

# THE TENANT

ISSUE #5. JULY, 2025



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## SPECIAL FEATURE: KEN HOWELL AND PARKLANE MANAGEMENT, CO: A PATTERN OF NEGLECT

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By: A BTU member

Boise's downtown has experienced a renaissance in recent decades, with historic preservation and urban revitalization at the heart of its growth. And the city's rapid population increase within the last decade means housing for tenants has become increasingly necessary and valuable. But amid efforts to protect Boise's heritage and house its tenants, one name has become synonymous with delay, dysfunction, and disregard: Ken Howell, owner of the Parklane Company.

Over the past several years, Howell's management of some of Boise's most iconic buildings—most notably the Union Block, Idanha Apartments, and Plaza Apartments—has drawn widespread criticism. Tenants, city officials, and the public alike have raised serious concerns about safety hazards, chronic neglect, and a persistent failure to meet even the most basic responsibilities of property ownership.

### **The Union Block Debacle**

At the center of the controversy is the Union Block building, a cornerstone of downtown Boise's historic district. Howell purchased the building with plans to revitalize it, but instead of progress, the site has been marred by years of inaction, construction delays, and growing safety risks. According to multiple reports from BoiseDev, Howell failed to complete structural shoring, stalled repairs for months, and ultimately ignored warnings from engineers and city inspectors.

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In November 2023, the building was officially condemned. Not because of sudden disaster, but due to years of avoidable neglect. Howell's response? Attempting to sue the city to block inspections and delay repairs further. Even after a judge ruled that the city and Howell must coordinate to stabilize the structure, deadlines were repeatedly missed. Ultimately, the City of Boise had to step in, launching its own emergency repairs at taxpayer expense—nearly \$2.7 million, which it plans to bill back to Howell.

## **Tenants Left in the Cold**

The impact of Howell's neglect hasn't just been legal—it's been personal. Small businesses that once operated out of the Union Block have been evicted or forced to shut down. Tenants described worsening structural conditions, dwindling foot traffic due to closed sidewalks, and an owner who refused to engage. The message was clear: profits came before people.

This disregard isn't limited to Union Block. The Idanha Apartments—a historic, high-rise building also owned by Parklane—was the site of a public outcry in 2019 when both elevators failed, leaving elderly and disabled tenants stranded on upper floors for weeks. Residents organized protests and media campaigns after Howell's company delayed repairs. Lawsuits followed.

## **More of the Same at Plaza Apartments**

In 2022, another Parklane-owned property, the Plaza Apartments, made headlines for chronic water leaks, structural decay, and health hazards. Howell again abdicated responsibility for the problems, blaming the scale of the damage and supply-chain issues. But residents reported years-long issues, ignored maintenance requests, and a landlord more interested in evasion than action.



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These are not isolated incidents. They represent a clear and consistent pattern: mismanagement, delay, and conflict with the very communities Howell claims to serve. Howell has positioned himself as a steward of Boise's architectural heritage. But in practice, his legacy is far more self-serving—marked by litigation instead of cooperation, abandonment instead of accountability, and a callous lack of regard for the tenants whose homes he is responsible for.

There are countless Boise tenants currently living under Parklane management. The company is responsible for housing units on all of the following sites, and their tenants continue to voice distress under Howell's neglect and exploitation

If you are a tenant living in a building owned or managed by Parklane, please know that we will listen to your struggles and stand firmly on your side against the injustices this company habitually perpetrates.

## **Conclusion**

Ken Howell and the Parklane Company have failed Boise—not just in missed deadlines and court battles, but in personal suffering and eroded trust. A landlord's primary responsibility should be to ensure the safety and well-being of their tenants. And a steward of historic buildings should honor their value, not neglect them to the point of collapse. In both duties, Ken Howell has failed dramatically. Until meaningful change is forced—whether by law, community action, or city pressure—their presence in Boise will remain a menace to the tenants they claim to serve.

## WHAT WE'RE LISTENING TO

Podcast: The Dig w/ Daniel Denivir

Episode - From Rebellion to Reaction

## WHAT WE'RE READING

Book: Raising Expectations (and Raising Hell)

By: Jane McAlevey

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**WEBSITE**

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## TENANT RESOURCES:

- Wrest Collective  
<https://wrest.coop/>
- Intermountain Fair Housing Council (IFHC)  
[ifhcidaho.org](http://ifhcidaho.org)
- Idaho Legal Aid  
[www.idaholegalaid.org](http://www.idaholegalaid.org)
- Boise Mutual Aid Collective  
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