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Earlier that night, the council revisited its previous decision to pursue a requirement that landlords extend lease termination and eviction notices to 120 days. Apparently, the city can't proceed. Jared said another charter city attempted to change noticing requirements in the 1980s and was shot down—if the city proceeded, it could be sued, he added. "The courts have determined it to be an issue of statewide concern and have fully occupied the field," Jared told the CN&R.

More than a dozen speakers addressed the council on the item. Several were renters who shared eviction stories, and said they live in fear that their housing is never secure. Rain Scher has moved multiple times since the fire, in one instance because a landlord wanted to renovate a property and another in which a landlord's family member needed a place to live. Scher briefly became homeless before being able to find another spot.

Several speakers emphasized the importance of getting renters to the table for future discussions on the issue. Real estate professionals and property owners also supported continued conversations.

"I think one thing that's very disturbing is the shockingly little degree to where actual renters are consulted in this process," Jeremy Markley said. "How about we have City Manager [Mark] Orme talk with an organization of renters?"

Orme said he met with the North Valley Property Owners' Association and Sierra North Valley Realtors to understand and legally vet the proposal the organizations brought to the city when the issue was discussed last month (see "Displacements continue, Newslines, July 11).

The council opted to continue discussing how to provide relief to renters in Chico at an Internal Affairs Committee meeting and an upcoming city-hosted housing conference to conduct more research and gather more public input. This will include Schwab's initial proposal of an eviction for good cause ordinance, which would make it tougher for landlords to kick out well-behaved tenants. There are similar ordinances in other California cities, such as San Francisco.

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