Minutes

Remote Rent Board Meeting - Held Via Zoom
Wednesday, March 23, 2022

Start time: 5:03pm

II. Roll Call - 00:00:40

Austin Sims, Homeowner, District 5 - Chair (absent)
Barbara Vestal, Landlord, At-Large - Vice Chair
Christopher “Buddy” Moore, Tenant, District 1
Josef Kijewski, Homeowner, District 2 (absent)
Elliott Simpson, Tenant, District 3
Ian McCracken, Landlord, District 4
Elias Kann, Tenant, At-Large (absent)

Staff present:

Jen Thompson, Acting Corporation Counsel
Katlyn Sawyer, Licensing & Registration Coordinator
Zachary Lenhert Licensing & Housing Safety Manager

III. Minutes - 00:01:01

Elliott Simpson makes a motion to accept the minutes as written, seconded by Ian McCracken.
Vote: 4-0 (3 members are absent).

IV. Communications -

  A. **Written Public Comment**

This item was not discussed.

V. Unfinished Business - 00:02:35

  A. **Rent Increase Application - Public Comment**
  Landlord: Daniel Vallee
  Property Address: 89 Irving St, Unit 1 & 2
  CBL: 137-J-002-001
  Type of Increase: Increased Housing Service Costs

This item was tabled from the last meeting on 2/23/22.

No tenants spoke as objectors.

Public comment was taken from one member of the public.

00:24:15 Acting Chair, Barbara Vestal, asked Mr Vallee for his approval that the Board look at his rent increase request as a Capital Improvement Cost rather than an Increased Housing Service Cost. Mr Vallee confirmed that was okay.

00:38:12 Ian McCracken makes a motion to approve a $377.96 rent increase to be subject to the ten percent maximum yearly allotment based on capital improvements made by Mr Vallee. This will be divided between Unit 1 and Unit 2 with a note that the washer is specific to unit 2. The total amount of rent increase for Unit 1 would be $182.84 and Unit 2 would be $195.13.

Seconded by Eliott Simpson. Vote: 4-0 (3 members are absent).

VI. New Business - 00:43:09

A. Rent Increase Application - Public Comment
Landlord: Victoria Poole
Property Address: 90 Westminster Ave
CBL: 181-B-007-001
Type of Increase: Fair Rate of Return

No tenants spoke as objectors.

No public comment was taken.

The Acting Chair seeked advice on how to proceed with the methodology for determining a fair rate of return from Jen Thompson, Acting Corporation Counsel. After some discussion, it was suggested that this application be tabled until the Board has agreed upon and adopted a methodology that allows the applicant to review and prepare with appropriate notice.

> Additional questions were raised to Jen, in which she had suggested that if the questions are in regards to how the Board will apply the ordinance broadly and how the Board will interpret and apply in this case - that those questions are for use of an Executive Session at another time.

Board members discussed having a special meeting before the next regularly scheduled Rent Board meeting on 4/27/22. This special meeting would act as a workshop to discuss the methodologies for a Fair Rate of Return. The Board suggested Wednesday, April 20th as the special meeting. Jen Thompson, Acting Corporation Counsel will not be available for that meeting, however, our new attorney (who replaced Anne Torregrossa) Kari will be present.

Board members requested that Ms Poole solidify the expense part of the calculation that was on the sheet, to make sure everything is captured as an operating expense in the event the Board decides to go with the cap rate for a methodology. She could also provide a couple more comparable units if there are any. It was also suggested that she may also use an operating expense worksheet, such as the Housing Service costs that lists all of the expense elements in order to flush out the operating expenses.

01:19:16 - Elliott Simpson makes a motion that the Board tables this item to the April 27th Rent Board meeting and that the Rent Board has their workshop on April 20th. Seconded by Ian McCracken. Vote: 4-0 (3 members absent).

B. Rent Increase Application - Public Comment - 01:31:42
Landlord: Sherman Street Properties LLC
Landlord's Representative: David Bergeron, Manager Rep
Property Address: 123 Sherman St, Units 01 through 13
CBL: 048-C-020-001
Type of Increase: Increased Housing Service Costs

No tenants spoke as objectors.

Public comments were taken from two members of the public.
Mr Bergeron addressed the public comments made.

02:07:46 - Ian McCracken makes a motion to accept the request for $4,049.04 which is the requested amount minus the tax. That would be an increase of $25.96 per month, per unit. Seconded by Elliott Simpson. Vote: 3-1 (3 members were absent and Buddy Moore voted against the motion). This fails to pass as it takes 4 affirmative votes to pass.

02:11:32 - Elliott Simpson makes a motion that this item comes back as Unfinished Business at the next Rent Board meeting on 4/27, seconded by Ian McCracken. Vote: 4-0 This will be the second item listed under Unfinished Business.

Buddy Moore requested the applicant submit a year to year comparison of net operating income.

Ian McCracken would like to make a note that the Board already covered Professional Costs in "other" and the tax piece.

It was also requested that the applicant resubmits the page that allocates the costs with the tax removed.

02:15:22 The Board returns to the decision form for 89 Irving St.

This was drafted by Elliott Simpson.
Several edits were made to the form by the Board.

02:34:26 - Ian McCracken makes a motion to approve the decision form as written, seconded by Elliott Simpson. Vote: 4-0 (3 members are absent).

VII. Adjourn - 02:37:55

Meeting end time: 7:41pm