

**CITY OF NORWALK
FAIR RENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 1, 2009**

7:30 PM

Mary T. (Bea) Brown Room
(Formerly Known as Room 231)

ATTENDANCE: Patricia Genuario, Chair; John Church, Vice Chair; Richard Stumpf, Mary Geake, Martin Bernard, Stacy Parrigin

STAFF: Adam Bovilsky, Director; Lawrence Patterson, Field Representative

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Genuario called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

• March 2009 meeting

The following changes were noted:

Page 1, in “Header” and “Footer”: please change “Fair Rent Advisory Commission” to “Fair Rent Commission” throughout the document.

Page 1, in **ATTENDANCE**: please change

“Pat Genuario, Chair; Mary Geake, Richard Stumpf, John Church, Vice Chair; Stacey Parrigin, Maria Borges-Lopez; Martin Bernard, Brenda Penn-Williams (7:50 p.m.)

To: “Patricia Genuario, Chair; John Church, Vice Chair; Mary Geake, Richard Stumpf, Stacy Parrigin, Maria Borges-Lopez; Martin Bernard, Brenda Penn-Williams (7:50 p.m.)”

Page 1, in **STAFF** : please change “Larry Patterson” to “Lawrence Patterson”

Page 1, under **CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**, paragraph 3, line 1: please change: “However, in

December” to “In December”

Page 1, under **CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**, paragraph 5: line 1: please change the following from:
“**Bea Brown Memorial Room** in honor Bea Brown,” to “**Bea Brown Memorial Room**
in honor
of Bea Brown,”

Page 1, under **CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**, please remove the double period at the end of the fourth paragraph.

Page 2, paragraph 2, line 1: please change the following from “you his Directors Report.” To
“give you his Director’s Report.”

Page 3, **MOTION**: please change the following from:

**** MR. BERNARD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE
FEBRUARY 18, 2009 AS CORRECTED.
** MRS. GEAKE SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

TO:

**** MR. BERNARD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE
FEBRUARY 18, 2009 AS CORRECTED.
** MS. GEAKE SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Page 3, paragraph 3, line 3: please change the following from “in Ben Franklin, but he” to
“in the former Ben Franklin School, but he”

Page 3, under **CASE #1589-08 MOTION**, please change the following from:

**** MR. CHURCH MOVED TO CLOSE CASE 3#1589-08.
** MS. BORGES-LOPEZ SECONDED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

To:

**** MR. CHURCH MOVED TO CLOSE CASE #1589-08.
** MS. BORGES-LOPEZ SECONDED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Page 3, under **MOTION TO ADJOURN**:

Please change the following from:

**** MR. CHURCH MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
**** MRS. GEAKE SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

To:

**** MR. CHURCH MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
**** MS. GEAKE SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MR. BERNARD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 4, 2009 AS CORRECTED.**
**** MR. STUMPF SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. Chairman's Report

Ms. Genuario read the following report into the record:

“Good evening and thank you for attending tonight. As you know, the City is in the middle of a budget crisis and the Finance Department has recommended the defunding of the Field Representative position for the Human Relations and Fair Rent Commission.

I have numerous newspaper articles relating to this matter and you are welcome to read them. On Wednesday, March 25th during the public hearing before the Board of Estimate and Taxation and the Common Council Finance and Claims Committee I spoke on behalf of Fair Rent and Vicky Su represented Human Relations. We are hoping for a favorable outcome and that the Field Representative position will remain intact and not be defunded. Our Director, Adam Bovilsky has been in constant contact with the Mayor and other personnel trying to convince all appropriate parties to retain this position. He will give you an update on any progress being made.

I have no further business at this time and ask that Adam give you his Director's report.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Genuario, Chair

3. Director's Report

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Mr. Bovilsky presented his report to the commission as follows:

Statistics:

The office had 69 intakes during the month of March, 66 of which were related to Fair Rent. We had 522 follow up contacts in March, 350 of which were related to Fair Rent. This is a substantial increase in follow up contacts for the department, in large part based on the Director's work on a particularly high tension landlord/tenant dispute and the Bilingual Secretary's increased workload of Spanish speaking tenants looking for information on evictions and security deposits. No formal complaint was filed in March with the Fair Rent Commission.

Commission Members and Department Staff:

We have no vacancies on staff or on the Commission.
Our Field Representative recently went to conferences on bed bugs and foreclosure mediation.

Budget:

Comments supporting the need for and value of our Field Representative position were voiced at the Board of Estimate and Taxation public hearing on March 25th. Five people spoke on the Department's behalf including our Chair, Patricia Genuario, and past Chair, Richard Booth. We are still waiting to hear the outcome of negotiations between the city and unions that may impact whether we get to keep the Field Representative position.

In the News:

In addition to articles on the budget, we have included articles on the new Freedom of Information requirements for posting minutes online and a foreclosure forum held by Congressmen Himes.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Bovilsky
Director

Mr. Bovilsky then briefly reviewed the situation regarding a recent Human Relations hearing where the minutes were published on the website, and said that it is unclear whether the court transcript needs to be posted online.

Mr. Patterson said that there was a recent change on the law regarding the minutes being published on the website. Some of the smaller towns have removed their websites because they do not have the resources to publish the minutes within a week.

Mr. Patterson then reported on the conferences on foreclosures and bed bugs. Regarding the foreclosures, there has been challenges in terms of tracking down the actual loan holder, because the bank may have sold the mortgage to an out of state or out of country party, which makes the tracing of the mortgage holder difficult. Some of these properties are two, three or four family residences.

Mr. Patterson then gave a brief overview on the seminar regarding the recent increase in infestations of bed bugs. Mr. Patterson said that it is believed that the most recent infestations have occurred because the bedbugs have hidden in luggage.

4. Old Business

There was no old business to discuss at this time.

5. New Business

Ms. Genuario said that in the packet there was a list of the Commissioners' contact information. She asked that the Commissioners review the information and submit any corrections to Mr. Bovilsky.

6. Review, Discussion, and Motions on Open Cases

a. Case # 1592-09

Mr. Patterson commented that Ms. Martinez had compiled the local rents and noted that the rents have not changed much in the market.

Regarding Case #1592-09, Mr. Patterson reported that the tenant involved in the case was planning on moving on Friday. He then recommended no action at this time.

**** MR. CHURCH MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION REGARDING CASE # 1592-09.**

**** MR. BERNARD SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7. Presentation of New Cases

There were no new cases to review at this time.

Mr. Bernard said that now that the Silvermine Tavern was closed, he would like to suggest O'Neill's for the Commission's Spring Dinner. There was a brief discussion about whether this would be handicapped accessible. Ms. Geake suggested Luisi's Diner. Ms. Genuario will look into these locations.

8. Motion to Adjourn

**** MR. STUMPF MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MS. GEAKE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

