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**NEW YORK STATE HOMES AND
COMMUNITY RENEWAL
BOARD MEETING**

Rockland RGB Public Hearing
Held Via Teleconference
Monday, June 24, 2020
7:17 p.m.

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MS. APRIL GRAY-HUERTAS: Good evening. It's the
3 Rockland County Rent Guidelines hearing. It's 7:17.
4 Before we take attendance, I'm just going to read the
5 statement that we read at the beginning of the Zoom
6 meeting, and I would request that everybody please make
7 themselves mute unless they're actually speaking. In
8 response to --

9 MS. PATRICIA CALDWELL: If I make myself mute, I may
10 never --

11 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: No, no, you don't have to.
12 You'll be quiet and your dog won't talk to us. We're
13 good.

14 "In response to the Governor's directive to take
15 every effort to keep New Yorkers safe and
16 mitigate the spread of COVID-19, and pursuant to
17 Executive Order 202-1, which allows for the
18 suspension of the Public Officers Law, the
19 Rockland County Rent Guidelines Board will be
20 conducting public hearings to set guideline
21 rates, rent adjustments for housing
22 accommodations within its jurisdiction subject
23 to the Emergency Tenant Protection Act of 1974
24 for leases commencing between October 1st, 2020,
25 and September 30th, 2021, via teleconference.

1 Instructions for members of the public to
2 simultaneously view or listen to the meetings
3 will be posted to the HCR's website, for the
4 Office of Rent Administration under the public
5 hearing section prior to the meetings. The
6 hearings will also later be transcribed, and the
7 public will have the ability to view the
8 transcripts."

9 And welcome to this evening's meetings.

10 Karen, can you take roll, or do you want me to do
11 that?

12 MR. PETER STECKER: She's muted right now. Karen?

13 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: All right. Kim Foskew?

14 MS. KIM FOSKEW: Here. Do you hear me?

15 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Patricia Caldwell?

16 MS. CALDWELL: Here.

17 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Milagros Guzman?

18 MS. MILAGROS GUZMAN: Here.

19 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Martha Robles?

20 MS. MARTHA ROBLES: Present.

21 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Jain Jacobs (sic)?

22 MR. JACOB: (Indiscernible).

23 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Alejandra Silva-Exias?

24 MS. ALEJANDRA SILVA-EXIAS: Here.

25 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Jared Oats (phonetic)? Rabbi

1 Hersh Horowitz?

2 MR. RABBI HERSH HOROWITZ: Hi.

3 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: I'm turning the meeting over to
4 Ms. Caldwell.

5 MS. CALDWELL: Well, you can't see me. So we have
6 members of (audio distortion) meeting. Can you hear me?

7 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Yes, we can.

8 MS. CALDWELL: Okay. Where are we?

9 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: We had two people register to
10 vote to speak, and neither one has signed in yet.

11 MS. CALDWELL: Oh, that's great. Did you get any --
12 they were unable to attend (audio distortion)? Do you
13 have any of those?

14 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: I had two statements to be read
15 into the record.

16 MS. CALDWELL: Go ahead and read those, probably
17 wait for the other two people.

18 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: All right. Give me one second to
19 pull them back up.

20 MS. CALDWELL: While you're doing that, hello,
21 everybody. How are you?

22 MS. ALEJANDRA SILVA-EXIAS: Hello.

23 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: All right. From Mark the Wolf
24 (phonetic),

25 "Do not raise the rent because there are many

1 people who have been laid off or don't have
2 jobs. It would be advisable to take in account
3 that we are in a pandemic and things are hard or
4 getting harder for others. Thank you for
5 listening, from Linda Oursiquot (phonetic), O-U-
6 R-S-I-Q-U-O-T."

7 That's for the transcriber. That was his, and the
8 second one is from Shaniqua Jemison Denise (phonetic),
9 why rent shouldn't go up.

10 "There's single mothers out there and single
11 fathers out there working 9 to 5 jobs, some
12 working two or three jobs to make ends meet. I
13 don't think the rent should go up, especially
14 being that we are in a pandemic. I think the
15 world alone has suffered enough, and we've lost
16 a lot of loved ones during this difficult time.

17 "If the rent goes up, there will be more
18 evictions and more homeless people, especially
19 people with kids. If rent goes up, how do they
20 expect us to pay for our utilities, our water,
21 put food on the table, buy things for our kids
22 that they actually need, pay for our car
23 insurance --"

24 Okay, somebody has to put themself on mute. I'm
25 sorry.

1 -- "buy things for our kids that they actually
2 need, pay for our car insurance to get back and
3 forth to work. The world revolves around rent.
4 We pay so much trying to live somewhere to call
5 home that we can't afford to pay other bills.
6 How do they expect us to get an education if we
7 are working harder to keep a roof over our
8 heads? Other bills go into collections,
9 focusing on rent.

10 "The economy isn't so good, especially with
11 people that are just making ends meet with
12 minimum wage jobs. You want a three bedroom,
13 you have to pay \$2,000 plus utilities. How is
14 that fair? It's not. A two bedroom going for
15 1,600 instead of 1,300. If rent goes up, I
16 won't see anything good coming out of it.

17 Shaniqua Jemison Denise."

18 Those are the two I have. I will forward both of
19 those emails to the Board as soon as this call is --
20 video is over, but it doesn't look like either of our
21 people have called in, so I'm going to put myself on mute
22 for a second while you guys discuss whatever you feel a
23 need to discuss, and I'm going to see if I can reach this
24 one person.

25 MS. CALDWELL: Okay. Thank you.

1 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Can I ask a question?

2 MS. CALDWELL: One of the (audio distortion) This
3 is Pat Caldwell. Have any of you spoken to any people
4 who have shown any concerns regarding how this (audio
5 distortion) conduct how we consider voting tomorrow?

6 Alejandra, I know they've been beating your door
7 down.

8 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Yeah.

9 MS. CALDWELL: so do you want to share some
10 information with us, please?

11 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: I just was actually wanted to ask
12 April before I answer your question, Pat.

13 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Yep?

14 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Do we know who those two people
15 were that --

16 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Yep. If you give me a second,
17 I'll pull both names because they came as emails.

18 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Okay, because I know of someone
19 who wanted to sign up to speak.

20 MS. CALDWELL: Okay.

21 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Well, at this point, if you know
22 somebody that wants to speak, I think we can -- the Board
23 can choose to make an exception if they didn't register
24 in advance.

25 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Okay. I reached out and am

1 waiting to hear back, so.

2 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Okay. Marie Lawrence Aupont
3 (phonetic)?

4 MS. CALDWELL: Marie or Maurice?

5 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Marie.

6 MS. CALDWELL: This is the one that's signed up to
7 speak?

8 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Yes.

9 MS. CALDWELL: Will you spell that last name,
10 please?

11 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: A-U-P-O-N-T.

12 MS. CALDWELL: Okay. And the other name?

13 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Was Magda Gazimarepierre
14 (phonetic).

15 MS. CALDWELL: Okay.

16 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: And if I could answer Pat's
17 question, if I've spoken to anyone. I've spoken with
18 Alex Borstein, who is the executive director of the Legal
19 Aid Society of Rockland County. He is an attorney, and
20 they are a legal services organization that provides
21 representation to tenants who are facing eviction, and he
22 is extremely concerned about the rent going up just
23 because he knows what his clients are facing. They are
24 low income tenants who are like the person that wrote in
25 described, trying to make ends meet, and especially now

1 that there's been a pandemic and many people have lost
2 their jobs, wages have remained stagnant.

3 It doesn't look good for prospects of, you know,
4 economic growth or opportunity, so he was just expressing
5 his concern. There has been a moratorium on evictions.
6 However, once those commence -- and I believe they were
7 commencing soon. The moratorium is being lifted soon.

8 MS. CALDWELL: It will, unless they extend it,
9 because it was supposed to be three months. It's well
10 into that now, so hopefully they're going to extend it.

11 MS. FOSKEW: Can I ask you a question? I'm sorry.
12 Aren't people still going to be responsible for back
13 rent?

14 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Yes.

15 MS. CALDWELL: Yeah, but (audio distortion) --

16 MS. FOSKEW: So that's going to be a problem?

17 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: You're adding higher rent on top
18 of back rent. I mean it's, you know --

19 MS. CALDWELL: Exactly. If they can't afford to pay
20 it now, how are they going to pay it when it goes higher,
21 if it goes higher?

22 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Right.

23 MS. CALDWELL: And if unemployed during the
24 pandemic, then that means that they've got to catch up
25 everything, not just rent, so we have to -- we'll have to

1 make that decision tomorrow, but yes, I can understand
2 how Alex's position because it does represent them, and
3 he represents them well. But at some point, you know,
4 he's going to need some outside agencies like us, for
5 example, to assist him in his fight.

6 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: I'm sorry. He's going to need
7 what?

8 MS. CALDWELL: I said he's going to need some other
9 outside agencies to assist him in his fight, like us. If
10 we keep it down or if we don't keep it down, it'll
11 certainly have a positive or negative impact upon him
12 whichever way we go.

13 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Right. So I mean that I echo his
14 concern as well, given the situation with the pandemic
15 and with a lot of tenants facing eviction and facing, you
16 know, job loss, so I'm very, very concerned about that,
17 about raising the rent at all, because I don't think
18 people are going to be able to pay that rent. And then
19 you're going to have huge rates of homelessness in the
20 county. We don't have -- we do have a family shelter in
21 the county, but we don't have a shelter for single adults
22 in the county, so I mean, the effects of raising the rent
23 are just -- it's multifaceted and it's going to have just
24 repercussions that we can't even talk about right now,
25 so.

1 MS. CALDWELL: And New York City did not raise their
2 rents.

3 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Exactly.

4 MS. CALDWELL: And I'm guided by them in some sense,
5 and certainly if they chose not to, we (audio
6 distortion).

7 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: So I just spoke with Marie Aupont
8 who asked -- who said she's ill today, and she asked that
9 I sent her the Zoom information and that she be allowed
10 to give a presentation tomorrow at 7 o'clock, because the
11 way we have tomorrow night set up, it's a hearing and
12 then a meeting.

13 MS. CALDWELL: Yes.

14 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: So I'll send her that
15 information. I told her she has to be there at 7
16 o'clock, because if she's the only one doing it, you guys
17 will be moving to a meeting right after that as soon as
18 this is over. And the other person I called and just got
19 a voicemail, so if you want, I will send that person also
20 the link for tomorrow night in case they want to give a
21 presentation, unless anybody has an objection for that.

22 MS. CALDWELL: I don't feel one way or the other.
23 With Marie, at least ask (audio distortion). We have not
24 heard from the Magda person?

25 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Correct. Well, you heard from

1 them yesterday. Apparently they forgot today, but that's
2 where we're at with this.

3 MS. CALDWELL: Well, since there's only one person
4 and then we're talking about adding the second, I don't
5 think that will be too much of a push if they're there at
6 7. If you'll just tell them, you know, to be mindful,
7 they get three minutes.

8 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Right. Yep.

9 MS. ROBLES: Oh, goodness gracious.

10 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: You're on, Martha.

11 MS. ROBLES: Well, what I wanted to say is what's
12 really concerning is that this thing will be over by next
13 week. Next week is June 30th, and that was the three
14 months. So with the back rent situation, what is going
15 to happen now in July? Are they going to negotiate with
16 landlords, are they going to have to pay the whole three
17 months, is there a possibility of forgiveness for three
18 months and not have to pay rent, which would be my
19 fantasy dream, because how are people -- 11 percent of
20 people in Rockland County are unemployed.

21 That's our number, and it's pretty damn high, and we
22 know who is unemployed for the most part, and that's what
23 I'm afraid of, what's going to happen next week?

24 MS. CALDWELL: Well, Martha, they're really saying
25 that they're probably going to extend it.

1 MS. ROBLES: It's only going to keep accumulating,
2 what they have to pay.

3 MS. CALDWELL: Well, that will (audio distortion) to
4 be able to assist them financially.

5 MS. ROBLES: Say --

6 MS. CALDWELL: The courts have not opened up for
7 landlord/tenants yet, so it will be a while before they
8 could start evicting.

9 MS. ROBLES: But it's still accumulating a cost and
10 expense. If it's three months, if it's six months, it
11 gets worse and worse the longer it gets delayed.

12 MS. CALDWELL: So if they start paying
13 (Indiscernible) most are paying a (indiscernible). I say
14 that because I have tenants who are in that situation,
15 and they do pay a part. You know, when they were out,
16 they were getting those checks. They were paying part of
17 their rent, and yes, they are behind, but I'm willing
18 to -- on an individual basis, we can negotiate with my
19 tenants because they don't have the ability to pay, and I
20 don't want to have to fight with Alex.

21 MS. ROBLES: And I know, I think CapRAC (phonetic),
22 Catholic Charities -- there are a few agencies out there
23 that may help with rent, but they're going to be limited
24 in what they can give them.

25 MS. CALDWELL: Yeah, but --

1 MS. ROBLES: Thinking of Catholic Charities, we're
2 never going to give somebody more than two months.

3 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: BSS (phonetic), Catholic
4 Charities, Salvation Army. Those are the three that are
5 going to help with rental arrears. I mean, Pat, that's
6 great you're working with your tenants, but not every
7 landlord is as generous as you, so --

8 MS. CALDWELL: The charities not going to help you
9 unless (audio distortion) issue.

10 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: In my experience, you know, a lot
11 of these landlords want their money, so it's a business
12 to them.

13 MS. CALDWELL: And don't leave out Legal Aid,
14 because they also have the ability to help in some
15 states, in some (audio distortion).

16 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Yeah, I think they may have a
17 grant for rental arrears. I'm not sure, but.

18 MS. ROBLES: And I might be calling it wrong, CapRAC
19 in Westchester. They also have funds. They've received
20 tons of money to help people in Rockland and Westchester.
21 I'll get that information. I had it in an email.

22 MS. CALDWELL: Well, right now, we need to focus on
23 trying to get our part of it done, with our part of that
24 little circle (indiscernible) and decide where we land
25 assistance, or (indiscernible), but yes, April?

1 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Yes, ma'am?

2 MS. CALDWELL: (Indiscernible) both of them
3 (indiscernible).

4 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: All right. I'll -- at about 8
5 o'clock tonight, you guys will get the Zoom information
6 for tomorrow night, because before I left the office
7 today, I presented to show up to you at 8 o'clock, and
8 I'll just open the email and I'll send the Zoom
9 information off to both people that wanted to testify.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

11 MS. CALDWELL: Okay.

12 MS. FOSKEW: Can I just back up, Alejandra and
13 Martha, as far as --

14 MS. ROBLES: Yeah, I don't know. My voice came off.

15 MS. FOSKEW: No, I heard everything you said. Thank
16 you. I also agree that I know plenty of people like
17 young kids that are moving back home because yeah, they
18 lost their jobs, or, like, their roommates lost their
19 jobs and they can't afford to pay the whole rent, so
20 they're moving back home, you know. It's just this --
21 these are un -- I know that word is overused, but, like,
22 unprecedented times, and people, they just can't do it.

23 And I don't know if we as a Board can -- if we can
24 put guideline restrictions on landlords as far as, like,
25 the back rent and how much, you know, how long people can

1 take to pay it back, and-- I mean, I don't even know if
2 there's a reduction in rent could be possible in order
3 for people -- to help people recoup their past rent. I
4 don't know if that's even a possibility, but I'm just
5 looking to help people out, because, you know, it's going
6 to be hard to bring that back, to pay back three months
7 of back rent and then pay your current rent on top of
8 that.

9 MS. ROBLES: Right. But I wouldn't want to freeze
10 the rents if that's what we decide plus request a
11 reduction, because that -- it's one or the other for me.

12 MS. FOSKEW: No, I agree. I say we go for a
13 reduction first.

14 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Yes.

15 MS. ROBLES: I'd rather do that as opposed to a
16 freeze, truthfully, but I don't think the landlords would
17 agree to that one.

18 MS. FOSKEW: They're not here.

19 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: The landlords are not here, and --

20 MS. FOSKEW: They're not here.

21 MS. ROBLES: They're never here. I think I've seen
22 one landlord in all these years.

23 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Yeah. So --

24 MS. ROBLES: My preference would be a rent reduction
25 and not freezing it. That would be my preference.

1 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Okay. How does (indiscernible)?

2 MS. CALDWELL: (Indiscernible) what we can do
3 legally is two different matters at this point, because I
4 don't believe -- I'm not sure, but April -- that's an
5 April question. Are we empowered to dictate to landlords
6 about reduction in rent or forgiveness of rent? I don't
7 think we are.

8 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: No. You have no -- you don't
9 have any authority to tell them to forgive any rent.
10 That's going to be between them, their landlords -- the
11 landlord, tenant, and in the courthouse.

12 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Can we do a rent --

13 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: You can't do a rent reduction.
14 You can do a guideline, you can do a zero. I've never
15 seen it done in 20-something years, but every once in a
16 while, I hear people talking about doing a rent rollback.
17 I've never seen it done, and it would only affect
18 whatever leases came up for renewal. It wouldn't be
19 across the -- it's not like you can say across the board
20 in Rockland County, I'm giving x dollars as a reduction.

21 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: So how does that work, because I
22 know that was discussed in New York City. A reduction
23 was discussed. It didn't pass, but it seems --

24 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Correct.

25 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: -- that there is that possibility

1 that --

2 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: It's a possibility. It's on
3 your -- but it would only be -- it's only for lease
4 renewals and new leases. It's not for other people that
5 aren't already -- you know, you can't do it across the
6 board to just absolutely everybody. It's for --

7 MS. ROBLES: New tenants.

8 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Right, and this, as our, you know,
9 rent guideline is zero percent, that's just for one year
10 and two year leases, so --

11 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: That's all the authority this
12 Board has, is to do -- is to do guideline increases for
13 one and two year leases. You don't have any authority to
14 do anything more than that.

15 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Right. So --

16 MS. ROBLES: And even if it wasn't a rent reduction,
17 Alejandra, not that many people move out, as you see by
18 those numbers. There wasn't that many people that moved.
19 (Indiscernible).

20 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Right, but it still affects those
21 people who are getting lease renewals for one and two
22 year leases, though it is a good chunk of people.

23 MS. FOSKEW: So could we do a rollback on renewal
24 leases or -- and then also a zero on current leases?

25 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: The guideline -- you get to pass

1 one guideline, not two different guidelines. Whatever
2 guideline you pass affects both renewal leases and
3 vacancy leases. There's no authority given to -- as a
4 matter of fact, the (indiscernible) law that was passed
5 last year specifically says that you don't have the
6 authority to do separate leases.

7 MS. ROBLES: And we have froze them last year
8 already, so.

9 MS. FOSKEW: The last two years.

10 MS. ROBLES: Right. Two years in a row.

11 MS. FOSKEW: And can we do restrictions or
12 guidelines on landlords as far as, you know, setting how
13 people can pay back, like, they can't say --

14 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: No.

15 MS. FOSKEW: -- you give it all to me now or you're
16 going to be evicted --

17 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: No.

18 MS. FOSKEW: We can't?

19 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Again, that's going to happen in
20 court. That's going to happen between landlords and
21 tenants.

22 MS. ROBLES: So we have limited --

23 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: We're limited to setting a
24 guideline increase.

25 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Okay. So --

1 MS. CALDWELL: Did we hear from any landlords?

2 MS. ROBLES: No.

3 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: None.

4 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: If I'm hearing you correctly,
5 April, what you're saying is that we have the authority
6 to either pass an increase, freeze the rents, or do a
7 reduction; is that correct?

8 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: I suppose you have as much
9 authority to do that as anything else, but if you go back
10 to the 30 years of guideline increases, there's never
11 been a reduction in a guideline.

12 MS. ROBLES: So we have two options, then?

13 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Well, there's always a first
14 time. There's always a first time.

15 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Just because it hasn't been done
16 in the past doesn't mean we can't do it now.

17 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Yep.

18 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: I mean, unless there's some black
19 letter law that says, you know, you can't do this, I'm
20 not -- I'm not taking no for an answer.

21 MS. ROBLES: If we do a rent reduction, we're not
22 going to be able to do the freeze. Am I correct, April?

23 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: I said one guideline. Whatever
24 your guideline is, that's your guideline.

25 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Right, but we always vote

1 separately for one-year leases and two-year leases.

2 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Correct, correct. You're setting
3 a guideline for a one-year lease and a guideline for a
4 two-year lease.

5 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Right.

6 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: But you can't set a guideline and
7 then give a reduction.

8 MS. FOSKEW: So we could do the reduction for one
9 year, gives people more time to recoup, and then a freeze
10 for the second year?

11 MS. ROBLES: Oh, yeah.

12 MS. FOSKEW: That's just a thought.

13 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Or we could just do double
14 reductions.

15 MS. FOSKEW: Yeah, absolutely. Double reduction.

16 MS. ROBLES: If we go for a reduction and we can't
17 do it, can we go back to changing our minds?

18 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Not during the -- no, you're --
19 right now, this Board is setting a guideline that is
20 effective between April 1st, 2020.

21 MS. ROBLES: Right.

22 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: It's for all lease renewals and
23 all vacancies between then and September 30th of 2021.
24 When I say one guideline, I mean a guideline for a one-
25 year lease and a guideline for a two-year lease. That's

1 both that you can set.

2 MS. ROBLES: April, what I'm asking you, if we were
3 to vote for a rent reduction and it does not pass, can we
4 go back and say, okay, we want to freeze it?

5 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Oh, absolutely. You know, it's
6 like any other year, Martha. You guys can make as many
7 different motions --

8 MS. ROBLES: No, no, and then I would --

9 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: -- you need to get a majority to
10 vote for it.

11 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Are you --

12 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: You realize, like, whatever
13 you're passing applies to both vacancy and renewals, so
14 that means -- assume you moved out of an apartment that
15 was \$1,000 and you guys sent a rent rollback, the new
16 rent would be less than \$1,000, which is also true for
17 renewals. So it affects both renewal and vacancy.

18 MS. ROBLES: Okay.

19 MS. CALDWELL: If you vote for a rent reduction --
20 if we pass it here, which I seriously doubt, but it will
21 never stand up in court. We're going to be in court the
22 same day. Every landlord in the world is going to be at
23 court.

24 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: I'm sorry, say --

25 MS. ROBLES: Yeah. She's saying every landlord in

1 the world will take us to court.

2 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Okay.

3 MS. FOSKEW: Bring it on.

4 MS. ROBLES: Bring it on.

5 MS. FOSKEW: Bring it on.

6 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: I mean, I don't know that
7 you're --

8 MS. FOSKEW: Maybe they can show up next year and
9 then maybe we'll have a different story, but if they
10 don't show up, they continue to not show up, that's on
11 them.

12 MS. CALDWELL: Well, the fact that they don't show
13 up doesn't mean that they're not aware what goes on in
14 our meetings, and believe me --

15 MS. FOSKEW: Nothing you just --

16 MS. CALDWELL: -- nothing will spark faster than a
17 vote to, say, a rollback and a rent reduction. That will
18 not -- it will be out of that room before we finish
19 voting.

20 MS. FOSKEW: But they need to advocate for
21 themselves.

22 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Just --

23 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Nothing has changed them from --
24 we -- when we've done freezes for I think, like, four
25 years, and one year we did a very minimal increase, and

1 they have, since I first got on this Board, not come to
2 meetings, half of them submit their surveys, they
3 continue to not fix the apartments and the common areas
4 because we hear the complaints.

5 So this is -- the freezes have done nothing to their
6 bottom line, so maybe a reduction will help tenants out
7 and maybe be a wakeup call to these landlords that they
8 can't just keep on doing business as usual.

9 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Their participation at this
10 point, while they may not come and testify, is there's
11 nothing that requires them to submit those survey
12 information to this Board --

13 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Right, I understand.

14 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: -- and they do it every year, so.

15 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: (Indiscernible) because if they
16 were unhappy, they would be showing up to our meetings
17 saying hey, no, why are you doing a freeze?

18 MS. ROBLES: No, but you're not --

19 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Every other place does it. Every
20 other place, you have landlords advocating for why rent
21 shouldn't be frozen, or why it should be increased five
22 percent as opposed to two percent. Here, we have none of
23 that because they're making such a huge profit on the
24 backs of tenants that they don't feel the need that they
25 need to show up.

1 MS. ROBLES: We can't -- I'm going to say it's a
2 broad brush, because I don't think that every single
3 landlord is a horrible landlord or doesn't do their work.
4 What I find interesting also is that it -- at least the
5 ones that have submitted the surveys are the same ones
6 that do it every year, and we don't make it mandatory, so
7 you're never going to make those other landlords fill it
8 out.

9 And I think the fact that they even fill out the
10 survey, we got to at least give them credit for that.
11 They could not do it at all, and we'll know nothing.
12 It's the same people that have completed the survey all
13 the times, so I must think that in that mix, you know,
14 it's like someone said to me, oh, they're going to get
15 \$1,200 and everybody's going to get over on the rent.
16 Well, that's not true. Not everybody's going to get over
17 on the rent. I don't think every landlord is bad, but I
18 know we have a lot of bad ones. That's what I'm saying.

19 MS. CALDWELL: Okay. We can bring this to -- this
20 is for tomorrow night's discussion anyways, and you're
21 going to notify -- I'm being redundant. You notified
22 those --

23 MS. GRAY-HUERTAS: Yes. AS soon as this meeting is
24 over, I will notify both of those people to call in at 7
25 o'clock tomorrow.

1 MS. CALDWELL: Okay. Are there any other items we
2 need to discuss? None? Hearing none?

3 MS. ROBLES: No.

4 MS. CALDWELL: Okay. It's a motion to adjourn?

5 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Motion to adjourn.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Heck yeah.

7 MS. CALDWELL: Properly moved and seconded to
8 adjourn this meeting? All in favor?

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Aye.

10 MS. SILVA-EXIAS: Aye.

11 MS. CALDWELL: That sounds like a unanimous aye to
12 me. (Indiscernible).

13 MS. ROBLES: Until tomorrow.

14 [END RECORDING]

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

1
2 The prior proceedings were transcribed from audio
3 files and have been transcribed to the best of my
4 ability. I further certify that I am not connected by
5 blood, marriage or employment with any of the parties
6 herein nor interested directly or indirectly in the
7 matter transcribed.

8
9 Signature

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12 Date June 29, 2020

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