

**CITY OF NORWALK
FAIR RENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 4, 2025
VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING.**

ATTENDANCE: John Church; Chair, Fran Collier-Clemens; Vice Chair, Dora Witherspoon, Sonja Oliver, Johnnie Mae Weldon, Hansen Guest, Brenda Penn-Williams, Lunise Constant, Peter Halladay (7:34 p.m.)

STAFF: Carlos Duque; Fair Rent Coordinator, Russell Liskov, Esq.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Church called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Church read the roll as reflected above.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: May 7, 2025

Commissioner Halladay joined the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

Mr. Guest noted on page one that the word "amended" was misspelled and should have a single "m." It was also pointed out that the name "Weldon" appeared inconsistently across pages one and two.

**** MS. OLIVER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED.
** MR. HALLADAY SECONDED THE MOTION.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Duque confirmed there were no members of the public present who wished to participate

V. REPORTS

A. Chair's Report

Mr. Church welcomed everyone and expressed appreciation for their strong participation. He noted 14 commission spots—seven regular commissioners and seven alternates. Alternates may vote when a regular member is absent. All commissioners are treated equally in discussions and motions.

Mr. Church stated there are currently five vacancies. He noted Mr. Duque has been in contact with the city clerk about filling them. Mr. Church encouraged members to suggest interested community members, especially those not affiliated with the Democratic Party, due to existing limits on party representation.

Ms. Oliver inquired if party affiliation restrictions were the reason they had not been moved from alternate to full commissioner status despite years of service. Mr. Duque confirmed this was accurate and had been discussed with the city clerk.

Mr. Church emphasized the value of new voices and encouraged recruitment efforts.

B. Coordinator's Report

Mr. Duque presented the Coordinator's Report. He stated as lease renewal season begins, both landlords and tenants have been reaching out with questions about lease terms, legal compliance, and rights. He noted he has been reviewing many leases and providing information on evictions.

Mr. Duque attended a Fair Rent Commission network meeting with other commissions across Connecticut. He stated the Commissioner of the Department of Housing is funding outreach events to raise awareness about the commission's role.

Mr. Duque also visited Westport to consult with their newly established Fair Rent Commission. He shared best practices and remains available to provide guidance and documentation support.

Mr. Duque said he will present an overview of the Norwalk Fair Rent Commission at the Department of Health staff meeting, covering the Commission's history, duties, and his role as

coordinator.

VI. REVIEW, DISCUSSION, AND MOTIONS ON OPEN CASES

Attorney Liskov reviewed the open cases.

A. 1831-23

Mr. Liskov recommended a vote to take no action.

- ** MS. OLIVER MOVED THAT NO ACTION TO BE TAKEN ON CASE 1831-23.**
- ** MS. WELDON SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THER MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

B. 1861-25

Mr. Liskov recommended a vote to take no action.

- ** MS. OLIVER MOVED THAT NO ACTION TO BE TAKEN ON CASE 1861-25.**
- ** MR. HALLADAY SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

C. 1862-25

Mr. Liskov recommended a vote to take no action.

- ** MS. OLIVER MOVED THAT NO ACTION TO BE TAKEN ON CASE 1862-25**
- ** MS. WELDON SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VII. PRESENTATION OF NEW CASES

Attorney Liskov reviewed the new cases.

A. 1863-25

Mr. Liskov recommended a vote to not accept the case..

- ** MS. OLIVER MOVED TO NOT ACCEPT THE CASE.**
- ** MR. HALLADAY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

Mr. Guest inquired about the legal impact of not accepting the case. Attorney Liskov explained

there is no binding legal impact, and the case could be revisited if necessary. He confirmed the lease has been signed, both parties agree, and they are cooperating well. He clarified the case was filed after the last meeting and resolved before the current one, supporting the recommendation.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

B. 1864-25

Mr. Liskov recommended a vote to not accept the case..

**** MS. COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO NOT ACCEPT THE CASE.**

**** MS. OLIVER SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Duque was thanked for maintaining active communication and management of the cases. The commissioners acknowledged his ongoing efforts and coordination.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Fair Rent Commission Brunch/Dinner

Mr. Duque provided an update on the annual commission event. He received feedback from some members. Ms. Penn-Williams suggested the city cover the cost, but Mr. Duque indicated his supervisor may not approve this. He said he would confirm and report back.

Restaurants discussed included Pinstripe, O'Neal's, Greer's Country Kitchen, and Harbor Lights.

O'Neal's was previously used but had accessibility issues; Dr. Duque was open to revisiting it. Commissioners expressed a preference for a weekday evening, ideally on a day the commission already meets.

Mr. Duque offered to obtain quotes from each location to compare pricing. He also proposed a working event format, which may allow city support. This would involve a presentation from Connecticut Legal Housing attorneys who developed the Fair Rent Commission Toolkit and serve as network advisors. The commissioners were supportive of the idea and agreed that an in-person event would be beneficial.

Mr. Duque will discuss this further with his supervisor and coordinate accordingly.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

Next month's meeting will be moved to Wednesday, July 9 due to the July 4th holiday. Ms. Collier-Clemmons noted she will be absent due to her wedding anniversary, which was acknowledged and celebrated by fellow commissioners.

Mr. Duque will explore the option of the Norwalk Inn as a possible event venue, though there were mixed reviews regarding food quality. He stated he would continue gathering options and report back.

NEXT MEETING

Scheduled for Wednesday, July 9 at 6:30 p.m. to accommodate a scheduled hearing.

X. ADJOURNMENT

- ** MS. COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**
- ** MR. HALLADAY SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
China Mayhew
Telesco Secretarial Services.