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**NEW YORK STATE HOMES AND
COMMUNITY RENEWAL BOARD MEETING
Westchester RGB Certification Meeting
Monday, September 14, 2020**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MR. PETER STECKER: Okay. I'll turn it over to you,
3 Elsa, to call the roll, please.

4 MS. ELSA RUBIN: Yes. Good evening, everybody.
5 Welcome to this meeting -- to this public hearing of the
6 explanatory statement. So I'm going to call everybody's
7 name. Velene Acquah.

8 MS. VELENE ACQUAH: Present.

9 MS. RUBIN: Member?

10 MS. ACQUAH: Public.

11 MS. RUBIN: Can you hear me?

12 MS. ACQUAH: Yes, you're going in --

13 MS. SANTIAGO: You're breaking up.

14 MS. ACQUAH: -- and out.

15 MS. ACQUAH: Yeah.

16 MS. RUBIN: Oh, okay.

17 MS. ACQUAH: Public member, present. Right.

18 MS. RUBIN: Lamont Badru, public member.

19 MR. LAMONT BADRU: Here.

20 MS. RUBIN: Eddie Mae Barnes, public member.

21 MS. EDDIE MAE BARNES: Here.

22 MS. RUBIN: Eliot Cherson, owner representative.

23 MR. ELIOT CHERSON: Present, but not in Hawaii,
24 unfortunately.

25 MS. RUBIN: Kenneth Finger, owner --

1 MR. KENNETH FINGER: I'm here.

2 MS. RUBIN: -- representative.

3 MR. FINGER: I'm here.

4 MS. RUBIN: Evelyn Santiago, public member.

5 MS. EVELYN SANTIAGO: Present.

6 MS. RUBIN: Tamara Stewart, tenant representative.

7 MS. TAMARA STEWART: Present.

8 MS. RUBIN: So with that, we are going to -- I
9 think, Peter, you have to make an announcement?

10 MR. STECKER: Yes, I have to read the opening first.
11 So I'll go ahead and do that.

12 In response to the governor's directive to take
13 every effort to keep New Yorkers safe, mitigate the
14 spread of COVID-19, and pursuant to Executive Order 202-1
15 and its updates, the Westchester County of Rent
16 Guidelines Board will be conducting a public meeting to,
17 among other things, certify the guideline rate for rent
18 adjustment for housing accommodations within its
19 jurisdiction subject to the Emergency Tenant Protection
20 Act of 1974 for leases commencing between October 1st,
21 2020 and September 30th, 2021, via teleconference.
22 Instructions for members of the public to simultaneously
23 listen to the meeting will have been posted to HCRs
24 website for the Office of Rent Administration under the
25 public hearing section prior to this meeting. This

1 meeting will also later be transcribed, and the public
2 will have the ability to view the transcript.

3 So that's the opening statement. I just have one
4 thing that I want to address first. I've had a number of
5 you reach out to me because you haven't yet received the
6 payment for the June 2020 meetings, for which most of you
7 have submitted the cert -- the vouchers at this point. I
8 did follow up with the higher-ups at ORA. And all the
9 vouchers that have been sent to me have been forwarded to
10 Albany. At this point, I'm advised that none of the
11 boards have yet been paid. It's thought that, you know,
12 with everything going on with the budget as well as with
13 limited office staff capabilities, things like that, it's
14 taking longer than usual to process the payments. But we
15 do expect that they'll be forthcoming shortly.

16 So that's really all the information that I have at
17 this point. There's nothing else any of you need to do
18 other than, if there's an outstanding voucher, to get it
19 to me.

20 Secondly, on the vouchers, I did email everyone the
21 copy of the voucher that needs to be filled out for this
22 meeting. Most of you have emailed me back saying that
23 you'll be returning it to me via mail after tonight's
24 meeting. If that doesn't work for you and you need me to
25 send you a paper copy with a return envelope, I'm happy

1 to do that. But other than that, that's -- and other
2 than that, the -- the next date for the meeting will be
3 sometime in early 2021, but we can talk about that, I
4 guess, later on in the meeting.

5 So with that, Chair, I'll turn it over to you, if
6 you want to start addressing various items in the -- in
7 the notice for --

8 MS. RUBIN: Yes --

9 MR. STECKER: -- the agenda.

10 MS. RUBIN: -- well, before I move to the review and
11 finalize of the explanatory statement, I wanted to ask
12 you if there's any status that you can give us on the
13 next tenant representative.

14 MR. STECKER: The next tenant representative. I
15 know that we did reach out to the County. The County is
16 the one who actually sent it over to us for us to
17 interview the individual that will be on the board. So
18 we have reached out to them, advised them of the vacancy.
19 As of this point, we haven't been sent anyone to
20 interview, but that is something that we will be
21 following up on. I believe that that's one of those
22 things that has kind of been sidetracked by everything
23 that's been going on the last few months, but I will make
24 it a point to follow up on that and see exactly where
25 that is in the status.

1 MS. RUBIN: Yes, Eliot.

2 MR. CHERSON: Question. So maybe I wasn't paying
3 attention. I apologize. So has the Board of
4 Legislatures approved somebody for that position?

5 MR. STECKER: Not at this point, no.

6 MR. CHERSON: Oh, so it's really -- oh, it's got a
7 long way to go then.

8 MR. STECKER: Yeah, I mean, it could -- it could
9 happen quickly, but you know, I, frankly, don't --
10 haven't followed up with them in some time, so I don't
11 really know -- I'm sorry.

12 MR. CHERSON: Is someone nominated --

13 MR. STECKER: Not --

14 MR. CHERSON: -- to the legislature --

15 MR. STECKER: -- not that I know of, Eliot. But
16 again, I haven't followed up in a few months on that, so
17 I'll make it a point to do so and let the board know.

18 MR. CHERSON: Okay.

19 MS. BARNES: Are they using a different process this
20 time? Because usually, it goes before the Board of
21 Legislatures before it comes to us, right?

22 MR. STECKER: Right. And that -- that's what I'm
23 saying. We haven't been -- we haven't gotten to that
24 point, yet.

25 MS. BARNES: Okay.

1 MR. STECKER: So nobody's been sent to us yet to
2 interview and you know, get that whole process underway.

3 MR. CHERSON: But us is not board -- us is not us,
4 it's --

5 MR. STECKER: Right, right. I'm talking with my --

6 MS. BARNES: The Board of Legislature.

7 MR. STECKER: -- right. So the agency interviews
8 them, and you know, then there's an appointment after
9 that.

10 MS. BARNES: Okay.

11 MR. STECKER: But you know, Jean Anderson's
12 resignation was submitted earlier this year. And you
13 know, I think that coincided with everything being shut
14 down with the pandemic. So you know, I'm -- I wouldn't
15 be surprised if there hasn't been much movement over the
16 last three months on it.

17 MS. ACQUAH: Um-hum.

18 MS. STEWART: By the way, I ran into Jean in a store
19 in New Rochelle maybe about two weeks ago, three weeks
20 ago, and she's doing okay.

21 MS. ACQUAH: Oh, great.

22 MS. SANTIAGO: Oh, good. Glad to hear.

23 MS. ACQUAH: Yes. Um-hum.

24 MS. RUBIN: Okay. Peter, I think that we can move
25 to the review and finalize of the explanatory statement.

1 MR. STECKER: Well, first, you know, there's usually
2 two votes taken on these. If somebody wants to make a
3 motion to combine them -- but the first one would be a
4 certification of the guidelines is the first item on the
5 agenda.

6 MS. RUBIN: I move to certify.

7 MS. SANTIAGO: Second.

8 MR. STECKER: Would you like me to call the roll,
9 Chair?

10 MS. RUBIN: Yes, please.

11 MR. STECKER: Okay. Elsa Rubin.

12 MS. RUBIN: Yes.

13 MR. STECKER: Velene Acquah.

14 MS. ACQUAH: Yes.

15 MR. STECKER: LaMont Badru.

16 MR. BADRU: Yes.

17 MR. STECKER: Eddie Mae Barnes.

18 MS. BARNES: Yes.

19 MR. STECKER: Eliot Cherson.

20 MR. CHERSON: No.

21 MR. STECKER: Ken Finger.

22 MR. FINGER: No.

23 MR. STECKER: Evelyn Santiago.

24 MS. SANTIAGO: Yes.

25 MR. STECKER: And Tamara Stewart.

1 MS. STEWART: Yes.

2 MR. STECKER: Okay. So that motion passes by a vote
3 of six to two.

4 MS. RUBIN: Should we now discuss the review for
5 dates for future meetings?

6 MR. STECKER: Well, first, Chair, the review -- the
7 second vote, if the board decides to do so, would be a
8 review and finalize and adoption of the explanatory --

9 MS. RUBIN: Yes.

10 MR. STECKER: -- statement for the 2020 --

11 MS. RUBIN: Yes.

12 MR. STECKER: -- 2021 guideline period.

13 MS. SANTIAGO: So moved.

14 MS. BARNES: Second.

15 MR. STECKER: I'm sorry, that was moved by Evelyn?

16 MS. SANTIAGO: Yes.

17 MR. STECKER: Okay. And second by Eddie Mae --

18 MS. BARNES: Eddie Mae.

19 MR. STECKER: -- right? Okay.

20 MS. BARNES: Yeah.

21 MR. STECKER: Okay. You want me to call the roll,
22 Chair?

23 MS. RUBIN: Yes, please.

24 MR. CHERSON: Can you repeat the question? Sorry.

25 Can you repeat the -- the motion?

1 MR. STECKER: Oh, sure. It was a motion to finalize
2 and adopt the explanatory statement for the 2020-2021
3 guideline period that was circulated to the board last
4 week.

5 MR. CHERSON: Okay.

6 MR. STECKER: Tamara Stewart.

7 MS. STEWART: Yes.

8 MR. STECKER: Evelyn Santiago.

9 MS. SANTIAGO: Yes.

10 MR. STECKER: Ken Finger.

11 MR. CHERSON: Ken, you're muted.

12 MR. FINGER: No.

13 MR. STECKER: Eliot Cherson.

14 MR. CHERSON: No.

15 MR. STECKER: Eddie Mae Barnes.

16 MS. BARNES: Yes.

17 MR. STECKER: LaMont Badru.

18 MR. BADRU: Yes.

19 MR. STECKER: Velene Acquah.

20 MS. ACQUAH: Yes.

21 MR. STECKER: And Chair Rubin.

22 MS. RUBIN: Yes.

23 MR. STECKER: Okay. That motion to adopt the
24 explanatory statement also passes by a vote of six to
25 two. So Chair, I'll just -- I sent you the certification

1 language that's needed for you to countersign, so if you
2 could just --

3 MS. RUBIN: Yes, uh-huh, I have it here. I'm
4 sending it to you tomorrow.

5 MR. STECKER: Okay. Great. Thank you. So, Chair,
6 if you want to move on to the dates, now would be the
7 appropriate time to do that.

8 MS. RUBIN: Yes. We need to set up a date for
9 January for our first meeting of the year, January 2021.
10 So maybe we should give tentative dates.

11 MS. SANTIAGO: The only thing I want to interject is
12 that the schools are -- the -- the winter break is until
13 January the 4th. I mean, I don't know's -- who'll be
14 going away, but just -- just to keep it in mind.

15 MR. STECKER: (Indiscernible) beginning the --
16 January 18th.

17 MR. FINGER: Perhaps it could be a Monday night
18 again.

19 MR. CHERSON: Let's not do January 21st. You know
20 why?

21 MS. ACQUAH: Um-hum.

22 MS. BARNES: Oh.

23 MS. ACQUAH: Yes.

24 MR. CHERSON: That's in (indiscernible)?

25 MS. ACQUAH: Yes.

1 MS. BARNES: I have to get my calendar.

2 MR. FINGER: How about January 20 -- 28th then, so
3 we'll all be the happier in morning.

4 MR. CHERSON: Exactly, exactly right. You can find
5 me on the -- on the road to Canada.

6 MR. FINGER: 28th okay?

7 MR. CHERSON: Okay with me.

8 MS. SANTIAGO: Elsa, you're muted.

9 MS. BARNES: I had to get a calendar.

10 MS. RUBIN: Peter, I was saying maybe you want to
11 send us three or four dates and we pick among
12 ourselves --

13 MR. STECKER: Yeah --

14 MS. RUBIN: -- and get back to you.

15 MR. STECKER: -- we can set it up like I set up the
16 date for this meeting if that's --

17 MS. RUBIN: Yes.

18 MR. STECKER: -- preferable to you.

19 MS. SANTIAGO: Works for me.

20 MR. FINGER: Okay with me.

21 MS. SANTIAGO: Please. Good.

22 MS. STEWART: Thank you.

23 MR. STECKER: I'll send that out tomorrow then.

24 MS. BARNES: Okay with me.

25 MS. ACQUAH: Yep. Um-hum.

1 MS. RUBIN: Okay. I think -- other business?

2 Anybody wants to bring up any issue, any --

3 MR. FINGER: I -- I -- I don't have an issue, but --

4 let me see if I'm muted -- but if Jane (sic) is feeling

5 better, maybe we could reach out to her to rejoin the

6 board. Is it Jane -- not Jane.

7 MS. ACQUAH: Um-hum. Jean.

8 MS. BARNES: Jane Anderson?

9 MR. FINGER: Yeah, yeah, Jane Anderson. She's

10 healthy again, maybe she would like to rejoin the board.

11 What if --

12 MS. STEWART: While she's -- she is -- she said

13 she's feeling better, she still has two siblings who have

14 a lot of health issues and she's -- you know, in addition

15 to minding her own health, she's also trying to help with

16 them. So I don't think that she'd be interested because

17 she said she has a lot on her plate. But it was good to

18 see her and that, you know, she's not in the hospital and

19 she's doing somewhat better than she was before.

20 MR. CHERSON: Good to hear.

21 MS. ACQUAH: Yeah.

22 MR. FINGER: Just a thought.

23 MS. RUBIN: Last --

24 MS. STEWART: Can't hear you, Elsa.

25 MS. RUBIN: Yeah, last time I spoke to her, she told

1 me that she has two sisters that are very sick and that
2 she has to --

3 MR. FINGER: All right. It was --

4 MS. RUBIN: -- not care for them, but she has to be
5 tending their health.

6 MR. FINGER: I move to adjourn.

7 MS. ACQUAH: Um-hum.

8 MR. CHERSON: Second.

9 MS. ACQUAH: Yes.

10 MS. RUBIN: Okay. This meeting is adjourned. Thank
11 you, everybody, for everything.

12 MS. ACQUAH: Thank you.

13 MS. RUBIN: Stay healthy.

14 MS. ACQUAH: Have a wonderful --

15 MS. SANTIAGO: Everybody. Yes.

16 MS. RUBIN: Happy holidays to everybody.

17 MS. ACQUAH: Yes, happy holidays.

18 MR. CHERSON: You, as well.

19 MS. SANTIAGO: Thank you. Thank you.

20 MS. BARNES: Thank you, everybody. Okay.

21 MR. FINGER: Make sure you go out there to vote.

22 MS. ACQUAH: Yes.

23 MS. SANTIAGO: Yes.

24 MS. STEWART: Yes.

25 MS. BARNES: Go out to vote. Please put -- yes.

1 MR. FINGER: Make those phone calls. Take care.

2 MS. BARNES: Vote like your life depends on it.

3 Right.

4 MS. SANTIAGO: Yes.

5 MS. STEWART: Because it does.

6 MS. BARNES: It does.

7 MR. FINGER: Um-hum. We all agree to that.

8 MS. ACQUAH: Okay.

9 MS. STEWART: Take care.

10 MS. BARNES: Okay.

11 MS. ACQUAH: Bye.

12 MS. STEWART: Thanks, Peter.

13 MS. SANTIAGO: Bye-bye.

14 MR. STECKER: Bye everybody.

15 MS. BARNES: Thank you, Peter.

16 MS. ACQUAH: Thank you, Peter.

17 MR. STECKER: All right. Sure thing. Thank you.

18 All right. Thank you, everybody.

19 MS. ACQUAH: Thank you.

20 [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.

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9 Signature

10 A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bill Wuerst".

11
12 Date September 18, 2020

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