City of Elyria

FAIR HOUSING BOARD SPECIAL MEETING

May 19, 2026

5:00 pm

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 PM by Karen Wu

Present: Brenda Warren, John Koleski, Clifton Oliver, Karen Wu, Ashley Scott, Mark Craig and Alisa Edwards

Absent: Mone't Roberts

1. New Business

a. Complaint- 698 Bell Avenue- Lashana Elliott

Karen Wu opened the meeting stating that as an employee of the Legal Aid Society she would be stepping out of the room during the discussion.

Clifton Oliver opened the meeting explaining the purpose of the committee say that the board is to address the concerns related to Fair Housing matters and to provide an opportunity for all parties to be heard. He stated the committee is not a court of law, it does not provide legal advice, it does not interpret lease agreements or enforce contracts, it does not determine civil liabilities or legal actions between landlords and tenants.

Clifton Oliver also stated that matters involving lease enforcement, eviction proceedings, contractual disputes and civil claims are generally handled through the legal systems with attorneys. Clifton Oliver shared that the committee is not here to take sides, but to allow both parties to present their concerns respectfully and to ensure the process remains fair, professional and orderly.

Clifton Oliver continued stating that if either party is currently working with Legal Aid, private counsel or pursuing legal remedies through the courts, it is recognized by the committee that those venues may ultimately be the proper venue for resolving legal and contractual disputes.

Clifton Oliver added that this hearing provides an opportunity for communication, clarification and the opportunity for this committee to better understand the concerns that have been raised. He also, asked that each party remain respectful when speaking, avoid interrupting and to focus on the facts and concerns rather than personal attacks.

Clifton Oliver concluded by stating that at the end of the hearing the committee will determine if the information presented falls within the scope of Fair Housing concerns or whether the matter is something that should be address through legal consultation. Mr. Clifton then asked Ms. Elliott to present her concerns first.

Ms. Elliott address the board stating that she moved into 698 Bell Avenue on October 5, 2025. She stated she gave a deposit of $2400.00 to Charles Lynch to secure the rental of the property.

Ms. Elliott said, "Before I moved in, there is mold, there is water leaking behind the breaker ...she knew that and she still took my money. So, after that the bathroom toilet was leaking water and the water bill was 12, 15, 16 hundred dollars every month.

Then after that, in January when we had the bad storm, I was without heat for forty-five day and I ended up catching upper respiratory infection and I let her know about that, she didn't care ....anything, and I didn't pay rent cause I was actually moving out during that time, but she end up having two unprofessional guys come and try to fix the boiler, but the boiler was never even working at all, she had it rigged up. So, the guy that's next to Ms. Joyce, right there, "Butch " he's not even licensed he doesn't have certification or nothing, he just somebody that's working for her.

So, during the winter when it was cold and there was no heat for 45 days, she ended up getting these space heaters that you buy at Walmart or whatever and she put them in through the wall, but it was still cold in the house. So, I started investigating and I hired an electrician. He came in and he said the water is leaking behind the breaker, it's a fire hazard. Then I ended up leaving Billy like 5 to 10 messages, him and Mr. Green and Billy ended up coming out saying the same thing that the guy I paid to come look and see what's going on and he ended up putting a paper on the window saying the house was not livable."

Clifton Oliver asked for clarity if Billy was the Building Inspector from the City of Elyria

Ms. Elliott confirmed he was.

Ms. Elliott continues saying, "Still no rent was paid and I didn't put it in escrow because I was going to give it to her but then there was just so much confusion going on. After I started investigation Butch and the other guy Tim who isn't licensed to be working on the house. "

"So, then she ended up giving me a 3-day notice, we go to court and I move out. So, it's just...my health is at risk, you know, this dust was all over the furniture, from the living room to the kitchen, just the whole house was just messed up, so everything that I had in the house is totally destroyed. "

"So, I'm in the process of going to get my lungs check by a lung specialist but it's just sad, I feel like she didn't, she just wasn't the person that you think to just handle the situation for the house."

"This guy right here Chuck, like I said we're friends, whatever; he was working with her and then he ended up... you know just coming out telling the truth about what was wrong with the house. And so, I just feel like she just took my money and let me move into a house that was pretty messed up."

"There is pictures and text messages. So, I went to St. Mary's to get a water bill paid, it was $1700 they even said she knew that I wasn't responsible for the water, so they ended up paying 2 or 3 hundred dollars for the water. Every month it was something."

Clifton Oliver asked Ms. Elliott if she was no longer at the residence.

Ms. Elliott confirmed she is no longer there.

Clifton Oliver asked Ms. Elliott why she felt she was not responsible for the water?

Ms. Elliott replied, " She (Ms. Weimer)keeps the water in her name, but for 2 people, me and my son, $1700 is a lot for me and my son."

Ms. Elliott stated that she lived at the residence for six months and stated " We all know mold can't grow in six months. I feel like she knew about the mold and then also, for this water leaking behind the wall, you can tell that they tried to put wall paper over it to cover it and I let her know about that and told her about the breakers keep on popping and things couldn't stay plugged up. She(Ms. Weimer) said everything was fine but she always called Butch to do a job and I don't understand that if he's not certified or doesn't have a license. My health is at risk right now so!"

Ms. Weimer shared that Ms. Elliott did ask for a copy of the water bill which she provided her with. She stated that Ms. Elliott claimed she was getting the money for the bill, but she never paid one dollar on the water bill since she moved in and the lease states she is to pay the bill.

Ms. Weimer stated that she had averaged the tenant's bill to be approximately $160.00 a month, but did not charge her for any of the larger bills. Ms. Weimer provided receipts that she had paid the larger bills due to the leak. Ms. Weimer goes on to claim that Ms. Elliott owes her over $7,000.00 in back rent because she has paid nothing since the beginning of January.

Ms. Weimer says, "According to the courts if they are not paying the rent, we don't have to do the repairs because we don't have the money, but I didn't do that. Everything was fine until February, we have radiant heat, I don't know if you understand radiant heat, but it's the heat that's under the floor into the cement, the pipes are off the boiler under with heat. Since I had the house, I never had a problem with the boiler, she (Ms. Elliott heard some noise, I don't think she told me right away, but as soon as she did tell me, we could not see anything that was wrong but could hear water running. So, we called a plumber in and he was unable to find the source, but gave Butch the number for a Leak detection company." It took time for them to come out, but once they did it took several tries for them to locate a leak which they never did. The cement was chiseled though to locate a leak, but none was found."

Ms. Weimer also shared that everything has now been inspected and approved by the City.

Ms. Weimer stated that every time Ms. Elliott called, repairs were made. Ms. Weimer stated there was nothing more she could have done.

Ms. Elliott stated that a resolution would be the return of her security deposit. She also stated that she has spoken with someone from Legal Aid named Bobby and was told they are unable to assist her in this situation.

Clifton Oliver stated that he thinks the discussion presented may be out of the board's purview.

Charles Lynch asked the board to view the lease because he feels it is predatory.

Ms. Weimer says it was Ms. Elliott who discriminated against her workers by not allowing them to use the restroom while working in the home.

Charles Lynch shared that the dust that Ms. Elliott spoke of is called crystalline silica and that it is extremely dangerous and may cause health issues. He says special hepa filters are needed to remove the particles from the air. He went on to say that Jim "Butch" Ossman is unable to make proper decisions when his diabetes is not regulated.

Discussion was had with the Clifton Oliver stating that the board will keep documentation on file and the board believes the complaint is beyond the scope of what they are able to remedy.

Jim "Butch" Ossman stated that he is retired from the IBEW Local 129 and was a licensed plumber prior to retirement. He states the work he has done in the past most certainly qualifies him to do the minor repairs of a home.

Clifton Oliver stated to Ms. Elliott that on the application she originally marked discrimination, harassment and retaliation; so, could she please give an explanation?

Ms. Elliot says she feels she was discriminated against by Ms. Weimer because she was called ratchet or hood. As for harassment, Ms. Elliot says she was called dumb in a text message.

Clifton Oliver shares that the discrimination would be that Ms. Weimer would not rent to her (Ms. Elliot) due to sex, gender, race, etc. He stated he wanted to be clear on the understanding of the term and use of discrimination.

Clifton Oliver explained to Ms. Elliott that based on what was heard today this is more of a legal matter and beyond the scope of what the board is able to handle. He expressed that the board is sympathetic to her concerns, but is unable to assist and does not want to misuse her time and efforts.

2. Approval of April, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Tabled until all members have had time to review

3. Old Business

a. Annual Report

Discussion was had, the board will continue to work on this and present a final draft at the August meeting for approval.

b. Billboard for Community, web page information

The committee agreed there is a need for an update to the web page.

Discussion was had to created and mission/purpose statement for the board. They would also like to add literature that would give the community a better understanding of Fair Housing and what the board is able to do.

Tabled for a later discussion

d. New Complaint

Discussion was had, the board will decide if a new special meeting shall be held for Charles Lynch III. Karen Wu stated that Mr. Lynch did speak to her in the hallway and he stated that although the outcome was not what he expected, he thought the meeting was a good opportunity to get things out in the open.

The board determined that an emailed should be sent to the complainant asking, how do you feel you were discriminated against and could you please give an example? Also, what protected class does he feels this represents.

c. Community Outreach

Discussion was had concerning the next up-coming events such as:

Memorial Day	May 25, 2026	
Juneteenth	June 20, 2026	
Taste of South	July 24-26, 2026	3rd Thursdays
Touch a Truck	August 1, 2026	
Apple Festival	September 18-20th	

Mrs. Warren suggested that the board members try to make their presence in the Community more prevalent and consistent. Mrs. Warren also spoke of a group at Elyria High School called "Interact" who are required to obtain community service hours. She is hoping to incorporate them to help the board at events.

Discussion was had about the board acquiring a table cloth or a table cloth which represents all three boards. Ashley Scott stated that the staff would look into the pricing of both and spoke to the board about more signage.

Ashley Scott shared with the board about attending next year's Fair Housing Summit and

possibly getting a table for the board members. Ashley Scott will follow up with Monet Roberts for details.

5. **Adjournment**

Clifton Oliver motioned to adjourn
John Koleski 2nd the motion
All were in favor and the motion carries

Meeting was adjourned at 6:37 PM

Respectfully,

Alisa Edwards

Alisa Edwards

Approved
11/10/16