

**Rent Stabilization Commission
City of West Hollywood
Thursday, January 14, 2016 @ 7:00 PM
West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers
625 North San Vicente Boulevard**

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Sanes called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Commissioner Bergstein led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Commission Secretary Tom Trevor took roll call.

PRESENT:

Chair Gail Sanes, Vice Chair Richard Maggio, Commissioner Stephanie Harker, Commissioner David Gregoire, Commissioner Alexander Gurfinkel, Commissioner Josh Kurpies, Commissioner Rob Bergstein

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT:

Director of Human Services and Rent Stabilization Elizabeth Savage, Rent Stabilization and Housing Manager Peter Noonan, Legal Counsel to the Commission Alison Regan, Commission Secretary Tom Trevor, and Assistant City Attorney Lauren Langer.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

A motion was made by Commissioner Bergstein to approve the agenda for the January 14, 2016 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gregoire. The motion was approved (7-0-0).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Commissioner Bergstein to postpone the approval of the December 10, 2015 minutes until amendments could be made to include Commissioner comments on the topic of relocation requirements and fees. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kurpies. The motion was approved (7-0-0).

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Coe Holbrook of West Hollywood spoke regarding unauthorized entry into a rental unit by a landlord.

Tory Berger of West Hollywood spoke as liaison from the Public Safety Commission and talked about the Public Safety Commissions recent activities regarding an El Nino emergency town hall meeting, two public meetings regarding mail theft, the forming of sub committees that address the following issues: 1) Neighborhood Watch; 2) contracts and services; 3) homeless issues; 4) transportation; and 5) surveillance cameras.

DIRECTOR'S/MANAGER'S REPORT:

Rent Stabilization and Housing Manager Peter Noonan reviewed the Director's/Manager's Look Ahead Calendar. Mr. Noonan spoke about the Rent Stabilization Commissions study session that will take place at the January 28, 2016 meeting. The study session meeting will be open to the public but will not be televised. Mr. Noonan also spoke about a presentation that will occur at the February 11 meeting on unit transfers.

Elizabeth Savage, Director of Human Services and Rent Stabilization spoke about the Cityline X pilot program, WeHo's new free shuttle connection to Hollywood and Highland and the Metro Red Line station. She also spoke about the upcoming free community outreach that will be held on Tuesday January 19 at the auto court outside of Council Chambers entitled Taco's and Transit, being held to educate the public about their transportation options.

APPEALS:

A. D-4060 1246 Hayworth Ave #206
(MAR)

Alison Regan, Legal Counsel to the Commission, provided a case summary and analysis of the appeal from the staff report.

Landlord representative James L. Jacobson was in attendance and spoke to the Commission regarding the appeal.

Tenant Isabel Lembersky was in attendance and spoke to the Commission regarding the appeal.

After the Commission deliberated, a motion was made by Vice Chair Maggio to adopt Resolution 16-482 affirming the hearing examiner's decision. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gurfinkel. The motion passed (7-0-0).

NEW BUSINESS:

A recommendation was made by Rent Stabilization and Housing Manager Peter Noonan to hear item B first, to be followed by item A.

B. RENT STABILIZATION ORDINANCE: Lauren Langer, Assistant City Attorney, spoke to the Commission regarding a proposed municipal code amendment requiring the annual registration of exempt rental units and the reporting of rent increases. The Commission discussed the item and provided comments, including considering alternative wording for clarity on certain sections of the proposed language, and clarifying what unit types would be exempt from the ordinance. The Commission raised concerns on how fees and penalties would be structured. The Commission offered points to consider such as limiting penalties to a maximum amount, and raised concerns over possible increases on rent that may result from charging a fee. The Commission also voiced concerns regarding tenant's privacy and how publicly available information collected by the City would be.

Action: The Commission motioned that its comments be memorialized and presented to the City Council. The motion was approved (7-0-0).

At this time the Commission adjourned for a brief recess.

- A. THINGS TO KNOW: REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS: Alla Chasnik, Staff Attorney and Director of WeHo Project at Bet Tzedek, gave a presentation on reasonable accommodations and answered questions from the Commission which focused primarily on unit transfers and emotional support animals.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Kurpies thanked Alla Chasnik for her presentation.

Commissioner Harker reminded the public to attend the Tacos and Transportation event on January 19 at 5pm.

Commissioner Kurpies reminded the public that Covered California open enrollment ends on January 31.

Commissioner Gurfinkel thanked staff for their work on the RSO Building Blocks seminars.

Chair Sanes thanked the night's speakers.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Rent Stabilization and Housing Manager Peter Noonan announced that the City would be hosting two Housing Open House events on January 21 and January 25 and encouraged the Commissioners and public to attend. He also announced the Arts and Cultural Affairs Winter Sounds Event, which is a free concert series organized by the City of West Hollywood Arts and Cultural Affairs Division.

Commissioner Gurfinkel made a request for a feasibility report on multilingual community meetings. The item was deferred to the Study Session meeting in January.

ADJOURNMENT:

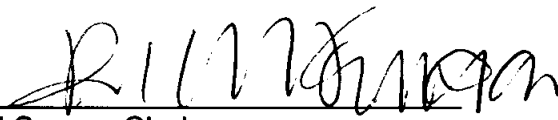
The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Rent Stabilization Commission will be held on January 28, 2016 in the West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers.

These minutes were submitted by Laura Schoonover, Commission Secretary and approved by a motion of the Rent Stabilization Commission on this 28th day of January, 2016.

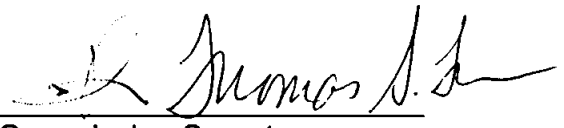
A copy of the audio recording of this meeting can be obtained from the City Clerk's office upon request.

(Disclaimer: Staff records the meetings for the sole purpose of composing the official meeting minutes; therefore the recordings are not of commercial quality.)

ATTEST:



Gail Sanes, Chair



Commission Secretary