



**TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD FAIR RENT COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
June 24, 2024 at 6:30 PM
West Hartford Town Hall Room 400**

I. Meeting Opening

- A. Call to Order: Chair Nastajha Ortiz welcomed everyone and started the meeting at 6:30 pm.
- B. Roll Call: Vice Chair Berklas conducted roll call.
Present: Commissioners Alexis Safo-Agyeman, Nichole Berklas, Nastajha Ortiz, Ashley Rigby, and Bruce Wittchen.
Absent: Commissioners Venica Blythe and Kyle Zelazny.
A quorum of members present.
- C. Approval of Minutes from June 4, 2024 Meeting
Motion made to approve the minutes by: Bruce Wittchen
Motion seconded by: Alexis Safo-Agyeman
Vote: Motion passes unanimously

II. New Business

- A. Chair Ortiz discusses the procedure for this evening's meeting
- B. Motion made to enter Executive Session Pursuant to Section 1-200(6)(E) of Connecticut General Statutes to discuss an Attorney-Client Privileged Memorandum made by Vice-Chair Berklas. Motion passes Unanimously. Commission entered into executive session and invited Assistant Corporation Counsel Cynthia Lauture to enter into

executive session at 6:33pm. Commission exited executive session and is back on the record at 6:53pm.

C. Continuation of case #2024-03, Pagan v. Westwood Condominiums, LLC.

Chair Ortiz advised that Respondent requested a new hearing in this matter. Complainant was present. Respondent was not present. Complainant made an argument as to why Respondent should not be afforded a new hearing. Vice-Chair Berklas made a motion to deny the motion to reopen the hearing and to release the Complainant's June check from escrow. Seconded by Commissioner Safo-Agyeman. Motion passed unanimously.

D. Explanation of Administrative Hearing Guidelines

Chair Ortiz advised that the next item on the agenda is a hearing in Gabriel v. 4 Sisters Forest, LLC. Complainant and counsel for both parties were present. The court reporter was present. Chair Ortiz noted that the parties were notified of the hearing via regular and certified mail and went over the hearing procedures.

Recess at 7:07pm

Reconvened at 7:09pm

E. Case #2024-04, Gabriel v. 4 Sisters Forest, LLC

Parties made an opening statement.

Complainant put on her case. Complainant's counsel asked questions of Complainant. Respondent's counsel through the Chair asked questions of Complainant. Respondent's counsel presented argument for Respondent. Complainant's counsel through the Chair asked

questions of Respondent's counsel. Parties presented a closing argument.

Commissioners discussed testimony.

Commissioner Wittchen made a motion to reduce Complainant's rent to \$1450. Motion seconded by Vice-Chair Berklas. In favor of motion was Commissioners Wittchen. In opposition of motion were Chair Ortiz, Vice-Chair Berklas, Commissioners Rigby and Sago-Ageyman. Motion does not carry.

Commissioner Wittchen made a motion that Complainant's rental increase is harsh and unconscionable. Seconded by Vice-Chair Berklas. In opposition of motion is Chair Ortiz, Commissioners Rigby and Sago-Ageyman. Motion does not carry.

Vice-Chair Berklas made a motion to dismiss without prejudice. Seconded by Chair Ortiz. In opposition of motion was Commissioner Wittchen. In favor of motion were Vice-Chair Berklas, Chair Ortiz, Commissioners Rigby and Safo -Ageyman. Motion carries.

III. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm.