FAIR RENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2024
VIA TELECONFERENCE

ATTENDANCE: John Church; Chair, Fran Collier-Clemmons; Vice Chair, Dora Witherspoon; Commissioner, Samuel Pride; Commissioner, Peter Halladay, Commissioner, Brenda Penn-Williams; Commissioner

(8:04 p.m.)

STAFF: Carlos Duque, Russell Liskov, Esq., AnnaVivian Estrella

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Church called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. March 6, 2024

**** MR. PRIDE MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES.**
**** MS. COLLIER CLEMMONS SECONDED THE MOTION**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Church said he had nothing significant to report.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Duque stated that since the beginning of the year, they have helped 110 families with fair rent inquiries that included:

- Explaining the process to people who are currently being evicted.
- were in the first stages of the eviction process.
- Helping them with applications for the Eviction Relief Fund.
- Questions about the Section 8 process and their documentation for the program.

Mr. Duque indicated he was in constant communication with Housing Authority case workers to ensure proper communication with their clients. He stated he also helped several residents with the return of their security deposits. Mr. Duque discussed the COVID-19 Housing Relief Fund.

REVIEW, DISCUSSION, AND MOTIONS ON OPEN CASES

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 is excessive due to her limited income.

Attorney Liskov stated a hearing has been scheduled for June 8, 2024.

Attorney Liskov recommended a vote to take no action.

** **MS. COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE 1831-23.**
** **MR. PRIDE SECONDED THE MOTION.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

1839-23
6 Elm St, 1st Floor. Landlord wants to increase rent from $1000 to $1900 per month. Tenant feels this is excessive due to the condition of the apartment and building.

Attorney Liskov stated a hearing has been scheduled for May 8, 2024.

Attorney Liskov recommended a vote to take no action.

** **MR. PRIDE MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE 1839-23.**
** **MS. WITHERSPOON SECONDED THE MOTION.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

1840-24
23 1 / 2 Bouton St, Apt #1. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $1350 a month to $1600 a month for a 2 BR apartment. Tenant feels this is excessive due to the size and condition of the apartment.

Attorney Liskov stated they were waiting for a new lease to be signed.

Attorney Liskov recommended a vote to take no action.

** **MR. PRIDE MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE 1840-24.**

** **MS. WITHERSPOON SECONDED THE MOTION.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

1841-24
39 Osborne Ave. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $2350 a month to $3950 a month for a 2BR family house. Tenant feels this is an excessive rental increase.

Attorney Liskov stated the landlord and tenant came to an agreement and the case was withdrawn.

Attorney Liskov recommended a vote to close the case

** **MR. PRIDE MOVED TO CLOSE CASE 1841-24.**
** **MS. COLLIER-CLEMMONS SECONDED THE MOTION.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

1843-24
213 Ely Ave, Unit #1. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $1,100 a month to $2,500 a month for a 2BR apartment. Tenant feels this is an excessive rental increase.

Attorney Liskov stated that the tenant moved out and they were waiting on the complaint withdrawal.

Attorney Liskov recommended a vote to take no action.

** **MS. COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE 1843-24.**
** **MR. PRIDE SECONDED THE MOTION.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

1844-24
213 Ely Ave, Unit #2. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $1,450 a month to $3,700 a month for a 3BR apartment. Tenant feels this is an excessive rental increase.

Attorney Liskov stated the tenant had moved out, returned the keys, and was waiting for the return of the security deposit. He said they were waiting to receive the withdrawal paperwork.

Attorney Liskov recommended a vote to take no action.

** **MS. COLLIER CLEMMONS MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE 1844-24.**
** **MR. PRIDE SECONDED THE MOTION.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

1845-24
213 Ely Ave, Unit #6. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $1,300 a month to $1,800 a month for a studio. Tenant feels this is an excessive rental increase.

Attorney Liskov stated the parties have negotiated a new lease. He said they were waiting for the lease to be signed and to receive the withdrawal.

Attorney Liskov recommended a vote to take no action.

** **MS. COLLIER-SMITH MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE 1845-24.**
** **MR. HALLADAY SECONDED THE MOTION.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

1846-24
213 Ely Ave, Unit #3. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $1,350 a month to $3,700 a month for a 3BR apartment. Tenant feels this is an excessive rental increase.

Attorney Liskov stated the parties reached a new lease agreement. He said they were waiting for the lease to be signed and to receive the withdrawal.

Attorney Liskov recommended a vote to take no action.

** **MS. COLLIER-SMITH MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE 1846-24.**
** **MR. PRIDE SECONDED THE MOTION.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

1847-24
213 Ely Ave, Unit #4. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $2,400 a month to $3,700 a month for a 3BR apartment. Tenant feels this is an excessive rental increase.

Attorney Liskov stated the tenant had moved out and they were waiting on the withdrawal form. Attorney Liskov recommended a vote to take no action.

** **MS. COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE 1847-24.**

** **MS. WITHERSPOON SECONDED THE MOTION.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

1848-24
44 Plymouth Ave, Unit #1. Landlord wants to increase rent from $1,700 a month to $2,220 a month for a 2BR apartment. Tenant feels this is an excessive rental increase.

Attorney Liskov stated the landlord was unwilling to negotiate. It was determined a hearing would be scheduled for July.

Attorney Liskov recommended a vote to take no action.

** **MS. COLLIER-SMITH MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE 1848-24.**
** **MR. PRIDE SECONDED THE MOTION.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY,**

1849-24
12 Naromake Ave, Unit B. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $3,200 a month to $3,800 a month for a 4BR house. Tenant feels this rental increase is excessive.

Attorney Liskov stated this was a new case and negations were ongoing.

Attorney Liskov recommended a vote to take no action.

** **MS. COLLIER-SMITH MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE 1849-24**
** **MR. PRIDE SECONDED THE MOTION.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

1827-24R
15 West Main st, Apt J102. Retaliation complaint filed against the Landlord.

Attorney Liskov stated that the tenant moved out after filing the retaliation complaint. He said the tenant no longer had standing, and the case was rendered moot by his actions. He described the process involved after filing the complaint. Ms. Collier-Clemmons had concerns about whether the tenant fully understood the process for filing. She suggested that, in the future, they do a better job of informing people who file a retaliation complaint. Mr. Duque described his interaction with the tenant. He said he never had the opportunity to address the issue in question with the tenant. Mr. Church noted that, are you still a tenant should be a standard question on the complaint form. Mr. Carlos stated the form could be amended to include the question.

Ms. Penn-Williams joined the meeting at 8:04 p.m.

Attorney Liskov recommended a vote to close the case

** **MS. COLLIER-SMITH MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE 1827-24R**
** **MR. PRIDE SECONDED THE MOTION.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED WITH SIX AYES AND ONE ABSTENTION (MR. PRIDE).**

PRESENTATION OF NEW CASES

There were no new cases in March.

OLD BUSINESS

No new business was brought up for discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Fair Rent Commission Brunch

Ms. Penn-Williams reminded Mr. Duque that he had to send out the brunch invitations. She said June 9th at Pinstripes would be optimal. Mr. Duque indicated he would inquire about an estimate for the areas being considered.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

** **MS. COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**
** **MS. WITHERSPOON SECONDED THE MOTION.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED WITH SIX AYES AND 1 NAY (MS. PENN-WILLIAMS)**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
China Mayhew
Telesco Secretarial Services

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 is excessive due to her 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 David Wankoff (Tenant's Next of Kin)
01/23/24 Voicemail left for David Wankoff
01/26/24 No response letter mailed out via certified mail
02/02/24 Email received from David 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 TN Next of Kin.
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

Staff Recommends vote to take no action

1839-23

6 Elm St, 1st Floor. Landlord wants to increase rent from $1000 to $1900 per month. Tenant feels this is excessive due to the condition of the apartment and building.

11/30/23 Complaint Filed
12/01/23 Notification mailed out to Landlord via certified mail
12/14/23 Second notification mailed out to Landlord via certified mail
01/03/24 Third notification mailed out to landlord via certified mail
01/12/24 Spoke to Property Manager then spoke to their attorney
01/17/24 Video Conference call with attorney, property manager
01/18/24 Spoke to Tenant
01/26/24 Called the attorney and left a voicemail
02/07/24 Negotiations ongoing
02/21/24 Spoke to tenant. Will schedule a hearing date
04/02/24 Notices sent out for Hearing in May

Staff Recommends vote to take no action

1840-24

23 1 / 2 Bouton St, Apt #1. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $1350 a month to $1600 a month for a 2 BR apartment. Tenant feels this is excessive due to the size and condition of the apartment.

01/17/24 Complaint Filed
01/19/24 Notification letters sent out to landlord via certified mail

01/30/24 Landlord came in to talk in person about the complaint
01/31/24 Russell spoke to Landlord
02/02/24 Tenant came in to the office to mediate
02/06/24 Landlord called to let me know he offered to switch their refrigerator because their current refrigerator is old and the Tenant declined
02/07/24 Negotiations on going
04/02/24 Waiting for Tenant to sign lease agreement

Staff Recommends vote to take no action

1841-24

39 Osborne Ave. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $2350 a month to $3950 a month for a 2BR family house. Tenant feels this is an excessive rental increase.

02/16/24 Complaint Filed
02/20/24 Russell and I had conversations with Landlord and Tenant
03/05/24 Tentative agreement reached. Negotiations ongoing
03/18/24 Lease Agreement signed. Complaint Withdrawal signed

Staff Recommends vote to close the case

1843-24

213 Ely Ave, Unit #1. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $1,100 a month to $2,500 a month for a 2BR apartment. Tenant feels this is an excessive rental increase.

02/27/24 Complaint Filed
02/28/24 Notifications letters sent out via certified mail
03/06/24 Landlord came in to discuss in person. Negotiations ongoing
04/02/24 Tenant moved out. Waiting for her to return the complaint withdrawal form

Staff Recommends vote to take no action

1844-24

213 Ely Ave, Unit #2. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $1,450 a month to $3,700 a month for a 3BR apartment. Tenant feels this is an excessive rental increase.

02/27/24 Complaint Filed
02/28/24 Notifications letters sent out via certified mail
03/06/24 Landlord came in to discuss in person. Negotiations ongoing
04/01/24 Tenant moved out, keys were returned to the landlord. Waiting for complaint withdrawal to be returned

Staff Recommends vote to take no action

1845-24

213 Ely Ave, Unit #6. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $1,300 a month to $1,800 a month for a studio. Tenant feels this is an excessive rental increase.

02/27/24 Complaint Filed
02/28/24 Notifications letters sent out via certified mail
03/06/24 Landlord came in to discuss in person. Negotiations ongoing
04/02/24 New lease agreement reached. Waiting for both parties to sign agreement

Staff Recommends vote to take no action

1846-24

213 Ely Ave, Unit #3. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $1,350 a month to $3,700 a month for a 3BR apartment. Tenant feels this is an excessive rental increase.

02/28/24 Complaint Filed

02/28/24 Notifications letters sent out via certified mail
03/06/24 Landlord came in to discuss in person. Negotiations ongoing
04/02/24 agreement reached. Waiting for both parties to sign agreement

Staff Recommends vote to take no action

1847-24

213 Ely Ave, Unit #4. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $2,400 a month to $3,700 a month for a 3BR apartment. Tenant feels this is an excessive rental increase.

02/28/24 Complaint Filed
02/28/24 Notifications letters sent out via certified mail
03/06/24 Landlord came in to discuss in person. Negotiations ongoing
04/01/24 Tenants moved out. Waiting to hear from them to come in and sign a complaint withdrawal form

Staff Recommends vote to take no action

1848-24

44 Plymouth Ave, Unit #1. Landlord wants to increase rent from $1,700 a month to $2,220 a month for a 2BR apartment. Tenant feels this is an excessive rental increase.

02/28/24 Complaint Filed
02/29/24 Notification letters sent out via certified mail
03/06/24 Landlord reached out to Carlos.
04/03/24 Fair Rent Hearing will be scheduled for May

Staff Recommends vote to take no action

1849-24

12 Naromake Ave, Unit B. Landlord wants to increase the rent from $3,200 a month to $3,800 a month for a 4BR house. Tenant feels this rental increase is excessive.

02/29/24 Complaint Filed
02/29/24 Notifications letters sent out via certified mail
03/20/24 Spoke to Tenant about getting a good number to call landlord to try and mediate
04/03/24 Negotiations ongoing

Staff Recommends vote to take no action

1827-24R

15 West Main st, Apt J102. Retaliation complaint filed against the Landlord.

03/01/24 Complaint Filed
03/14/24 Hearing Notice email to Tenant
03/22/24 Russell and Carlos spoke to Tenant
03/27/24 Russell emailed Tenant to let him know his case would not be heard due to the tenant moving out and it no longer falling under the jurisdiction of the Fair Rent Commission

Staff Recommends vote to close 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
MAR 18 2024
FAIR RENT

COMPLAINT WITHDRAWAL

I, Pascual gonzalez

Tenant in (Address) 39 Osborne Ave
Norwalk CT 06855

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

COMMISSION on 2/16/2024 against my LANDLORD:

Name REHAB AND DESING CONTRUCTION CORP

Address 58 Fort Poin 1S
Norwalk CT 06855

Date 3/18/2024 Tenant

Case No. 184-24
Date Filed 2-16-24