

**CITY OF NORWALK
FAIR RENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 5, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Patricia Genuario, Chair; Mary Geake, Vice Chair; John Church, Zachary Mintz, Brenda Penn-Williams (7:38 p.m.)

STAFF: Adam Bovilsky, Director; Anna Keegan, Civil Rights/Fair Rent Investigator

CALL TO ORDER.

Commissioner Genuario called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.

Regular meeting January 8, 2014.

The following correction was noted:

Page 2, line 1: please change “minuets while Telesco” to “minutes while Telesco”

**** COMMISSIONER GEAKE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 8, 2014 AS CORRECTED.**

**** COMMISSIONER MINTZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

CHAIR'S REPORT.

Commissioner Genuario presented her report.

Good evening, Commissioners and Staff. Thank you for attending the March meeting of the Fair Rent Commission. I am pleased to be back from my vacation and am happy to see all of you.

Special thanks to Vice Chair Mary Geake, who so aptly chaired the January 8th meeting in my absence. I appreciate her willingness to do so.

In your packets were the Agenda and Minutes of the January meeting. There were no newspaper articles contained therein.

As we did not have a February meeting due to weather issues, I have no further business to add and will ask that Adam present his Director's Report.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Genuario
Chair

DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

Statistics

Departmental statistics are found on the back of this report. In January and February, of the Department's 94 intakes, 88 were related to the Fair Rent Commission. Of the Department's 1760 follow-up contacts, 467 were related to the Fair Rent Commission. We have received four new formal complaints since our last meeting, however, two of those were received in March and therefore are not included on the attached report.

Of the intakes we received last month, we saw a slight increase in the number of questions about repairs.

Commission Members and Department Staff

Two Regular Commissioners whose terms have expired have asked not to be reappointed. We additionally have one vacancy on the alternate list of our Commission. Mayor Rilling is aware of the vacancies and we have discussed candidates he is considering for the openings.

Budget

Since our last meeting the Finance Department published its recommended budget for the 2014-15 fiscal year. All of our requests were included except for two items; a new conference table for our mediation room and a new part-time staff position in our office. As you probably know, the Common Council voted to set the spending in the 2014-15 fiscal year at \$500,000 below the Finance Department's recommendation. On Monday of this week I met with the Board of Estimate and Taxation ("BET") as part of their "workshop" process in preparing their 2014-15 operating budget. The discussion focused on our request for an additional 2 day/week part-time employee and alternatives such as a paid intern or a 1 day/week employee. The BET decided to put the request on their open items list which means they will discuss the issue again towards the end of their process along with other requests that they are not certain they wish to prioritize for funding.

Respectfully submitted,


Adam D. Bovitsky
Director

Commissioner Penn-Williams joined the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

City of Norwalk
Fair Rent Commission
Regular Meeting
March 5, 2014

Page 2

Mr. Bovilsky spoke about a project that Mayor Rilling has requested for developing a Social Service Department. He said that the recent budget submission included a request for another staff member. The Finance Department would prefer the Fair Rent Department to have an intern instead.

Commissioner Genuario asked about the EOC services that would be needed after a major storm event. Mr. Bovilsky explained that Ms. DeLuca operates in this capacity but there needs to be a higher level of management.

Commissioner Genuario asked why Norwalk no longer had a Social Services Department. Mr. Bovilsky explained that Norwalk once had a department, but when the State created the Department of Social Services around 20 years ago, the positions were discontinued. Many of the services are outsourced to non-profits. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Penn-Williams asked for clarification regarding the difference between civil rights and social services. Mr. Bovilsky explained that the two overlap in the area of poverty. However, his department is not really set up to handle social service needs outside of Fair Rent and Human Relations issues. The Human Relations Commission's primary focus is on anti-discrimination.

REVIEW, DISCUSSION, AND MOTION ON OPEN CASES.

a. Case 1656-13 – 44 West Rocks Rd. Front Apt.

Ms. Keegan then reviewed the status of the case. Staff recommends no action.

**** COMMISSIONER CHURCH MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE # 1656-13.**

**** COMMISSIONER GEAKE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

b. Case 1657-13 – 29 Fitch Street, First Floor.

Ms. Keegan then reviewed the status of the case. Staff recommends no action.

**** COMMISSIONER MINTZ MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE # 1657-13.**

**** COMMISSIONER CHURCH SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

c. 1666-13 148 S. Main St, 1st Floor.

Ms. Keegan then reviewed the status of the case. Staff recommends no action on the case.

**** COMMISSIONER MINTZ MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE # 1665-13.**

**** COMMISSIONER GEAKE SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

d. 1668-13 35 Woodward Avenue.

Ms. Keegan then reviewed the status of the case. Staff recommends no action on the case.

**** COMMISSIONER CHURCH MOVED TO TAKE NO ACTION ON CASE # 1668-13.**
**** COMMISSIONER MINTZ SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PRESENTATION OF NEW CASES.

1671-14 2 Couch Street, Apt. 1.

Ms. Keegan then reviewed the status of the case. Staff recommends hearing the case.

**** COMMISSIONER MINTZ MOVED TO HEAR CASE # 1671-14.**
**** COMMISSIONER GEAKE SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

1672-14 77 North Water St., Apt. C410.

Ms. Keegan then reviewed the status of the case. Staff recommends hearing the case.

**** COMMISSIONER CHURCH MOVED TO HEAR CASE # 1672-14.**
**** COMMISSIONER MINTZ SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

1673-14 31 Second St., 2nd Floor. Ms. Keegan then reviewed the status of the case. Staff recommends hearing the case.

Commissioner Church recused himself from this item.

**** COMMISSIONER MINTZ MOVED TO HEAR CASE # 1673-14.**
**** COMMISSIONER PENN-WILLIAMS SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH THREE IN FAVOR (GEAKE, MINTZ AND PENN-WILLIAMS) AND ONE ABSTENTION (CHURCH).**

**1674-14 29 Van Buren Avenue
, Apt. M-7.**

Ms. Keegan then reviewed the status of the case. Staff recommends hearing the case.

**** COMMISSIONER CHURCH MOVED TO HEAR CASE # 1674-14.
** COMMISSIONER GEAKE SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OLD BUSINESS.

There was no old business to discuss at this time.

NEW BUSINESS.

There was no new business to consider at this time.

ADJOURNMENT.

**** COMMISSIONER PENN-WILLIAMS MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** COMMISSIONER CHURCH SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services