

**CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD  
MINUTES  
STUDY SESSION REGARDING  
PROHIBITION OF TENANT HARASSMENT  
ENFORCEMENT AND PROSECUTIONS  
MONDAY, JANUARY 14, 2002  
PLUMMER PARK COMMUNITY CENTER  
7377 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Heilman called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

2. **ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Councilmember Duran, Martin, Mayor Pro Tempore Guarriello, and Mayor Heilman.

**ABSENT:** Councilmember Prang.

**ALSO PRESENT:** City Attorney Mike Jenkins, City Manager Paul Arevalo, City Clerk Russell and Assistant City Clerk Taylor.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**

City Attorney Jenkins requested a Closed Session Agenda be added.

**ACTION: Moved by Mayor Pro Tempore Guarriello, seconded by Councilmember Martin to add a Closed Session Agenda. Unanimously carried noting Councilmember Prang as absent.**

**ACTION: Approve the January 14, 2002 agenda as amended. Moved by Mayor Pro Tempore Guarriello, seconded by Councilmember Duran to approve the agenda as amended. Unanimously carried noting Councilmember Prang as absent.**

4. **STUDY SESSION:**

4.A. **DISCUSS THE CITY'S PROHIBITION ON TENANT HARASSMENT ENFORCEMENT AND PROSECUTIONS:**

*The City Council will discuss the City's Prohibition on Tenant Harassment Enforcement and prosecutions activities over the last year. It will also focus on the changes that have been implemented to strengthen the City's enforcement efforts to protect tenants from harassment.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** Discuss the report and provide additional direction to staff.

Helen Goss, Director, Public Information & Adjudication Services, provided an overview of the meeting and presented a status report on the prohibition on tenant harassment, ordinance enforcement and prosecutions.

Christof Schroeder, Manager, Adjudication Services, provided an overview of the process his department takes when receiving a potential tenant harassment case.

Paul Fix, City Prosecutor, provided an update of the eight- (8) harassment cases, which were filed in the past year.

Joel Hecht, City Mediator, spoke regarding mediation procedures within the City, the number of cases processed and how they were resolved.

Stephen Lewis, Hearings Examiner, spoke regarding possible changes to the cities current Rent Stabilization Ordinance regarding tenant harassment.

Mayor Heilman stated that a large majority of tenants and landlords were getting along and that he felt tenant harassment cases were relatively small number.

Councilmember Martin stated that he has seen an increase in tenant harassment cases within his office, which has occurred over the past nine months.

In response to Mayor Pro Tempore Guarriello, Paul Fix, City Prosecutor, provided an overview of the process of educating judges who try tenant harassment cases.

Councilmember Duran spoke regarding the education of judges and how a judicial handbook on landlord tenant issues would be an effective tool in enforcing the cities rent stabilization laws.

In response to Councilmember Duran, Christof Schroeder outlined the procedures of the cities tenant harassment committee and how the committee responds when time sensitive issues are raised.

In response to Councilmember Duran, Joel Hecht, Mediator, explained how he tries to mediate outside of the ordinance but it varies case to case. He stated that tenants who are leasing to sub-tenants must screen potential sub-tenants.

In response to Councilmember Martin, Joel Hecht, Mediator, stated that once he provides the landlord with the current ordinance regarding domestic partnerships, the majority of them do not proceed with tenant evictions.

In response to Mayor Pro Tempore Guarreillo, Robert Brody, Bet Tzedek, stated that his West Hollywood designated attorneys always waive the income verification requirements when dealing with tenant harassment cases in the City.

Councilmember Martin stated that the issue of pet ownership should not be used as tool to evict tenants. He directed staff to review the current ordinance as it pertains to pets and possibly look at expanding the definition within the rent stabilization code.

Mayor Heilman commented on the proposed ordinance changes and directed staff to proceed with the updated. He also direct staff to look at possible civil remedies to provide relief to tenants. He encouraged staff to continue developing a City rent escrow program.

#### **4. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

INA BLISS, WEST HOLLYWOOD, thanked staffed for their hard work on this issue. She also provided an informational piece to council.

TOM DEMILLE, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke regarding the city intake response when dealing with tenant harassment cases and various other issues dealing with harassment.

JEROME CLEARY, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke regarding the process of being a tenant. He also spoke about how landlords are not depositing rent checks.

GENNADIY DANILKEVICH, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke regarding possible outreach programs to the Russian Community addressing tenant rights.

MYLES BURTON, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke regarding his current landlord and the harassment he and his fellow tenants are receiving from the current Management Company.

GRAFTON TANQUARY, WEST HOLLYWOOD, stated that landlords have no protection from tenant harassment.

JAMES FUHRMAN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke regarding how this issue is a one-side event and he asked when would the city have a study session addressing landlord rights.

SUZANNE DIETRICH, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke regarding building problems she is currently having in her building at 7292 Fountain Avenue and how her management company is not addressing them.

JOE PRAML, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke regarding how pre Costa Hawkins tenants are being harassed and how landlords are picking away at those tenant's rights.

**6. COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS:**

Mayor Heilman directed staff to investigate the problems at 7292 Fountain Avenue. He also directed staff to review the three-day notices procedures.

Councilmember Martin also directed staff to look at the increase off street parking which has occurred by landlords decreasing parking spaces in their buildings.

**7. REPORT OF CLOSED SESSION AGENDA:**

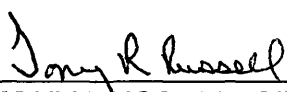
City Attorney Mike Jenkins stated the closed session convened at 8:21 P.M. He stated no reportable action was taken.

**8. ADJOURNMENT:** The City Council adjourned at 8:19 P.M. The next regular meeting will be on Tuesday, January 22, 2002 at 6:30 P.M. at West Hollywood Park, 647 N. San Vicente Boulevard.

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY COUNCIL THIS 22nd DAY OF JANUARY, 2002.

  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

  
TONY RUSSELL, CITY CLERK