

Minutes of a Re-Organizational Meeting of the Verona Township Rent Control Board on Wednesday, September 25, 2019 beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building, 600 Bloomfield Avenue, Verona, New Jersey.

Call to Order:

Municipal Clerk reads notice of Open Public Meetings law. The notice requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been satisfied with respect to this meeting; specifically, the time, date and location were included in the annual notice of meetings adopted by the governing body, posted in the Municipal Building, and sent to the official newspapers of the Township, the Verona Cedar Grove Times and the Star Ledger. Additionally, the agenda for this meeting was posted in the Municipal Building and sent to the two newspapers before 4:30 p.m. on the Friday preceding this meeting.

Roll Call:

Willola Ashley, Sean Byrnes, Patrick Hanley, Robert Narucki, Gerard Tamburino, Rent Control Board Attorney Alex Graziano, Esq., and Municipal Clerk/Board Secretary Jennifer Kiernan are also present.

Re-Organization of Rent Control Board:

Mr. Narucki nominates Mr. Hanley as Rent Control Board Chairperson; seconded by Mr. Tamburino. Roll Call Vote: 5 ayes.

Appointment of Rent Control Board Secretary is tabled for the next meeting. Ms. Kiernan states that at a regular meeting of the Township Council held on August 5, 2019, Alex Graziano, Esquire was appointed as Rent Control Board Attorney for a term ending June 30, 2020. Mr. Narucki motions to affirm the appointment; seconded by Ms. Ashley. Roll Call Vote: 5 ayes.

Ms. Kiernan states that pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 40:53.1*, the Township Council has designated the Verona-Cedar Grove Times and Star Ledger as the Official Newspapers of the Township. A motion to designate those newspapers for the Board is made by Mr. Tamburino; seconded by Ms. Ashley. Roll Call Vote: 5 ayes.

Ms. Kiernan states that tonight's meeting is the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter meeting of the Rent Control Board and requests a meeting date of the Rent Control Board be set for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2020. It is unanimously agreed that the next regular meeting of the Board be Thursday, February 20, 2020 at 7:00 pm.

Public Comment:

Kathleen Laterza, 810 Bloomfield Avenue, Verona, New Jersey

New Business:

Mr. Graziano states that present tonight are Nicholas Bittner, Esquire of Essex Newark Legal Services, representing the Verona Association of Tenants in regards to a complaint filed against Verona Fieldstone, LLC, and Adrienne LePore, Esquire representing the defendant, for Violation of the Verona Rent Control Ordinance. Mr. Granziano states that tonight is a "pre-hearing conference" whereby all parties have agreed that the Board will follow the New Jersey Rules of Court. After a brief discussion, Mr. Bittner and Ms. LePore agree to a 30 day requirement for document requests. It is agreed that the Board will receive any and all discovery documents for review. The parties agree to follow up with the Board attorney when request for documents is complete to schedule a hearing date. Jose Ortiz, Deputy Director of Newark Legal Services states that their clients are looking to streamline the process and focus what is before the board by each individual tenant. Mr. Graziano suggests that the parties conduct discovery and identify what will be relied on at the hearing. Ms. LePore states she wishes to see all the complaints first. After a brief recess, counsel for both parties announce that they have mutually agreed to set 60 days for discovery, then schedule a memorandum and stipulation of facts. The Board votes unanimously to designate Mr. Graziano to coordinate with the attorneys. The deadline date of November 30 is agreed to by all parties. Mr. Graziano requests of each counsel to provide seven (7) copies of all submissions which will be delivered to the Board. Both counsels agree.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn is made by Mr. Narucki; seconded by Mr. Tamburino is made at 7:38 pm. The next regular scheduled meeting is February 20, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jennifer Kiernan*

Jennifer Kiernan, Municipal Clerk

APPROVED: February 20, 2020