

City of Perth Amboy – Rent Leveling Board Meeting
Monday, April 5, 2021
Minutes: Meeting commenced @ 7:02 p.m. via zoom

Welcome: Chairperson S. Hubberman read open public meeting act.

Roll Call, Jenny Alvarez, Vincent Mackiel, and Chairperson Sharon Hubberman ,
Luz Ramirez (excused) Rebecca Minacapelli (absent)
Kevin McManimon, Esq. and Dianne Roman (recording secretary to the RLB and
City representative)

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes: March 1, 2021

Jenny Alvarez Vincent Mackiel

Motion 2nd the Motion

All members in attendance accepted the minutes.

Topics of discussion:

Presentation by PAFD Chief, Ed Mullen

Chief Mullen provided an overview based on the experience of PAFD in dealing with overcrowding/illegal units when arriving at fire scenes. He detailed his experienced of number of individuals needing to be relocated from recent fires in the city. He added that rental properties are supposed to be inspected annually.

Chairperson, S. Hubberman asked if there are any analysis of the number of persons needing to be relocated due to Code Enforcement designation of illegal housing. Chief mentioned that he is not sure if Code Enforcement may have that information.

Mr. Mackiel provided comments commending PAFD.

He asked, 'how can the city get access into all rental properties to ensure the safety of smoke/CO2 detectors are adhere to?'

D. Roman, added that would be part of the annual Rental Registration requirement.

Chairperson S. Hubberman expressed her appreciation to Chief Mullen for the presentation as it was an eye opener and thanked the PA Fire Department.

Motion to close topic of discussion Chief Mullen.

J. Alvarez Vincent Mackiel, 2nd the motion

Presentation by: Rebecca Pauley, RBYMCA, Healthy Communities/Housing Initiative

R. Pauley provided some guidance to RLB as to work on Housing issues the RBAYMCA, together with the City, and PRAHD are currently undertaking as part of the Healthy Communities.

Lauren Capaci, who oversees the Center for Prosperity for the Y, provided input from the Social Service casework that is being done at the facility to assist vulnerable residents.

R. Pauley provided details on a three part housing series that will focus on the lifting of the Housing moratorium to include resource information on where families can apply for assistance.

J. Alvarez asked, when will the series begin? May
Chairperson S. Hubberman asked about application process? R. Pauley added that residents in need of assistance can contact directly the PRAHD

Chairperson S. Hubberman, also thank Ms. Pauley, Lauren Capaci and Steve Jobin for the information and their work in the city.

Motion to close topic of discussion,

J. Alvarez

Vincent Mackiel, 2nd the motion

Topic of discussion: Rental Registration

Information was provided to RLB on fees charged by other municipalities. Rental Registration fees ranged from \$25 to \$45 per unit on a yearly basis and/or every time the unit becomes vacant. Inspections are conducted on a yearly basis by the municipalities.

Mr. Mackiel believed that starting at the lower end of \$20 would be appropriate, plus late fees.

J. Alvarez agreed on keeping feels small and felt that \$20 sounds reasonable.

Chairperson S. Hubberman agreed with the \$20 p/unit fee.

In order to allow RLB not are not in attendance, Chairperson Hubberman felt it would be in the best interest of the board to have further discussion with the full board present.

S. Hubberman asked, who is the Rent Control Administrator?

D. Roman is the Secretary of the RLB and the Municipal Representative. Any complaints will first come to her.

Also, what would the fees cover?

Who would maintain the record keeping of fee collection?

This information should be included in the language of any proposed recommendation to the council.

V. Mackiel mentioned that a small fee would be good for landlords as well because it was more affordable.

Motion to close this topic/Rental Registration fee:

J. Alvarez

Vincent Mackiel, 2nd the motion

Topic: Units covered under RC

During last meeting discussion was started on making a recommendation on changing the units to be covered under RC to two or less where the property owner lives in one of the units./ The reasoning for this is partly due to the number of complaints coming to the OHSS from tenants that are no cover under rent control.

Mr. Mackiel asked; how many rental properties would now fall under rent control?

What is the actual number of rental properties in the City?

Who could provide this number to RLB?

Possibly the Tax Collector/Assessor? D. Roman will look into this!!

J. Alvarez mentioned that it would be advantageous to have a better sense on the actual number.

Chairperson Hubberman added that having a breakdown of rental units will help RLB have a better picture; more data is needed.

Recommendation was made that properties that fail to pay Rental Registration should be subject to stronger fines in order to get owners to comply with registration. Registration will ensure that units are in compliance and meet safety guides prior to renting.

Chairperson S. Hubberman added that it will be vital to conduct workshops for landlords raising awareness about Rental Registration. The City should set up forums to hear directly from landlords. We can have some in person and via zoom.

J. Alvarez provide feedback that forums would be important as it would should efforts to be collaborative and provide landlords the opportunity to come to the table with questions!

V. Mackiel provided feedback of similar sentiments/.

Old Business:

J. Alvarez asked about the marketing and promotion of the RLB to the public. It would be a good way to let the community aware to hear cases.

D. Roman mentioned that the OHSS has sent notices to food pantries and have shared the Rent Control brochure with community partners. We will be doing more outreach including speaking to the Police/Fire Chaplains at their April meeting.

Motion to close OB:

J. Alvarez Vincent Mackiel, 2nd

New Business:

No new business

Motion to close NB

J. Alvarez Vincent Mackiel, 2nd

Open to the Public:

No comments

Motion to close Open to the public

J. Alvarez Vincent Mackiel, 2nd

Having no more business of the RLB:

Motion was made to close the meeting:

J. Alvarez Vincent Mackiel
Motion second the motion

All members were in agreement.

Meeting adjourned at 9:29 p.m.

Next meeting date:

Monday, May 3, 2021