



REGULAR MEETING – FAIR RENT COMMISSION AGENDA

**JULY 9, 2025, 7:30 PM
BY ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone and/or Zoom, or a recording in the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. Specific instructions and links can be found at norwalkct.gov/meetings.



Members of the public may call in to participate. Callers will not be able to see the meeting participants. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, dial *9 on the phone and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide "live comments" may also use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the "raise your hand indicator" and you will be called by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be included into the record, they must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Please email fairrent@norwalkct.gov with the subject line "Public Comment" to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
- II. **ROLL CALL**
- III. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**
 - A. **Regular Meeting: June 4, 2025**
- IV. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- V. **REPORTS**
 - A. **Chair's Report**
 - B. **Coordinator's Report**
- VI. **REVIEW, DISCUSSION, AND MOTIONS ON OPEN CASES**
 - A. **1831-23**

B. 1861-25

C. 1862-25

VII. PRESENTATION OF NEW CASES

A. 1865-25

B. 1866-25

C. 1867-25

D. 1868-25

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Fair Rent Commission Dinner

IX. NEW BUSINESS

X. ADJOURNMENT

**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.

NORWALK FAIR RENT COMMISSION

OPEN CASES AS OF JULY 9, 2025

1831-23

8 Union Ave, Apt B3. Landlord wants to increase rent from \$959.50 to \$1500 for a 1 Bedroom apt. Tenant feels this rent increase is excessive due to her disability and limited income.

07/20/23 Complaint Filed

07/26/23 Notification letters mailed out to landlord via certified mail

08/02/23 Voicemail left to landlord's attorney by Russell

08/02/23 Russell and I spoke to Tenant. Negotiations ongoing

09/02/23 Negotiations ongoing

10/04/23 Negotiations ongoing

10/30/23 Offer received from tenant; negotiations ongoing

12/20/23 Email sent to tenant's next of kin (NOK)

01/23/24 Voicemail left for tenant's NOK

01/26/24 No response letter mailed out complainant via certified mail

02/02/24 Email received from tenant's NOK about a senior housing application submitted to the Norwalk Housing Authority and missing documents that they still needed to submit.

02/07/24 Negotiations ongoing

02/16/24 Spoke to tenant's NOK

02/21/24 Offer communicated to landlord's lawyer. Waiting on a response

03/21/24 Offer not accepted by landlord

04/02/24 Fair rent hearing to be scheduled for June

06/05/24 Hearing postponed till January 2024 pending tentative agreement for 6 months

07/12/24 One of our Community Navigators did confirm tenant is on the Norwalk Housing Authority Senior Housing wait list.

07/17/24 I emailed and mailed an application for Broad River Homes to tenant and her NOK.

08/30/24 Negotiations ongoing

10/02/24 Multiple calls made to tenant's next of kin and multiple voicemails left, no answer back

11/06/24 Tenant next of kin reached out and spoke to Russell

12/03/24 Hearing notices (January Hearing) electronically mailed out to both parties

01/08/25 Agreement reached, pending signatures

01/28/25 Agreement electronically mailed to both parties, waiting for it to be signed and sent back to me

05/06/25 Attorney for landlord emailed that negotiations are still ongoing

06/03/25 Emailed sent out to both parties about an update and about putting them on the agenda for July's meeting to explained why the agreement has not been reached.

Staff Recommends vote to take no action

1861-25

4 Eversley Ave Unit #2. Landlord wants to increase rent from \$1400 to \$1650 for a one-bedroom apartment. Tenant feels this is unfair due to the current ongoing bed bug and rat issue.

03/17/25 Complaint filed

03/24/25 Notification sent out to landlord and tenant

03/28/25 Russell spoke to tenant. Russell also left voicemail to landlord.
04/01/25 Negotiations ongoing
05/07/25 Russell spoke to the landlord. Negotiations ongoing.
05/28/25 Agreement reached. Waiting for agreement to be signed and complaint withdrawal to be returned.
07/07/25 Complaint withdrawal received

Staff Recommends vote to close the case

1862-25

41 Wolfpit Ave, Apt 4K. Landlord wants to increase rent from \$2294 a month to \$2480 a month for a two-bedroom apt. Tenant feels this is excessive due to their limited income and the condition of the apartment.

04/01/25 Complaint filed
04/08/25 Notifications sent out via certified mail
04/23/25 Russell had a conversation with the landlord
05/07/25 Russell had a conversation with the landlord
05/30/25 Hearing notices being prepared for July's hearing
06/24/25 Electronic notification sent out postponing hearing date until September.

Staff Recommends vote to take no action

NEW CASES

1865-25

515 West Ave, Apt 339. Landlord is charging tenant legal fees for a notice to quit that was served. Additionally tenant's lease renewal offered was rescinded due to owing these legal fees. Tenant feels he should not be liable for these fees as per C.G.S. 42-150aa and should be offered a new lease renewal.

06/02/25 Complaint filed
06/09/25 Notifications sent out via electronic mail and certified mail
07/08/25 Carlos and Russell spoke with tenant.

Staff Recommends vote to not accept the case

1866-25

8 Union Ave Apt 10-H-2. Landlord is charging \$400 for a toilet replacement. Tenant feels this charge is excessive and should be covered under regular wear and tear of a unit as stated in C.G.S. 47a-7.

05/22/25 Complaint filed
06/12/25 Notifications sent out via electronic mail and certified mail
06/13/25 electronic mail received from the landlord/attorney
07/08/25 Carlos and Russell spoke to tenant

Staff Recommends vote to not accept the case

1867-25

6 Elm St, Unit #2. Landlord has failed to provide the premises in a fit and habitable condition specifically by not providing quiet enjoyment as per C.G.S. 47a-7. Tenant has sent out multiple emails and calls to property management due to upstairs noise and nothing has been done about it.

06/05/25 Complaint filed

06/11/25 Notifications sent out via electronic and certified mail

06/20/25 Carlos and Russell spoke to tenant

07/08/25 Carlos and Russell spoke to tenant

Staff Recommends vote to not accept the case

1868-25

17 Linden st, Unit #2. Landlord wants to increase rent from \$2100 a month to \$3000 a month for a 2-bedroom apartment. Tenant feels this is excessive.

06/05/25 Complaint filed

06/13/25 Notifications sent out via electronic and certified mail

06/24/25 Carlos spoke to landlord and tenant

07/01/25 Tenant came in to talk to Carlos

07/08/25 negotiations ongoing

Staff recommends vote to accept the case



CITY OF NORWALK
Fair Rent Commission

P: 203-854-7989 / F: 203-854-7767

fairrent@norwalkct.org

125 East Avenue, PO BOX 5125
Norwalk, CT 06856-5125

RECEIVED
JUL 08 2025
FAIR RENT

COMPLAINT WITHDRAWAL

I, Sarelle Suarez

Tenant in (Address) 4 Eversley Ave 1R

Norwalk, CT 06851

Do hereby withdraw my excessive rent complaint filed with the **FAIR RENT**

COMMISSION on _____ against my LANDLORD:

Name Timberridge associated

Address 110 Prospect Street, Suite 22, Stamford
CT, 06901

Date 6/30/2025

Tenant Sarelle Suarez

Case No. 1861-25

Date Filed 3-17-25