

CITY OF NORWALK  
FAIR RENT COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
JULY 12, 2023  
VIA TELECONFERENCE

ATTENDANCE: John Church, Chair; Lunse Constant; Peter Halladay; Samuel Pride,  
Brenda Penn Williams

STAFF: Carlos Duque, Fair Rent Coordinator; AnaVivian Estrella, Human  
Services Supervisor; Atty. Russell Lisko

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Church called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. and noted those in attendance as indicated above. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING - June 7, 2023

The following correction was made to the minutes:

Correct the spelling of Mr. Halladay's name throughout

**\*\* MR. PRIDE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED**

**\*\* MS. PENN-WILLIAMS SECONDED.**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Church thanked the members for moving the meeting so that he could attend the fireworks display by the City. He acknowledged the on-going issues on the need for affordable housing, and the Commission provides the place for families to report issues.

Ms. Penn Williams noted that people can't find apartments and the rent is so high, and something needs to be done in this City.

4. COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Duque reported that in the last three months, he has been able to help around 280 families and over 40 renewals this season. He spoke of the tenants' feeling they are forced to renew despite their intention to move, as there is no time to secure other housing in this market.

## Review, Discussion, and Motions on Open Cases

### a. 1821-23

#### **1821-23**

47 Lexington Ave, Basement Unit. Landlord increased rent from \$750 to \$900 in Nov 2022. Tenant has been living at premises since 2013 and feels conditions do not justify rent increase. After a fire at 43 Lexington Ave, the Norwalk FD went door to door doing inspections and found this basement unit to be an illegal dwelling. Landlord Immediately removed kitchen, cabinets, privacy door and told tenant he needed to move out, only gave him 3 days to move at the end of December. On several occasions landlord locked tenant out (police report dated 2/5/23), changed locks, disconnected heat (2/12).

2/13/23 Complaint Filed

2/14/23 Notice to Quit received

2/17/23 Car towed from parking lot by landlord

2/17/23 Attorney Liskov spoke to landlord's Attorney

3/14/23 Landlord attorney served a Summons Summary Process for eviction

4/--/23 Tenant retained services of Attorney Heisler for eviction case

4/24/23 Appearance filed by tenant's attorney

7/5/23 Trial date set for 7/25/23

**Staff recommends vote to take no action**

\*\* MR. PRIDE MOVED TO APPROVE THE STAFF RECOMMENDATION FOR NO ACTION.

\*\* MS. PENN WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

### b. 1823-23

#### **1823-23**

3 Loomis st, Apt 1. Landlord wants to increase rent from \$1950 to \$2441.83 plus an additional non-refundable pet fee of \$600. Tenant has been living here for the last 5 years. Rent has been increased yearly by \$50 or \$100 max.

4/10/23 Complaint Filed

4/13/23 Attorney Liskov spoke to Tenant

4/14/23 Attorney spoke to Landlord

4/24/23 Landlord proposed a rent amount

4/27/23 negotiations on going

5/4/23 Landlord signed addendum agreement

5/12/23 Tenant made a change to addendum agreement and signed it

5/30/23 Landlord agreed to change on addendum agreement and initialed it

6/2/23 Complaint Withdrawal form mailed to Tenant

6/8/23 Complaint Withdrawal form signed by Tenant

**Staff Recommends vote to close the case**

\*\* MR. PRIDE MOVED TO APPROVE THE STAFF RECOMMENDATION TO CLOSE THE CASE.

\*\* MS. PENN WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**1824-23**

1 Glover Ave, Apt 503. Property management wants to increase rent from \$2570 to \$3015 per month. Tenant Alleges that this increase is unfair because they have limited income and will not be able to afford this increase.

5/11/23 Complaint Filed

5/17/23 Fair Rent Complaint notification mailed via certified mail

5/19/23 Attorney Liskov spoke to Tenant

5/19/23 Property Manager called back and spoke to Attorney Liskov and Fair Rent

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Coordinator and said their law firm would contact us

6/28/23 Letter mailed out to Landlord about lack of response

**Staff recommends vote to take no action**

There was discussion on the fact that since there has been a lack of response, it would be best to pursue a hearing, rather than prolong the no action. It was agreed to schedule a hearing at the next month's meeting and to move up the time to 6:00 p.m.

\*\* MR. PRIDE MOVED TO SCHEDULE A HEARING ON THE CASE.

\*\* MS. PENN WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**1825-23**

515 West Ave, Apt 339. Property Management wants to increase rent from \$2660 a month to \$2879 a month. Tenant at the beginning of April received an offer to renew his lease for an increase of \$69, and around Memorial day weekend he received an email stating the increase would be \$219 a month.

5/30/23 Complaint Filed

6/2/23 Notification mailed out to Landlord via certified mail

6/6/23 Carlos Duque and Attorney Liskov left tenant a voicemail

6/7/23 Attorney Liskov spoke to Tenant (Rent and AC issue)

6/7/23 Attorney Liskov spoke to Landlord Attorney

6/21/23 Negotiations ongoing

**Staff Recommends vote to take no action**

\*\* MR. PRIDE MOVED TO APPROVE THE STAFF RECOMMENDATION FOR NO ACTION.

\*\* MS. PENN WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

## 6. Presentation of New Cases

### 1826-23

106 West Cedar st, Apt 203. Property Management wants to increase rent from \$1638 to \$1950. Landlord revised offer to \$1900 a month but tenant feels this is still too high for her income. This building is part of the Low-Income Housing Tax credit program.

6/14/23 Complaint Filed

6/26/23 Notification mailed out to Landlord via certified mail

6/25/23 Attorney Liskov spoke to Tenant

6/27/23 Attorney Liskov spoke to Landlord

6/27/23 Landlord emailed CHFA rent limits and revised rent offer

7/11/23 Attorney Liskov spoke to Landlord

7/12/23 Negotiations ongoing

#### **Staff Recommends vote to hear the case**

\*\* MR. PRIDE MOVED TO APPROVE THE STAFF RECOMMENDATION TO HEAR THE CASE.

\*\* MS. CONSTANT SECONDED THE MOTION.

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

### 1827-23

15 West Main st, Apt J-102. New Property Management wants to increase rent from \$2000 to \$2350. Tenant argues the rent is too high in comparison to other units in the same property.

6/14/23 Complaint Filed

6/29/23 Notification mailed out to Landlord via certified mail and email

6/30/23 Attorney Liskov spoke to Tenant

6/30/23 Attorney Liskov spoke to Landlord

7/6/23 Emailed received from Landlord with rental rate explanation

7/6/23 Attorney Liskov spoke to Tenant

7/11/23 Attorney Liskov spoke to landlord

7/12/23 Negotiations ongoing

#### **Staff Recommends vote to take no action**

Mr. Church noted that he would recuse himself if the Commission felt there was a conflict as his brother had formerly represented the Property Management. He further explained that his brother does not represent or have any business with the client at this time. Attorney Liskov stated that there was no need to recuse, and the members agreed.

\*\* MR. PRIDE MOVED TO APPROVE THE STAFF RECOMMENDATION TO HEAR THE CASE.

\*\* MR. HALLADAY SECONDED THE MOTION.

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

**1828-23**

289 Main Ave, Unit #3. New Property Management wants to increase rent from \$1200 to \$1575. Tenant feels the increase is excessive.

6/27/23 Complaint Filed

6/29/23 Notification mailed out to Landlord via certified mail

7/11/23 Attorney Liskov called Tenant and left a voicemail.

7/12/23 Negotiations ongoing

**Staff Recommends vote to hear the case**

- \*\* MR. PRIDE MOVED TO APPROVE THE STAFF RECOMMENDATION TO HEAR THE CASE.
- \*\* MR. HALLADAY SECONDED THE MOTION.
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

**1829-23**

41 Wolfpit Ave, Apt 5K. New property management wants to increase rent from \$1995 to \$2240 for a 2 Bedroom apt. Tenants financial situation has changed slightly and feel this increase is a bit excessive to them.

6/30/23 Complaint Filed

6/30/23 Notification mailed out to Landlord via certified mailed

6/30/23 Notification emailed to tenant

7/11/23 Carlos Duque spoke to property manager

7/12/23 Attorney Liskov spoke to property manager

7/12/23 Negotiations on going

**Staff Recommends vote to take no action**

- \*\* MR. PRIDE MOVED TO APPROVE THE STAFF RECOMMENDATION FOR NO ACTION.
- \*\* MS. PENN WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

7. OLD BUSINESS -There was no old business.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

The Commissioners discussed the brunch scheduled at Pinstripes for July 23. An email with details will be forthcoming.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

- \*\* MR. HALLADAY MOVED TO ADJOURN.
- \*\* MS. PENN-WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION.
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

There was no further business, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m

Respectfully submitted,

M. Knox  
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Norwalk  
Fair Rent Commission  
July 12, 2023