

Fair Rent Commission

Town of Hamden, Connecticut

Thursday, July 6, 2023, at 6:00 pm

This meeting was hybrid and via zoom.

Members Present: Conte Robinson (Chair), Peter Cunningham (Vice Chair), Sharon Bradford, Jennifer Coggins and Antwan Ned.

Others Present: Timothy Lee (Asst. Town Attorney), and Salvatore McClain (Fair Rent Commission Asst.), Jeff Mastrianni (Attorney/Broadmoor), Kathy Clouds (Property Manager/Broadmoor), Lawrence Freedman (Tenant), Marcia Robinson (Tenant).

1. Call to Order: Mr. Robinson called the meeting to order at 6:18 p.m.

2. Attendance: Mr. Robinson called attendance.

3. Public: No

4. Executive Session: No

4. Correspondence: Request for a continuance from all parties for today's hearing due to scheduling conflicts.

5. Vote to approve the minutes from the regular meeting held on June 22, 2023. All commissioners approved.

6. Cases to be heard:

a. Case #22-029 Lawrence Freedman: Mr. Freedman explained his original rent was \$1,151 and was changed and currently paying \$1,255. Mr. Freedman explained he did not receive a lease and he repeatedly asked and never got a new one. He explained he did receive a copy, but it was not his signature and showed them examples of his signature to show there's a major difference between them. There were missing payments in his transaction report showing payments and fees.

Mr. Freedman explained the conditions of his apartment, his A/C was not working and that he had congestive heart failure. He purchased a \$400 portable A/C unit because he could not stand the heat anymore. Mr. Freedman stated that he came to an agreement with Broadmoor and the attorney he hired since that agreement has disappeared. The agreement was that he would move by July 1, 2023, and Broadmoor would forgive all his fees. He explained he had some serious health issues and was difficult for him to pack. His son was supposed to move back to Connecticut to help but does not look like he will not come back until September. And his health issues aren't allowing him to pack. He explained his yearly income doesn't leave him additional money for security and has not been able to find a place to live that's within his price range and is looking all over Connecticut. He was denied help from Senior Services because he made \$200 over the limit.

He filed maintenance reports that his bedroom ceiling was leaking and the last 2 months it's been so bad he has not been able to sleep in the room and sleeping in the living room. When he calls, they say they will address and don't completely. QVHD was called and came out, but he never heard back. He is now using the room to store his hobby stuff, but unable to sleep in there due to the sound and smell. As of today his trash shoot does not work without a repair date per the note on the shoot door.

Mr. Freedman explained he would be happy to make arrangements regarding his actual rent. He feels he's been paying more than he should and feels they owe him. And happy to move but needs time to. He has pictures of the apartment conditions. His room leaks a day or two after it has rained and is afraid there is mold in his ceiling and that will collapse on him. He is asking for help to have Broadmoor fix everything and give him some time to move. He explains again the various health issues he is currently facing. Mr. Freedman shared pictures and was shared with the commissioners. He was asked about his income. Salvatore explained that Mr. Freedman's attorney was notified via notices, emails and calls but has not responded. Salvatore stated that he has been working with Mr. Freedman to locate a new apartment by making calls to apartments for rent, connecting him and connecting him with other services.

Mr. Freedman was asked questions by the commission about his unit conditions and how much did Broadmoor claimed he owed, and he stated \$7,000.

Attorney Jeff Mastrianni was allowed to speak and was sent via email exhibits from the tenant. Attorney Mastrianni explained that Mr. Freedman came to an agreement to move out due to unpaid charges. He asked when did Mr. Freedman move in and how many work orders for repairs did he submit and/or have they been resolved or addressed. He ask was Mr. Freedman aware of the settlement agreement that his attorney had entered into on his behalf. He stated that there is no dispute in the amount of rent being paid and that there has not been an increase in the rent. He that Mr. Freedman did not comply with the terms of the settlement agreement. He explained also that Broadmoor is willing to address any concerns if a work order was submitted and the proper approach calls are followed. And that this situation is not trying to increase the rent.

b. Case #22-029 Marcia Robinson: Ms. Robinson explained she has been paying her rent but the office is closed on the weekends. She explained her unit conditions are unhealthy. She explained she pays her rent by check but was late this month because she did not receive her compensation check and emailed that she was going to be late. She stated that government people live in the building and don't pay rent. She stated she does not work and gets a monthly check. She stated that she has been to the doctors and there is nothing wrong with her brain. She stated that there is something in her apartment that goes up into your body. She stated she was in her bedroom and a monster was standing up against her wall and she told the office. And the monster is tall and cold. She explained that the elevators don't work at times. She explained she does not feel comfortable with workers coming into her apartment. She stated that Simone had been quiet for the past few months and didn't see her anymore, but changes bodies and follows her around everywhere.

Commissioner Ned asked was there a work order placed for her mold concerns. She stated last year. Commissioner Ned asked what is her initial complaint and she stated the raising of her rent. She showed pictures of the mold from her bathroom ceiling. She stated it was a beautiful place but the monsters come up in the world and she had to make sure she was not mutated. She stated she does not want to be evicted.

c. Case #23-004 Aklilu Beyene: Continue till 7/20/23.

d. Case #23-005 Abdul Kizawi: Continue till 7/20/23.

e. Case #23-009 Hassan Nadeem: Continue till 7/20/23.

7. Old Business: Scheduling of upcoming cases to be heard.

8. New Business: Proposed and adopted a new policy going forward. All parties will be allowed 1 request to continue their case for a later date and 1 additional request to continue for a good cause which will be subject to the approval of the Commission.

9. Schedule of additional hearings: Next cases to be heard on July 6, 2023 – Case 22-028 Marcia Robinson, case 22-029 Lawrence Freedman, case 22-034 Melva Boyd, case 22-036 Arsene Lwamba, case 22-042 Ariel-Raven Estes.

Cases to be heard on July 20, 2023 – Case 23-004 Aklilu Beyene, case 23-005 Abdul Kizawi, case 23-009 Hassan Nadeem, case 23-011 Chyna Grant.

10. Adjournment: The meeting ended at 8:30pm
