



**West Hartford Fair Rent Commission Special Meeting
Town of West Hartford - Legislative Chambers Room 314
50 South Main Street, West Hartford CT 06107
June 26, 2025 at 6:30 PM
Minutes**

I. Meeting Opening

A. Call to Order: Chair Ortiz calls the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

B. Roll Call: Chair Ortiz conducts roll call.

Present: Commissioners Nichole Berklas, Venica Blythe,
Bruce Wittchen, Nastajha Ortiz, Kate Martin, and Alexis
Safo-Agyeman

Absent: Commissioner John Souza

A quorum of members present.

C. Approval of Minutes from June 10, 2025 Meeting

Motion to approve minutes is made by Commissioner
Berklas. Motion is seconded by Commissioner Wittchen.

Vote: Motion passes unanimously.

II. New Business

A. Discussion of Procedure for Meeting

Chair Ortiz discusses the procedure for this evening's meeting.

B. # 2025-06, Huri v. Sierra

Chair Ortiz calls the parties in the matter of *Huri v. Sierra*. Both parties are
present. Chair Ortiz identifies and marks exhibits. Respondent wishes to
address procedural matters.

Recess at 6:50 pm. Reconvene at 6:52 pm.

Chair addresses Respondent. Respondent wishes to put forth other matters. FRC
Ombudsman reads Complainant's Opening Statement. Respondent asks
questions of Complainant through the Chair. Commissioners ask questions of
the Complainant.

Chair Ortiz identifies and marks the Respondent's exhibits.

Recess at 7:50 pm. Reconvene at 7:56 pm.

Chair Ortiz continues to go over Respondent's exhibits. Respondent puts forth opening statement. Chair Ortiz affords Complainant an opportunity to ask questions of Respondent through Chair, Complainant declines. Commissioner asks questions of Respondent. Respondent calls witness Attorney John Pirina. FRC Ombudsman reads Complainant's closing statement. Respondent presents closing statement. Commissioners begin deliberation.

Chair Ortiz asks each Commissioner if they find the rent increase fair and equitable. Commissioners Safo- Agyeman, Wittchen, and Ortiz find the rent increase to be fair and equitable. Commissioners Blythe, Martin, and Berklas find the rent increase not to be fair and equitable.

Commission closed deliberations briefly to ask Respondent questions.

Commissioner Safo-Agyeman moves to vote that the rental increase is fair and equitable. Commissioner Wittchen second motion.

Commissioners Safo-Agyeman and Wittchen vote in favor. Commissioners Berklas, Ortiz, Martin, and Blythe vote against.

Motion fails 2-4.

Commissioner Martin moves to find the increase of 40% is excessive as to be harsh and unconscionable.

Commissioner Wittchen seconds the motion

Board votes unanimously that rent is harsh and unconscionable.

Commissioner Berklas moves to reduce the rent from \$1850 per month.

Board votes unanimously to reduce the rent from \$1850 per month.

Commission deliberates.

Commissioner Berklas moves to order a reduction of the rental charge to \$1625 per month until December 31, 2025.

Commissioner Blythe seconds the motion.

Commissioners Berklas, Ortiz, Wittchen, Safo-Agyeman, Blythe vote in favor.

Commissioner Martin votes Nay.

C. Discussion of Any Action Items - Case #2025-04, Meyer v. Dalton.

At its May 13, 2025 meeting, the Commission found that the Complainant's rental unit did not meet local health and safety requirements, that the Complainant's rent should be held in escrow until compliance is achieved, and that the parties were to report back within 60 days. The 60-day report back date is July 14th. On June 26, 2025, the Complainant emailed the Fair Rent Ombudsman and provided a status update with respect to the condition of the property. Chair Ortiz makes a motion that the Commission that push back the report back date another two months, unless anything changes prior to July 14th. Motion seconded by Commissioner Safo-Agyeman. Unanimous

D. Adjournment - Meeting adjourns at 9:08 pm.

