



## **TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD**

### **MEETING MINUTES**

### **FAIR RENT COMMISSION**

**March 23, 2023 at 6:30 PM**

**West Hartford Town Hall Legislative Chambers, Room 314**

#### **I. Meeting Opening**

A. Call to Order: Interim Chair Nastajha Ortiz welcomed everyone and started the meeting at 6:34 pm.

B. Roll Call

Present: Nichole Berklas, Nastajha Ortiz, Ashley Rigby, Salvatore Tripoli, Bruce Wittchen, Kyle Zelazny. Commissioner Alexis Safo-Agyeman participated virtually. A quorum of members were present.

C. Approval of Minutes from November 10, 2022 Meeting

Motion made by: Ashley Rigby

Motion seconded by: Nichole Berklas

Vote: Motion passes unanimously

#### **II. New Business**

A. Introduction of New Members

Interim Chair Nastajha Ortiz welcomes the new members Salvatore Tripoli, Bruce Wittchen, and Kyle Zelazny. New members briefly introduce themselves.

B. Explanation of Administrative Hearing Guidelines

Interim Chair Nastajha Ortiz confirms that both parties are present. Proper notice was made to both parties, as parties were notified of the hearing via email and certified mail.

Respondent is represented by counsel, Attorney Zev Sandman. A court reporter was also present. Interim Chair Ortiz explains that all parties to the proceeding have the right to present oral, written testimony and documentary evidence; offer rebuttal; examine all evidence present at the hearings; and present witnesses on their respective behalves.

Interim Chair Ortiz goes over the hearing procedures, and Commissioner Nichole Berklas swears in both parties and Respondent's additional witnesses.

### **C. Case #2023-01, Welch v. 98 Caya Rsk LLC**

Interim Chair Ortiz calls the Complainant to the podium. Complainant introduces Complainant's exhibits A-H, then provides testimony as to why a Fair Rent Commission Complaint was filed. Interim Chair Ortiz gives Attorney Sandman the opportunity to ask questions of the Complainant. The Commissioners then have the opportunity to ask questions.

Interim Chair Ortiz calls on the Respondent's representative. Respondent's representative introduces Respondent's exhibits 1-28. Attorney Sandman calls upon his first witness Tzvee Rotberg, principal of 98 Caya Rsk, LLC. Attorney Sandman questions his client. Interim Chair Ortiz gives Mr. Welch the opportunity to ask questions of the witness. The Commissioners then ask questions of the witness. Attorney Sandman calls upon his second witness, Realtor Thuyan Tran of Vanguard Private Client Group. Attorney Sandman questions the witness. Interim Chair Ortiz gives Mr. Welch the opportunity to ask questions of the witness. The Commissioners then ask questions of the witness.

The Parties then have the opportunity to make closing statements. Following closing statements, the Commissioners proceed with deliberations. Interim Chair Nastajha Ortiz makes a motion to refer the Parties to the Town of West Hartford's Fair Rent Coordinator for mediation, with the parties reporting back to the Fair Rent Commission in 30 days as to the status of the mediation, and Respondent's counsel shall file a withdrawal of the eviction proceedings against the Complainant. Commissioner Ashley Rigby seconds the motion. Vote: Motion passes unanimously.

### **III. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 8:36 pm.