

**RENT STABILIZATION COMMISSION
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2020
TELECONFERENCE**

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Bergstein called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Commission said the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Rent Stabilization and Commission Secretary Janene Sherrard took roll call.

PRESENT: Commissioner Kellan Martz, Commissioner Karen O'Keefe, Commissioner Josh Kurpies, Commissioner Richard Maggio, Commissioner Garrett Charity, Vice Chair Agassi Topchian, Chair Robert Bergstein.

STAFF PRESENT: Rent Stabilization and Housing Manager Pete Noonan, Legal Counsel to the Commission Alison Regan, Rent Stabilization Information Coordinator Yazmin Spiteri, Commission Secretary Janene Sherrard, and Corri Planck, Strategic Initiatives Manager and Acting Human Services and Rent Stabilization Department Director.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: A motion was made by Commissioner Charity to approve the agenda for the June 11, 2020 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kurpies. The motion was approved 6-0-0, with Commissioner Maggio absent.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: A motion was made by Commissioner O'Keefe to approve, as revised, the minutes of the February 27, 2020 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Martz. The motion was approved 6-0-0, with Commissioner Maggio absent.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: John Erickson encouraged the City and the Rent Stabilization and Housing Division to continue communicating with renters of all economic means through the Building Blocks program and other education programming developed in the future.

Helene Shapiro spoke on item 4. She stated that a lot of attention is placed on tenants and not on landlords. The tenants need help, but landlords do too. She mentioned tenants are not paying rent and do not have to provide documentation they are affected by the pandemic and are not able to pay. She said that she does not approve of any extension of the Eviction Moratorium.

Guy Fidele spoke on item 4. Tenants are not paying rent and not providing evidence that the pandemic is affecting their ability to pay. The lack of rent

payments is affecting landlords who are not making a profit but are paying property taxes. He also stated it is unreasonable to expect that someone who is not able to pay rent now would be able to pay rent plus any rent delayed in the future.

MANAGER REPORT: Rent Stabilization and Housing Manager Pete Noonan reviewed the Look Ahead Calendar.

Mr. Noonan informed the Commission it would receive a presentation on the Eviction Moratorium and assistance for renters and landlords. Additionally, the presentation would include an overview of Los Angeles County Department of Public Health guidelines for multi-family residences. The Commission will again meet twice a month going forward. The next meeting on June 25, 2020 will include the announcement of the Annual General Adjustment, which will be effective September 1, 2020. Two appeals are scheduled for the July 9th and July 23rd meetings. The July 9th meeting will also have the reorganization of the Chair and Vice-Chair. There are no items currently on the schedule for the August 13th meeting. This meeting is being held as a place holder if the Commission would like to hold a study session. The August 27th and September 10th meetings each have one appeal scheduled.

Corri Planck let the Commission know staff was working very hard to serve the community and to ensure available resources reach as many people as possible.

Commissioner Maggio asked if the upcoming meetings would be via Zoom. He also asked if hard copies of the agenda packets would be available for the meetings in which appeals will be heard. Mr. Noonan confirmed the meetings will be held via Zoom; and, while hard copies of the agenda are not currently available, he will work with each Commissioner to find a method that would work best for them. Corri Planck also stated hard copies cannot be safely provided at this time, but when staff can do so safely, they will.

Chair Bergstein echoed Commissioner Maggio's concern of not being provided hard copies of the agenda packet, particularly for appeals with a lot of information.

Chair Bergstein asked about the status of the City's application for FEMA grant money to help landlords with earthquake retrofitting costs. Mr. Noonan stated there is no additional information at this time. The City is still in consideration for one of the grants, but the status is still pending. The Commission will be updated as the process moves forward.

Chair Bergstein asked if the one-year deadline for landlords to provide initial engineering results has been extended. Mr. Noonan said he will find out.

COMMISSION COMMENTS: Commissioner Kurpies shared that West Hollywood community members who are having difficulty getting through to EDD or have an

application pending and can't reach anyone to contact Assembly Member Richard Bloom at 310-450-0041 or Google Richard Bloom, select "Contact" on his website, and send an email that includes their EDD number.

Commissioner Kurpies stated that DMV field offices are now open, but by appointment only. Individuals who had appointments cancelled by the DMV will be receiving calls to reschedule. Most services can be done online at dmv.ca.gov. Driver's licenses that expired before July have been extended to the end of July. Drivers over the age of 70 who had licenses that expire by July 31st will have their licenses extended 120 days.

Chair Bergstein asked if Assembly Members across the board would be able to assist or answer questions for people having trouble getting their unemployment benefits. Commissioner Kurpies confirmed that all State Assembly offices and Senate offices can help, but to only contact one, contacting both your assembly member and senator will slow down the process.

Chair Bergstein mentioned that the City of Beverly Hills will be having their first Rent Stabilization Commission meeting. Chair Bergstein reached out to the Beverly Hills Commission to offer congratulations and to state his belief in the importance of the work of the Rent Stabilization Commission.

Commissioner Martz encouraged everyone to continue to be tested for COVID-19. Drive-thru testing is switching from a self-administered throat swab to the more effective, self-administered nasal swab test.

APPEAL: None

NEW BUSINESS: Rent Stabilization and Housing Information Coordinator, Yazmin Spiteri, gave a presentation regarding guidance for multi-family housing. She provided both an overview of the guidelines and specific daily steps that both renters and landlords can take.

Mrs. Spiteri also presented an overview of West Hollywood's eviction moratorium, providing information on what the eviction moratorium is and what resources are available to the community.

Commissioner Martz recommended the City explore mini grants to support non-profit businesses with future pandemic service needs for homeless residents. Commissioners O'Keefe, Topchian, and Kurpies asked a series of questions regarding the eviction moratorium. Chair Bergstein offered a statement concerning the eviction moratorium's impact on landlords.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS: Commissioner O’Keefe proposed scheduling a review of the Commission’s priorities. Commissioner Kurpies asked if a discussion on the Rent Stabilization Ordinance deposit interest formula could also be moved forward. Chair Bergstein commended the service by City staff, City Council, and the Sheriff’s Department in response to COVID-19.

STAFF COMMENTS: Mr. Noonan and Corri Planck thanked Janene Sherrard for her service as Commission Secretary and introduced Roger Vinalon as incoming Commission Secretary.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m. The next meeting of the Rent Stabilization Commission will be held at 7:00 p.m. on June 25, 2020 via zoom conference.


These minutes were submitted by Roger Vinalon, Commission Secretary, and approved by a motion of the Rent Stabilization Commission on this 25th day of June 2020.

A copy of the audio recording of this meeting can be obtained from the City Clerk’s office upon request. You may also view a video of this meeting at <http://www.weho.org/weho-tv/other-city-meetings>

ATTEST:

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Roger Vinalon, Commission Secretary

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