

CITY OF NORWALK
NORWALK FAIR RENT COMMISSION
MAY 3, 2023
VIA ZOOM

ATTENDANCE: John Church, Chair; Fran Collier Clemmons, Vice Chair; Peter Halladay;
Sonja Oliver, Dora Witherspoon

STAFF: Carlos Duque, Fair Rent Coordinator

OTHERS: Russel Liskov, Fair Rent Counsel

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Church called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and those in attendance as indicated above.
There was a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS - March 1, 2023

Correct the spelling of hyphenated names throughout: Collier-Clemmons, Penn-Williams

- ** MS. COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS
AMENDED WITH CORRECTIONS NOTED.
- ** MS. OLIVER SECONDED THE MOTION.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Church said hoped everyone had a nice Easter and/or Passover and thanked all for attending the meetings and for the important work being made for the Commission.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Duque reported he has been able to help approximately 190 families to report unsafe living conditions and disputes with landlords over rent increases. He noted that there are trends where landlords are taking advantage of tenants that may be undocumented, and they are not aware that there are laws to protect tenants from eviction over a rent increase; and that tenants do have the right to file a complaint. He added that he has been able to assist tenants with recouping security deposits when they chose to move out.

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REVIEW, DISCUSSION, AND MOTIONS ON OPEN CASES

a. 1819-23

Atty. Liskov reviewed the details of the activity on the case and dates of when he spoke to the tenant and when the Property Manager updated the new rate in the lease. The complaint withdrawal was signed by the tenant on 01/09/2023. Staff recommended closing the case

** MS. COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO CLOSE CASE 1819-23.
** MR. OLIVER SECONDED THE MOTION.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

b. 1821-23

Atty. Liskov reviewed the details of the background and activity on this case that involves a tenant that has lived at this basement unit since 2013 and feels conditions do not justify a rent increase. After the NFD inspected adjacent units after a fire, they determined this unit was an illegal dwelling. The tenant is disabled and the Landlord had given eviction notice of three days, then locked out the tenant, changed the locks. He noted they have not been able to reach the tenant. Staff recommends no action on the case at this time.

** MS. OLIVER MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE 1821-23.
** MR. HALLADAY SECONDED THE MOTION.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Ms. Collier-Clemmons asked if a case should be closed if there is no action to be taken. Atty. Liskov clarified that case should remain open so that the case could be heard if so determined.

Presentation of New Cases

a. 1822-23

Atty. Liskov gave an overview of the case and dates of the complaint, when he spoke to the tenant, the field inspection, and the Landlord. Tenant is requesting repairs to be done in order justify rent increase. Staff recommended hearing the case.

** MS. OLIVER MOVED TO HEAR THE CASE 1822-23.
** MR. HALLADAY SECONDED THE MOTION.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

b. 1823-23

Atty. Liskov gave an overview of the case that is based on disputed rent increases and fees. Negotiations are ongoing. Staff recommended hearing the case.

** MS. OLIVER MOVED TO HEAR THE CASE 1823-23.
** MR. HALLADAY SECONDED THE MOTION.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Church reminded the Commissioners that the upcoming annual dinner would be June 7 or 14. Details to follow by email soon.

ADJOURNMENT

** MR. HALLADAY MOVED TO ADJOURN
** MS. OLIVER SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
M. Knox
Telesco Secretarial Services