



City of Saint Paul

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
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Minutes - Final

Legislative Hearings

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Thursday, December 12, 2024

9:00 AM

Room 330 City Hall & Court House/Remote

9:00 a.m. Hearings

Orders To Vacate - Code Enforcement

- 1 **RLH VO 24-37** Appeal of Amber Duncan to a Notice of Condemnation as Unfit for Human Habitation and Order to Vacate at 973 FRONT AVENUE.

Sponsors: Kim

Grant an extension to December 13, 2024 to get the furnace repaired under permit by a licensed contractor, install smoke detectors and carbon monoxide and plug space heaters to wall outlets. Property owner to work with House Calls to get house cleaned and put in application for other services as needed.

Amber Duncan, Property Owner, appeared
STAFF PRESENT: Richard Kedrowski & David Smith, Department of Safety & Inspections, Code Enforcement

[Moermond gives background process]. What I have is a vacate order (condemnation and vacate order). It's an immediate vacate which is serious. There are circumstances which makes it necessary to have this emergency hearing. The weather right now and no heat being a part of the problem. I understand you are using space heaters and the fact that there is a minor involved (a child) which makes it immediate concern and because of those immediate concerns, I need to come into a decision today and on for City Council Public Hearing next Wednesday]

Moermond: Has there been other staff involved, like the police code enforcement?

Kedrowski: Yes and Inspector Martin was also involved at one point, too. In the 7 ½ years working with the city, this is one of the more heavily involved and challenging properties I had to deal with. From reviewing the record, there had been 41 complaints since 2017, 12 in 2024 alone, 5 which resulted in work orders, and all assessed for work done. The first larger incident came on May 8, 2024, for gross unsanitary and garbage on property which Inspector Martin then took over the file and made contact with the property owner. There were quite a few issues and gross unsanitary and owner was working with a Ramsey County agency, ENC.

Amber: EC Cleaners, a house cleaning company.

Kedrowski: They had removed four 15-yard dumpsters at that time, They had 20 people working, 6 hours a day on cleaning the house. Inspector Martin attempted to

gain entry to see the interior and was not granted access at that point in time. Ms. Duncan threatened city official, so we added a people warning to the file. Today, we also attempted to make numerous clean up with crew, but we were threatened and told that she would file a lawsuit if we didn't get out of her property. We had St. Paul Police Department with us. They asked us to prevail, stand down, and reassess but this would cause our enforcement to go over the 30 days. We had to rewrite orders, because it never got resolved, and it is still ongoing, so we kept writing excessive inspections and not sending work crew. Moving forward to today, there was a recent complaint for the gross unsanitary and no heat, so Inspector Smith made arrangement with St. Paul Police Department to go to the house and found heat not on as of December 10th, and thermostat showing that house is 68 degrees. He also found five electric heaters running plugged to power strips. There was also a lot of animals and animal feces and unsanitary conditions in the property. He wrote a condemnation which I also recommended based on the unsafety and gross unsanitary issue. On reinspection, some items were cleaned, but Inspector Smith was not able to gain access to all areas of the house, including the upstairs and a lock door in the basement and the garage was full of debris. The yard litter had been there for a while as well and need to be addressed. Upon reinspection, there was still strong odor even though Animal Control had removed most animals on Tuesday. I did an email to you of what was removed and the condition of the animals. There was still no heat and stain floors from animal feces and urine which had been not scrubbed or sanitized. They were broken windows in the house, and we would still need access to full interior. There had been 9 to 12 people staying at the property, two are her children but I don't know who the others are and what their relations are. There may be over occupants as well. Part of the clean-up done on reinspect, things were thrown out to the back house, so we have more debris now than before and lots of bags stacked next to garage as well as a freezer. I have an ec due on the 19th of this month. Based on current condition with no heat, odor, and unsanitary conditions, our recommendation is still that we proceed with the condemnation with immediate vacate, as there were no smoke detectors either. We want to establish an emergency summary abatement order to remove items from the yard as shown in the photos and that code compliance inspection be established for the property and find out what deficiencies there are other than the sanitation and safety issues and no heat.

Moermond: Is there an existing SA on the yard?

Kedrowski: yes, there is no compliance, so I have doing excessive consumption fees on them. We have attempted to gain access but has been turned away. There had been two EC's issued. In lieu of this EC fee, if the court would grant us an emergency summary abatement, we would rescind that last excessive consumption and crew is prepared to clean up the property tomorrow.

Moermond: have you made referrals for services?

Kedrowski: No. The County has been working with the property owner. Per conversation with County, they were scratching the surface and not being thorough and there was a strong suspicion of recidivism inside the property and number of pets there as well.

Moermond: those concerns were from the County?

Kedrowski: yes. That was anonymous. We didn't include it in our records, just a general overview.

Moermond: House Calls aren't there as Social Workers, they are people who know

housing. Have they played a role in this? Usually cleaning contractors are there through them.

Kedrowski: yes, House Calls was contacted along the way and in fact the complaint doesn't show it, but under 24-024068 Inspector Martin did a detailed explanation on her involvement and road blocks she met. Our office can provide smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, but that's just a small piece of what should be in there.

Moermond: I understand. The failed furnace, the space heaters in use permanently, overloaded sockets, all talk to enhancing fire-safety issues. Any photos you want to point out?

Kedrowski: I did do a follow up at 5:30 this morning and snapped four photos of the yard.

Moermond: I am guessing a fair bit of the exterior items have been moved there from the interior.

Kedrowski: probably 50/50. Half has been there for the last few months and Ms. Duncan hasn't allowed us to remove it.

Moermond: Ms. Duncan, tell me what is going on. I wanted to check in, I have different reports on who lives there and fluctuating numbers. What is going on with who is at the house now?

Duncan: it is me, my boyfriend, his mom and little sister, two of my nephews, my son and daughter, and my daughter's best friend and little brother.

Moermond: which of these is the wee one?

Duncan: my boyfriend's little sister. She's 3.

Moermond: we have some under 18 and some over.

Duncan: I have a 12 year old, my 13 and 15 year old, another 15 year old, a 17 year old and then two 18 year olds.

Moermond: your definitely over 18, I'm guessing your boyfriend's mom is over 18?

Duncan: yes, me and him and his mom are over 18.

Moermond: so it is you and his mom who are over 18. Tell me more about what is going on.

Duncan: first I want to clarify about the May issue. I had E.C. Cleaners through my CADI waiver. They take everything out of your house, deep clean, help you go through items, then they bring it back into the house. They first came because I was cleaning out my living room because I had 70 fish tanks. I was trying to sell fish to help with income. I was getting rid of them; they came with pictures of the tanks. They didn't come out until the end of June. Usually Department of Safety & Inspections comes on Wednesdays in my neighborhood. They came on a Monday when I was out of town, and literally stole all of my belongings. My kids' baby blankets, our food, our clothes, my kid's trampoline to our lawn mowers. They stole everything. When I tried to contact Lisa Martin about it she was really disrespectful, she didn't care, didn't try and help. She didn't offer anything. No compensation help. No help with food. We've now been struggling to have enough food in my house

because I don't qualify for food stamps. That's just the beginning. I have a couple neighbors who constantly report anything that happens at my house. I never didn't let Lisa in the house. She was standing in my kitchen when she was talking to Edwardo, the team lead at E.C. Cleaners. They literally stood in my kitchen. She saw what was going on. I don't know why it says I denied access in her report. For the last year I've really tried to set my house up. I have a lot of disabilities that make it difficult for me to do a lot. When I've asked for help Department of Safety & Inspections basically say they won't do anything except clean. Yesterday I asked for resources for hotels since we have nowhere for 10 of us to go if we have to leave today. It is that serious. I don't have insurance right now because the County won't answer my calls. So, I can't use my CADI waiver right now so I can't get cleaners in to help. A lot of the stuff in the yard was put there in the last 36 hours. Most of it from that. There were two mattresses, the deep freeze is supposed to go in my garage. There is some garbage next to the cans, that all has to go. My mom has been trying to work with me to find a cheap dumpster that won't break the bank. They are struggling financially too. I recently had to get a job in October and working 6 days a week since then. My life has been stressful and every time I've asked County or Department of Safety & Inspections for help I get shut down. It has been difficult. With this vacate order I can't even get furnace people in the house since Department of Safety & Inspections has condemned it so unsafe that no one can come work in my house so everyone refuses. I had a company yesterday and the day before saying the vacate order was off they would feel comfortable to come in and put the furnace together. When I asked David in particular for help, he said there's nothing he can do his supervisor already told him no. When we asked for resources other than shelters, since I can't bring 10 people to a shelter in one night, they basically shut us down, said they didn't have resources and couldn't help. I could get audio of the conversation yesterday if I really want to. I have cameras in and outside of my house since we've had a lot of bad stuff going on. Animal control did come and take 5 of my cats, a rabbit, and a ferret. I did keep my two dogs and some of my cats. 3 aren't mine, they are other people's. The Guinea pigs belong to my boyfriend's mother so I didn't let them take them. I kept two cats for myself, out of 14 that I had. I am trying to do the right thing. I am trying to do better. When the furnace broke down, the whole reason we are in this mess is because I asked the furnace guy to come out and fix my furnace. Because the house was not clean he reported me to the City which led to the condemnation. I don't have anywhere to go. My family doesn't have anywhere to go. We have been cleaning. the house is almost spotless. We threw out 75 bags of everything we own. We said forget this, we can buy new stuff. Pots, pans, dishes, bathroom stuff. We threw it all out. That is what is outside the house and in the driveway. We're trying to get it cleared out. We are not planning to use the space heaters permanently. We are just using them because we can't get furnace people to get a furnace in.

Moermond: and I want to roll you back on that one and talk more. I do this a lot. Many years. The fact that an order to vacate is on the building, a Vacant Building notice, none of those things had an impact on whether a permit can be pulled to do furnace work. If a contractor is telling you that, that's their thing. The Department of Safety & Inspections is going to issue the permit, they are not prohibited from pulling one. Many contractors won't go into some place unsanitary and they may use that as a reason to be less "judgy" in their conversation with you. But nothing on the Department of Safety & Inspections' end to stop you.

Duncan: when the second guy came out to fix the furnace, I didn't know that wasn't a thing because they told us because Department of Safety & Inspections put up the vacate order they couldn't go in the house. That's what I believed. Yesterday my sister called six different companies who told her because of Department of Safety & Inspections' order they wouldn't come inside. My house is really clean right now, like the cleanest it has been in years, probably. We do still need to scrub floors and get

stuff out, but that can't be done in 24 hours. I'm a hoarder. I don't like saying it, because I don't truly believe it in myself, but I am one. If I have stuff everywhere in every room it will take longer than a family who is full of mental health issues, who isn't good at cleaning, who is constantly angry with each other. We were fighting and then cleaning right after. We all have issues in that house and we're trying to figure our stuff out. Kids growing up trying to figure out who they are. My daughter is struggling with life, my son is, I am, everyone is struggling. We spent 30 hours cleaning my house so we could pass this inspection and get the furnace people in. When I explained this to David he flat out didn't seem to care or have any way to help me, just that we'd have to leave. Department of Safety & Inspections for the last 5 years has been harassing me. We had neighbors banging on my garage when I had to keep my uncle's dogs in there overnight, people would pound on the garage and then call Department of Safety & Inspections and animal control knowing the dogs were in there.

Moermond: what did you do?

Duncan: we explained to animal control and my uncle moved out a few weeks later. Every time there is an issue I'm constantly trying to fix it, but Department of Safety & Inspections has to understand I have disabilities and am doing this on my own so I need longer than 5 hours or two hours. We don't have anything in my house packed, and with Department of Safety & Inspections already having taken most of my important belongings, I need to have time to go through my stuff, my kids need time, to pack if we actually have to get out. They tried to give us 20 mins after we spent 30 hours cleaning the entire house without speaking. We've been trying to appease them. We were all upset when they said because the furnace isn't on we can't stay. I know it is cold, but is it more important to put a family out on the streets in the middle of this? Or let them stay in the house with space heaters while they're trying to figure out how to fix the furnace.

Moermond: we have a significant safety problem with no smoke detectors. Space heaters going into power strips. This can be managed, but this is a fire hazard. We are balancing the heat, as it is, against the fire hazard and what that is. It is more complicated than a matter of no heat. I hear a lot of what you are saying is that Department of Safety & Inspections is enforcing and not providing services. Their job is enforcement though, the County and others have the responsibility to provide services. I'm not sure what happened with the CADI waiver and paying medical insurance and what is happening with that. Unravel that for me.

Duncan: I have County insurance. A few months ago, we got dropped because I didn't get the paperwork in time. I have tried to contact them a few times, over the last couple months in particular, to try and get my insurance on so I could get the County waiver back up and get cleaning companies in. With that being said I'm also terrified to have someone come back in and clean because I don't want Department of Safety & Inspections to steal more of my stuff.

Moermond: and I'm going to roll you back on the stealing idea. If there were orders you got in the mail to clean up—

Duncan: there was no orders for that.

Moermond: I don't know I agree. This is an ongoing thing where you have had, since you've been there in 2016, more than 40. I'm going to assume you have a clear idea of what the property maintenance expectations are in St. Paul and having all of that wasn't ok. You know your neighbors have a short fuse with you. I hear you blaming others. I see you taking steps that make your situation worse. You've got a lot of

people in here, arguably hearing you have that many. There are two things we look at: there's the zoning code that says you can't have more than six unrelated adults. I am hearing that there are two, the boyfriend and his mom who are related, and then you. Then youth who may or may not be connected in a nuclear family kind of way. Setting zoning aside and saying that's a mess. What I can look at is the number of square feet required per person for sleeping areas and living purposes. Hearing there is 10 people in a 3 bedroom house, there are quite specific square foot requirements about sleeping areas so they can be safely evacuated in an emergency.

Duncan: a couple of years ago I had 12 people living in the house and the Fire Inspector came in and told me I could legally have up to four families with four people in them living in that house. That as long as they all have a proper place to sleep, smoke detectors—which we do have one upstairs and I think we have one still at the bottom of the stairs—just not outside my bedroom.

Moermond: who is the Fire Inspector who came in?

Duncan: I don't know.

Moermond: you are an owner occupant.

Duncan: this was before I was on the contract for deed. So probably around 2018. They came in because we had cleaners come in who didn't think that many people should be in the house. The inspector passed us because he said we were all set properly, all had places to sleep. One room two girls, one room four boys, and then in my room it is me and my boyfriend and his mom and sister sleep in the living room. Everyone has their own bed. My daughter and her best friend choose to share a bed. We've offered to get them bunk beds. They don't want that. The rest of the boys all have beds, spots to sleep, space to get out. Windows in each room. One broken window in my son's room that I've been trying to ask my mom to help pay for, but in order to do that we have to get the window out and I don't know how without hiring a window company since it is a big window and I'm scared of breaking it. I can't afford it.

Moermond: I couldn't find anything in the Fire Certificate of Occupancy file but there may be something being responded to as a complaint.

Kedrowski: I didn't see anything

Duncan: I also want to say I'm willing to work and put the space heaters directly into walls, put in smoke detectors. I'm willing to do what I need to to make it safe until we have our furnace working. We just don't have anywhere to go if we have to leave. It is a lot colder outside or sleeping in our van overnight with no heat than being in a house.

Moermond: we're going from 10 people, and your nuclear family there is you and your two kids.

Duncan: and two nephews that are mine.

Moermond: they're in your custody?

Duncan: not in my custody but they are 17 and 18.

Moermond: but they aren't your nuclear family. If they were in your custody, yes. You're looking after them, I get it. You have a lot of people. Two over 18, two 18, 15,

15, 17, there could be some jobs going on here besides you. Is there?

Duncan: my nephew, who is here in the green, has a job. My boyfriend is trying to get a job but we need to get his birth certificate from his dad so he can get his ID and Social security cards so he can do that. The mom has been looking for work, but she just moved here from Burnsville because her lease was up. She's looking here as well. I get \$4,500 a month between my kids' disability, my disability, and my paychecks at work. I am still struggling, but we're doing better than we were in September. My nephew helps out a lot. He helps with food and gas and things we need. I also have an ex-boyfriend who helped a lot the last few months. He recently moved out. Long story. We've had quite a bit of financial help, but from people who don't make a lot of money.

Moermond: where are you at financially with the furnace repair?

Duncan: my mom is going to pay for it if we can get someone out to fix it. Everywhere we have called has said unless Department of Safety & Inspections says it is safe enough to go in, they will not go in. Unless I can get Department of Safety & Inspections to say it is not too unsafe or dangerous, they won't come out.

Moermond: I don't know what is going on with you and the contractors. How many have you called?

Duncan: I've called 3. My sister has called about 5. My nephew called 1. 8 or 9 different companies.

Moermond: I have never heard this before. I don't know why they're not wanting to do your job, but this isn't a condemnation that will be lifted until the heat is restored. Are you in a Catch 22 then? I guess you are, but the thing is you're going to be out of there. The idea of heating and space heaters and a 3-year-old, other minors. This is not sustainable. Have you talked to social workers who could assist?

Duncan: I don't have anyone. I have my CADI waiver and that's about it and they can't do anything until my insurance is up.

Moermond: have you reached out to House Calls?

Duncan: last time I called them they told me I didn't qualify because I'm on a CADI waiver. That was this past summer to ask about lawn mowing help.

Moermond: you haven't called them about the furnace.

Duncan: no, not about the furnace. I was turned away this summer for help cleaning my yard.

Moermond: but they told you the CADI waiver was the rub, and it isn't right now because you lost it.

Duncan: right, yeah. I could probably call them and see if I can get help. I'm also getting all the stuff needed to try and get furnace help through CAP energy assistance. I have to get check stubs, proof of County assistance, social security payments, I was getting ready to work on that and then I got hit with the vacate. I've just been trying to clean and get it together.

Moermond: that's one of the problems you have with the vacate. The biggest issue is the heat. The gross unsanitary, the hoarding, that is something we could make a

work plan about much more easily. There are ways to manage that, but the no heat is the critical component from my perspective. Do I like the other stuff? No. Could I work with it? Yeah. I think this is turned around.

I'm not thrilled with the thinking that says, "because I got condemned I had to clean out the house, it is their fault that I can't get my furnace repaired and the contractors won't come because it is condemned." That approach doesn't give me confidence in your ability to solve this. It is a probability for me. How likely is it that you're going to be able to solve this in X amount of time if I put a short leash on this. Can you get it done? Right now, you're not showing me you have the capacity to address these problems. You are an owner. You are taking in people. You are managing what looks like is more than your ability to manage. How YOU move forward with this—you bit off a lot here. You have some strikes with your neighbors. They aren't happy. I imagine you know what is going on with that. Sounds like over that many years there is a pattern that has been established between you and your neighbors.

Duncan: my sister has a friend in HVAC that will come out today to try and see what is wrong with it and if he can fix it, but I need time for him to come out. I wasn't even given a time by Department of Safety & Inspections on when they would be back today. They just said they would show up.

Moermond: the order was issued December 10 and it was an immediate vacate, so mid-day yesterday. That means you can continue to work on the property you just can't sleep there anymore. That's literally what it says. You can be there from 8 am to 8 pm fixing, repairing, cleaning. You can't sleep there because it isn't safe enough for that. Are space heaters running now? And are there adults there now? Are there always adults there when it is running?

Duncan: yes. My boyfriend's mom doesn't leave often. If she is gone then one of them are home. We always have adults in the house, or even the 17-year-old is always there. He doesn't go anywhere.

Moermond: do you have all the documents you need to talk to CAP?

Duncan: yes. Well, I'm waiting for a couple in the mail like my award letter for social security for me and the kids. I can get my stubs today from work. I didn't go to work 2 days ago because I had to stay home and try and get my life together to keep my house. I went to work yesterday, my boss wasn't there, but he should be there today.

Kedrowski: the space heaters aren't plugged direct. Try to find a location where they can be plugged directly into the wall. Also, another document that just came in when I got here, you haven't seen, was the last 5 years of police calls.

Moermond: I have that here.

Duncan: can I say something on the police calls? We have a big family obviously, there is a lot of arguing and fighting. The police get called a lot, almost every time they don't find an issue. We just had someone come out because one of my neighbors complained about a disturbance at 9:30 at night when I yelled at my son to get back in the house because it was too cold for him to be walking around without a shirt. Those are the kinds of calls we get called on.

Moermond: mhmm. And that is normal to get called on those things.

Duncan: there's a few that aren't, but those are---

Moermond: If I were to ask neighborhood, councils, police, licensing staff, code enforcement staff, tell me your top 10 worst properties. I'm betting you are on someone's list. What I have learned through study is that if you are on one of their lists, there's more than 50% chance you are on multiple lists. Police problems? For a single-family home that is an extraordinary number of calls. Obviously there are code enforcement issues. The neighbor issues. This all comes together. The common thread is when you end up with that complicated of a problem is domestic violence and disturbances from the home. When people here that what they do is lose it in terms of their ability to be more flexible on things. If they are hearing arguments, hearing fights, hearing things that make it seem things have gone south behaviorally? They have no patience for tall grass and weeds. They have no patience for extra garbage bags. Barking dogs. All of these other things. Do other people have these things? Yes, but 90% literally have those characteristics. The behaviors going on are really driving people's emotions on your situation. And your own as well. If that is the core of it, and you can straighten out relationships and anger and the ability to manage the other things will fall into place. So says research and my experience.

*That isn't something I can say you need to go fix. I'm focused on the furnace. Getting the space heaters safe if they need to be used on a temporary basis. You got to get the cat sh*t scrubbed out from the floors. Those photos? No. You have a 3-year-old and you have that ground into the floor? No. You have people in the house who are capable of using a brush and a bucket. Yes, you do. Including yourself. How its there for years is speaking to lack of control and ability to manage your circumstances. What is going to look different moving forward? How are you going to manage the house so it is a safe harbor for those you intend to provide safe harbor to? Right now, you are meaning to provide that but it has resulted in putting everyone's housing at risk. It is because you have provided that, not come through, and they haven't gone about finding alternatives because they relied on something built on sand.*

I would really love if we could get the House Calls program called now. There needs to be some firm commitment and ability to deal with this walking out of here so I am confident the house isn't going to burn down. There's a toddler. 12-year-olds get cold too, we all do. How will this be made safe shortly? We will take a break to give you a chance to call them. I think that's the best place to start, calling Lauren Ross and calling CAP. The number for CAP is—

Duncan: I have it on my phone.

Moermond: see if they will take the app without all the information there. Do you have other things that may substitute. Talk about options right now. You have, no joke, a crisis and we need a plan.

[recess]

Moermond: how did that go? Were you able to get ahold of someone at House Calls or CAP?

Duncan: I called House Calls. They said they can have someone come out to help me assess the house for cleaning but they don't do furnace help. She said she would reach out to you on specifics. I need to get her proof of income for me and the people living in the house. Do some of the paperwork for CAP, I'll be working on that today before work.

Moermond: who is all working?

Duncan: just two.

Moermond: so that should go fast. Do you have an appointment to get this information to her?

Duncan: she just told me she would email me the information and I would have to send it back to her.

Moermond: you didn't talk to CAP?

Duncan: no, I didn't even call them. I didn't hear I had too, just House Calls.

Moermond: I meant both.

Duncan: I know with energy assistance they want the proofs of income in before they look at my application. Two of the kids that live in my house, their mother is not cooperative with me, but allows her kids to be there because she can't take care of them. She won't give me their SSN's to put down on the app for energy assistance. I'm not sure what to do about that one because they need all the SSNs.

Moermond: if you don't have their SSN I imagine the implication is they can't be part of the application. You would divide household income by the number of people there to get the rate of poverty.

Duncan: I can go back and put a new application in and take those kids off of it. That's what I've done in the past.

Moermond: who pays your property taxes?

Duncan: my mom.

Moermond: you're buying on a contract for deed, when is it all yours?

Duncan: if we can get the furnace going, before February.

Moermond: how are you going to manage then?

Duncan: between me, my nephew and my partner will be getting a job fairly soon. I will have to buckle down and take priority over things that are most important. Stuff for the house. Stuff for the kids. Bills. I've struggled with money management a long time. Six months ago I started paying more of my bills before I pay for anything else or buy anything else. I'm really trying to put my head together, it has just been difficult for me. I had a couple of really toxic relationships recently that put me in a rut with my mental health but I feel a lot better now. I am doing better now. I work 25 hours a week, six days a week, every week. I'm trying to be a better person, mom, partner, daughter, better everything. I also am working with my sister Tara to help me as well as my mom.

Moermond: has your mom told you how big those property tax bills are because of the number of cleanups that have happened?

Duncan: they're around \$2,300.

Moermond: before the cleanups.

Duncan: I know this year will be quite expensive. She says she will help with taxes for another couple of years and then it will be on me.

Moermond: last year's taxes were \$2,974 and of that, just under \$1,000 is attributable to work done by the City and that's going to balloon in 2025 because of this. Another thing I wanted to point out is looking at police calls for your house. This is a five year run, there's under 10 calls 2020 through 2022. Then I'm seeing an explosion in the number of calls in 2023. 2024 has double. Each year it doubles easily. That tells me something bad is happening. This is a lot and that is not helping.

Duncan: a lot of these calls are from me, and then my neighbor next to me. She doesn't like me at all. She calls a lot. The other night when the kids were arguing she called the police twice. A lot of it is not good, no, but—

Moermond: but nothing. You built this. I just talked about disturbances and domestics and how it puts people on short fuses. People yelling in the yard, people lose it with those neighbors. It feels unsafe. If I understand correctly, one is about a stolen gun within the house. This is unsafe. Period. That's going on with a 3 year old in the house.

Duncan: she just moved in a week ago. The gun had been locked up in a case and the person that came and took it broke into the box.

Moermond: wow, that happens though, doesn't it. And who is responsible for YOUR house?

Duncan: me.

Moermond: and who is paying the bills?

Duncan: me.

Moermond: oh? Didn't you just say your mom pays your taxes, your mom is paying for the furnace, your mom is going to—

Duncan: I pay for my bills too.

*Moermond: how old are you? Not my business, but you get where I'm coming from. You have come a ways, great, but you are not standing on your own 2 feet. You aren't managing a safe household for those who have been invited in for safe harbor. You have until tomorrow noon to get the furnace running again. That means you get a contractor in, you get it clean. If the contractor won't go in it is because of the sh*t in the house. They don't want to go home with bugs on their clothes. When they hear these conditions they think about going home at 4 pm. That's where you are at with this. I'm 95% sure that's what they are taking to the situation.*

Your job to them now is to make it clear to them it is clean, please come and see this is better. It must smell to high heaven when I see those floors. I can smell you guys. It wasn't 2 months ago I had an animal hoarding case. You know; you just know. There's nothing to be done because it is in your clothes. Not passing judgment but at the same time, if someone is walking to that and smelling that, they don't know if that's the only thing or if there's something even worse than that smell. That's where they're coming from. You need to sell yourself. You aren't doing them a favor by hiring them. You want to see, if nothing else, can CAP provide you a list of contractors they use. Companies out there used to doing this. I heard calls have been made. Make them again. Make more. Get that information to Lauren immediately. Everything you have, immediately. I will talk to Lauren. I need to see that fixed.

Duncan: can I have an extension until 3 pm so if they're busy in the morning they would have time in the afternoon to come?

Moermond: I will say that I would need to know they were going to be there. The thing at 3 pm is, that's after Department of Safety & Inspections hours to make sure it is vacated and see what is going on. If they are coming in I need to see that commitment from the contractor that yes, they will be there at X time. If its 6 pm Friday, I'm willing to work with that, but then we have that. I think you need to work with Lauren more deeply. You don't have a CADI wavier now. They do have assistance with house cleaning you can work with them on.

Duncan: she's bringing one out either today or tomorrow to throw garbage out.

Moermond: can you gentleman email the photos and orders to Ms. Ross so she has all of it? Then she understands the gravity of the stuff we are working on. I will look forward to hearing from you. If I don't hear from you by noon, or from Lauren with a very exact plan, I will be looking for that vacate.

Kedrowski: part of this is the exterior condition of the house. If we are waiting for the dumpster, it can't be in the way when the contractor drives by and doesn't want to deal with getting through all the items in the yard. Even if the dumpster is that, I would respectfully request we do an emergency Summary Abatement and clean the yard once and for all and let her use the dumpster for the interior items. Get the yard back to looking presentable for the neighborhood.

Duncan: there are things in my yard they are going to try and take like my grill, kids' bikes.

Kedrowski: they won't touch those. Anything that's normally stored outside will remain, but the aquariums, mattresses, the deep freezer, the TVs, kennels, yes they will all go. Lawn ornaments and kids' toys are not going to go. Trampoline is broken, it will go. If it something just falling apart I suggest you put it back together so it is standing complete. We've taken one already and now there's another one laying on the ground.

Duncan: the one you took before wasn't broken though.

Moermond: and I don't want to go into whatever that is. I'm hesitant to do that if the dumpster is on its ways. Making a decision about whether something constitutes an emergency typically we are talking about a significant health or safety concern like raw garbage, bags full of dog poop. I'm not hearing that exists. The dumpster could be delivered and this cleaned up and it may play a roll in the contractor being able to look at it.

Kedrowski: the chest freezer is a safety issue. The white bags by the garage were from this hurried cleanup so I'm assuming do contain the pet waste. There is hazard out there. I also want to push that if she is allowed to get a dumpster in there to clean up it is a thorough cleaning and if it isn't meant to be outside it is put away or in the dumpster.

Moermond: what's your ability to get the chest freezer into the garage?

Duncan: I can work on it today.

Moermond: that truly is a hazard if not secured shut.

Duncan: I need to figure out where to dispose of the old one.

Moermond: I need that to be in the garage. I don't care about the rest of it. That's something for your cleanup team to work on. If they are both within a building that means there's no small child climbing or someone being locked inside. It is a hazard. Those things do happen.

Duncan: I'll get it in the garage today.

Moermond: that's all I'm looking for. Take a business card.

Kedrowski: she is allowed 3 large items through the garbage program.

Moermond: you need to call the hauler and tell them you will have a freezer there. Call Highland before you leave here.

Duncan: I did get clarification from Lauren what can and cannot go into the dumpsters. I can get rid of the mattresses and electronics through the recycling companies.

Moermond: communicate with me as things progress. Don't leave it until noon. That puts you in a hotel for the weekend for sure. I think we both would like to avoid that. I need space heaters plugged directly into the wall. We need functioning smoke detectors and carbon monoxide. Do you have those?

Duncan: not extra ones. I have one at the bottom and upstairs. I would be nice to get 3 new ones to replace them anyway.

[discussion of layout of home and smoke detector placement]

Moermond: get them installed right away. They'll drop them off today. We need to enhance the safety.

Referred to the City Council due back on 12/18/2024