

Remote Rent Board Meeting Minutes - Held Via Zoom

Wednesday, June 28, 2023

II. Roll Call

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

Staff present:

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

III. Approval of Minutes - 00:00:56

A. May 24, 2023 Minutes

Barbara Vestal made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Matt Walker. Vote: 4-0
(Three vacancies on the Board)

IV. Communications - 00:02:32

There are no items to be discussed

V. Unfinished Business

00:02:51 through 00:29:01 - Benjamin Plante, Esq., Counsel for the Rent Board discusses concerns about Rent Board member, Matt Walker, and the appearance of bias and/or conflict of interest for the applications listed in Unfinished Business. Along with that, if Matt Walker was recused from these applications, the Board would not meet quorum and the applications would be tabled for yet another meeting until a new member has been appointed. There was discussion amongst Board members and Mr Plante.

00:29:07 - Barbara Vestal makes a motion that the Board finds that Matt Walker should be recused from participating in the applications filed by Port Property on the basis that there is an appearance of bias or lack of objectivity. Seconded by the Chair.

Benjamin Plante, Esq., stated that the vote should be amongst the three board members (Elliott, Barbara, and Philip) and that the affected member should not be voting on the recusal itself.

Vote: 3-0 (Matt Walker did not vote and there are 3 vacancies on the Board).

00:30:54 - All Port Properties applications have been tabled (Agenda Item V, Sections A-G)

A. Rent Increase Application - Public Comment

Owner: Eastern Residential Inc.

Landlord's Representative: David Bergeron with Port Property

Property Address: 13 Montreal St, Units 1-8 (Legal address is 304 Eastern Prom)

CBL: 015-B-001-002

Increase Requested: Increased Housing Service Costs

See timestamp 00:30:54

B. Rent Increase Application - Public Comment

Owner: Eastern Residential Inc.

Landlord's Representative: David Bergeron with Port Property

Property Address: 19 Montreal St, Units 1-8 & B (Legal address is 304 Eastern Prom)

CBL: 015-B-001-002

Increase Requested: Increased Housing Service Costs

See timestamp 00:30:54

C. Rent Increase Application - Public Comment

Owner: Eastern Residential Inc.

Landlord's Representative: David Bergeron with Port Property

Property Address: 25-27 Montreal St, Units 1-8 (Legal address is 304 Eastern Prom)

CBL: 015-B-001-002

Increase Requested: Capital Improvement Costs & Increased Housing Service Costs

See timestamp 00:30:54

D. Rent Increase Application - Public Comment

Owner: Eastern Residential Inc.

Landlord's Representative: David Bergeron with Port Property

Property Address: 304 Eastern Prom

CBL: 015-B-001-002

Increase Requested: Increased Housing Service Costs

See timestamp 00:30:54

E. Rent Increase Application - Public Comment

Owner: Grant Street Realty Group LLC

Landlord's Representative: David Bergeron with Port Property

Property Address: 63 Grant St, Units 1-6 (Legal address is 65 Grant St)

CBL: 048-B-016-001

Increase Requested: Increased Housing Service Costs

See timestamp 00:30:54

F. Rent Increase Application - Public Comment

Owner: Grant Street Realty Group LLC

Landlord's Representative: David Bergeron with Port Property

Property Address: 65 Grant Street, Units 1-6

CBL: 048-B-016-001

Increase Requested: Increased Housing Service Costs

See timestamp 00:30:54

G. Rent Increase Application - Public Comment

Owner: Grant Street Realty Group LLC

Landlord's Representative: David Bergeron with Port Property

Property Address: 69 Grant St, Units 1-6

CBL: 048-B-015-001

Increase Requested: Increased Housing Service Costs

See timestamp 00:30:54

VI. New Business - 00:34:24

A. Rent Increase Application - Public Comment

Owner: Joanne Stamplis

Property Address: 34 Cushman St (Legal address is 36 Cushman St)

CBL: 056-D-005-001

This is the first application submitted using the new MNOI worksheet.

01:20:52 - The Chair asks the applicant if she will voluntarily table her application due to additional information being needed, to which she agreed to

Additional information that can be submitted to help with the application are:

-receipts/invoices

-written statements if missing a receipt and be detailed about it

B. Rent Increase Application - Public Comment - 01:23:33

Owner: Trelawny 657 LLC

Landlord's Representative: Paul S Bulger, Esq. with Jewell & Bulger, P.A.

Property Address: 655 Congress St

CBL: 046-D-021-001

Per Matt Walker, he is a tenant at 655 Congress Street, therefore, there is a conflict of interest for him to participate on this application as a Board member. He has voluntarily recused himself.

01:28:22 - Barbara Vestal makes a motion that the Board tables this item until they have a quorum to be able to deal with it, seconded by the Chair.

Benjamin Plante, Esq., Counsel for the Board advised the Chair that for this purpose, it would be okay to only have the three remaining Board members vote (Elliott, Barbara, and Philip)

Vote: 3-0 (Matt Walker recused himself and there are three vacancies on the Board)

C. Continued Discussion for Annual Report - 01:29:33

Board members continued discussing preparation for the annual report from 01:29:33 to 02:02:54 on the recorded meeting.

VII. Adjourn - 02:03:03

Barbara Vestal made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Matt Walker. Vote: 4-0 (Three vacancies on the Board)