Remote Rent Board Meeting Minutes - Held Via Zoom

Wednesday, May 24, 2023

II. Roll Call

Elliott Simpson, Tenant, District 3 - Chair
Barbara Vestal, Landlord, At-Large - Vice Chair
Vacant, District 1
Matthew Walker, Tenant, District 2
Ian McCracken, Landlord, District 4
Philip Mathieu, Tenant, District 5
Vacant, At-Large

Staff present:

Zachary Lenhert Licensing & Housing Safety Manager
Benjamin Plante, Esq., Counsel for the Rent Board

III. Approval of Minutes - 00:00:50

The Vice Chair made a motion to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Philip. Vote: 5-0 (Two vacancies on the Board)

IV. Communications - 00:04:14

A. **Written Public Comments**

There were two comments submitted which can be found in the agenda packet

V. Unfinished Business - 00:05:30

A. **Rent Increase Application - Public Comment**
Owner: Eastern Residential Inc
Landlord's Representative: Dave Bergeron with Port Property
Property Address: 16 Walnut St, Units 1-8 & B (Legal Address is 304 Eastern Prom)
CBL: 015-B-001-002
Type of Increase: Increased Housing Service Costs

Benjamin Plante, Esq., Counsel for the Board reminded the Chair that Matt Walker's participation on this agenda item should be addressed again, as the recusal would not carry over from meeting to meeting.

> 00:07:38 - Matt Walker voluntarily recused himself from participating on this agenda item due to concerns about comments made as a member of the public before becoming a Board member
>
> The Chair allowed Matt Walker to participate as a member of the public

No tenants spoke as objectors

00:16:18 through 00::24:38 - Public comment was taken

1. Matt Walker, a tenant at 655 Congress St

2. Vivienda Apoyo, a tenant at 231 State St

3. Jessica Purser, a former tenant of 132 Marginal Way

00:33:54 - Philip makes a motion to approve the $88.99 per month increase referenced on the most recently submitted application as presented, seconded by the Vice Chair. Vote: 4-0 (Matt Walker recused himself, and there are two vacancies on the Board)

The Board will return to the Decision Form at the end of the meeting.

B. Vote for the next Board Chair and Vice Chair - 00:35:46

00:37:15 - Barbara Vestal makes a motion to elect Elliott Simpson as Chair, seconded by Philip Mathieu. Vote: 5-0 (Two vacancies on the Board)

00:38:18 - Barbara Vestal makes a motion to elect Philip Mathieu as Vice Chair, seconded by Ian McCracken. Vote: 5-0 (Two vacancies on the Board)

VI. New Business - 00:39:11

A. Discussion to Prepare for the Annual Report

Board members discussed preparation for the annual report from 00:39:11 to 01:09:08 on the recorded meeting.

01:12:45 - Board returns to Decision Forms for the Rent Increase Applications

16 Walnut Street

01:48:32 - The Vice Chair makes a motion that the Board adopts the edited form as written except with the addition of language from the Southern Maine Landlord Association (SMLA) decision concerning housing service costs, seconded by Ian. Vote: 4-0 (Matt Walker recused himself and there are two vacancies on the Board)

VII. Adjourn - 01:49:16

Philip made a motion to adjourn, seconded by the Chair. Vote: 4-0 (Philip was absent at time of vote & two vacancies on the Board)