford City Council

Specific person(s), if any, you allege committed the violation: Vice President Kit Collins

Date of alleged violation: 4/5/2024

Description of alleged violation:

Describe the alleged violation that this complaint is about. If you believe the alleged violation was intentional, please say so and include the reasons supporting your belief.

Note: This text field has a maximum of 3000 characters.

Medford City Council, Vice President, Kit Collins in a Reddit social media post states in part:(see attached) "In this post I'll attempt a summary of our City Council meetings this past week". "Next we took up a resolution by Councilor Callahan to meet in committee about a rental registry ordinance." Item 24-059, Resolution to Create a Rental Registry (See attached).

Vice President Collins' recap continues: "Develop a rental licensing ordinance and program, involving registration, inspection, and eventually retrofits for noncompliant rental units to address known health, safety, and energy efficiency issues in Medford's rental housing. Launch a working group that will evaluate options for the design and implementation of an ordinance and program that will improve equity in the quality of Medford's rental housing stock and reduce both utility costs and greenhouse gas emissions, while also protecting housing affordability, mitigating the risk of displacement, and reducing burdens on small-scale landlords. To the extent practicable, align Medford's program with Somerville's (currently under development) to create consistency across town boundaries".

The Agenda on April 2, 2024, the items that did not appear were: 1) retrofits for noncompliance rental units to address known health, safety and energy efficiency issues in Medford's rental housing; 2) launch a working group that will evaluate options for the design and implementation of an ordinance and program that will improve equity in quality of Medford's rental housing stock; 3) reduce utility costs and greenhouse gas emissions; 4) protect housing affordability; 5) mitigating the risk of displacement; 6) reduce burdens on small-scale landlords; and 7) align Medford's program with Somerville's to create consistency across town boundaries and 8) inspection.

In the interest of transparency, clarity, honesty and accountability how does Create a Rental Registry, which was presented, debated (as gathering landlord and renter contact information) and voted on then translate in a social media post into items numbered 1 through 8? The City of Medford's future goals should have no bearing on Agenda Item 24-059 as it was presented to the residents in the City Council meeting.

Vice President Kit Collins was presumptuous and misleading recapping via a social media post, items numbered 1 through 8 above that did not appear on the April 2, 2024 City Council Agenda that were not fully and openly debated and disposed by vote of the Council even if it was Vice President Collins' intent to include context from the City's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) in the social media recap.

Vice President (VP) Kit Collins' disclaimer in the social media post cannot, should not and does not negate the possibility of directly communicating with a quorum of the Medford City Council in the social media post.

What action do you want the public body to take in response to your complaint?

Note: This text field has a maximum of 500 characters.

City Council not have the authority to act on in committee items 1-8.

President Isaac Bears read in open City Council meeting a letter of apology for VP Kit Collins' disregard of recapping items that did not appear upon the Council that were not fully and openly debated.

VP Kit Collins read in open City Council meeting a letter of apology for communicating items in a social media post dated April 5, 2024 with the possibility of directly communicating with a quorum of the Medford City Council.

Review, sign, and submit your complaint

I. Disclosure of Your Complaint.

Public Record. Under most circumstances, your complaint, and any documents submitted with your complaint, is considered a public record and will be available to any member of the public upon request.

Publication to Website. As part of the Open Data Initiative, the AGO will publish to its website certain information regarding your complaint, including your name and the name of the public body. The AGO will not publish your contact information.

II. Consulting With a Private Attorney.

The AGO cannot give you legal advice and is not able to be your private attorney, but represents the public interest. If you have any questions concerning your individual legal rights or responsibilities you should contact a private attorney.

III. Submit Your Complaint to the Public Body.

The complaint must be filed first with the public body. If you have any questions, please contact the Division of Open Government by calling (617) 963-2540 or by email to openmeeting@state.ma.us.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understood the provisions above and certify that the information I have provided is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signed: Deanne Indrisano

Date: 4/24/24

For Use By Public Body

Date Received by Public Body:

For Use By AGO

Date Received by AGO:

RECAP READS IN PART:

City Council Recap, 4/2/2024

Hi Reddit, I'm back! Standard disclaimer: In this post I'll attempt a summary of our City Council meetings this past week. As ever, I make no claim of these notes being comprehensive of everything we covered, nor that they will reflect the perspective of any other person or Councilor besides myself (Kit). The Council meetings don't get uploaded immediately but they do get uploaded to Medford Community Media eventually: medfordtv dot org.

A resolution of note from the first section of the agenda, accolades and announcements: We passed resolutions by President Bears and Councilor Scarpelli to Honor and Commemorate the Service of Former Mayor Jack McGlynn in the WWII's 'Ghost Army.' (Boston Globe link [here](#), I think there are some non-paywalled recent options too.)

We approved a resolution offered by Councilor Leming that would initiate the process of bringing Medford's **linkage fees ordinance** in compliance with the state act establishing the ordinance.

Linkage fees are payments that developers pay to the City for projects that meet certain size thresholds. Those payments go towards these City functions: parks and recreational facilities, police and fire facilities, roads and traffic facilities, and water and sewer facilities. Large developments impact the community in different ways and while many to most of these impacts are benign and welcomed, adding people, workers, travel, etc. to the community means more impact on our physical infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, parks) and more stress on public safety infrastructure. Linkage fees are not arbitrarily set: The City conducts studies ("nexus studies") to ascertain what level of payment is appropriate to offset the impact of developments of various types and sizes.

Currently, Medford's linkage fees ordinance is out of date with how it is intended to operate. For one, the State Act that enabled our linkage fees ordinance said the payment formula should be updated "at least every 3 years." But our ordinance states the formula should be updated "no more than every 3 years." It's been a long time since the linkage fees were updated, and we are likely out of date on what we should be charging.

The linkage fees ordinance is a zoning ordinance, so updating this will go through several procedural steps between the Community Development Board and the Council. There are other changes to the linkage fees ordinance that we discussed in the Administration and Finance Committee last week – namely, adding affordable housing as a fifth bucket to which linkage fees can be paid – but that change wasn't included in this resolution this time. I believe we are waiting for amendment language to be suggested by the Planning Department staff and then we'll move forward on that.

We have a vast need for City revenue, more than any one channel can fix; but this is a valid and overdue change that will help, and I am glad we are pursuing it. We approved this unanimously.

Next we took up a resolution by Councilor Callahan **to meet in committee about a rental registry ordinance**. This is a proposal that is suggested in Medford's [Climate Action and Adaptation Plan](#), which is why Councilor Callahan brought it forward. Check out BE 2.2.D, "Develop a rental licensing ordinance with energy efficiency standards," in Medford's CAAP: it's on page 101.

From the [Go Green Medford website](#): "This plan [the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan] was developed with the input of the public, staff, non-profits and state agencies throughout 2019-2021. Information about the development of the plan are on pages 60-62."

And here is what the plan describes about the rental licensing (registry) proposal:

Develop a rental licensing ordinance and program, involving registration, inspection, and eventually retrofits for noncompliant rental units to address known health, safety, and energy efficiency issues in Medford's rental housing. Launch a working group that will evaluate options for the design and implementation of an ordinance and program that will improve equity in the quality of Medford's rental housing stock and reduce both utility costs and greenhouse gas emissions, while also protecting housing affordability, mitigating the risk of displacement, and reducing burdens on small-scale landlords. To the extent practicable, align Medford's program with Somerville's (currently under development) to create consistency across town boundaries.

It was noted during the meeting that the City already has a lot of landlords' contact information, so some people were confused about why a registry was needed, or how it would be different. My impression from talking to staff and from the CAAP is that while the City has the contact information for many property owners in the City, there are gaps, and those gaps cause problems. Absentee or hard-to-reach landlords are an issue from a Board of Health or Code Enforcement perspective when code violations persist (i.e. housing code, pest problems, trash piling up, etc.). Filling those contact info gaps will help City staff distribute important property-related information and make sure it reaches everyone, i.e. about energy retrofits.

Several people voiced concerns that this registry would include compromising information or be invasive. To be clear, this wouldn't collect tenant information; it would be a database of rental properties – where they are, who owns them, and how to get in touch with those owners.

This proposal was moved to the Planning & Permitting Committee for further discussion in a 5-2 vote.