



**FAIR RENT COMMISSION**  
**Special Meeting Minutes**  
Wednesday, June 14, 2023 at 6:00pm  
In Person Only Meeting  
Bristol Public Library Meeting Room 2

**Attendees:** Jon P. FitzGerald – Chair, Susan Pyzynski, David J. Haberfeld, Bryan Brown, Cristina Costa, and Alternates Brian Brady, Mary Alford, and Mayor Jeff Caggiano

**Absent:** Adam Brothwell, Timothy J. Gamache and Alternate Ryan Carrie

**Guests:** None

**1. Call to order**

Mayor Caggiano called the meeting to order at 6:01pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was not recited due to no flag being in the meeting room.

**2. Introduction of members**

*Introduced and seated right to left:* Mayor Caggiano, Mary Alford (T), Susan Pyzynski (H), Dave Haberfeld (L), Jon FitzGerald (H), Bryan Brown (L), Christina Costa (T) and Brian Brady (L)

Mayor Caggiano outlined the commission being comprised of renters, homeowners and landlords. He noted that each aspect the Commissioner represents should be noted in all future meetings, and there should be a balanced mix of representation present as well.

*Recording Secretary's note: For this meeting's record, the Commissioner's representation is noted next to their name: T = Tenant, H = Homeowner, and L = Landlord.*

**3. To elect officers and to take any action as necessary (Note: The commission should have a Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary)**

Mayor Caggiano nominated Jon FitzGerald as the Fair Rent Commission Chairperson. Commissioner Pyzynski seconded the nomination. There were no objections raised, and the mayor named Jon FitzGerald as Fair Rent Commission Chair. At this time, Mayor Caggiano turned the meeting over to Jon for the election of other officers.

Commissioner Haberfeld nominated Bryan Brown as Commission Secretary. The nomination was seconded by Commissioner Costa and passed with no objections.

**City of Bristol**

111 North Main Street

Bristol, CT 06010

[www.bristolct.gov](http://www.bristolct.gov)



Commissioner Pyzynski nominated Timothy J. Gamache as Commission Vice Chair. The nomination was seconded by Commissioner Costa and passed with no objections. As Commissioner Gamache was not present, the Commission clarified they'd reach out to him and confirm the nomination with him directly.

**4. Discussion by commission members of the report of the Fair Rent Task Force and to take any action as necessary**

The Chair reviewed the report by way of an introduction to the Commission.

**5. Discussion by commission members of the Fair Rent Commission ordinances sections 12-180 through 12-189 and to take any action as necessary**

As Chair, Jon Fitzgerald reviewed this packet in the Commission's handouts, touching on some of the Commission's powers, guidelines and processes to follow when grievances are received by the city. The Chair also noted that all meetings, conversations and decisions are to be done publicly. There was no additional discussion at this time.

**6. Discussion by member of the commission of the HOMEConnecticut Toolkit: Fair Rent Commissions in Connecticut and to take any action as necessary**

Chairman Fitzgerald noted the Toolkit as prepared by Connecticut Legal Services, Connecticut Fair Housing and the Melville Charitable Trust. The Toolkit was used in the drafting of the Commission's ordinance. For both item 5. And 6., the Chair requested all Commissioners to become familiar with the information included in them as it will be their guide when hearing grievances and making decisions about them. There was no additional discussion at this time.

**7. Discussion by commission member of a complaint form and to take any action as necessary**

Chairman FitzGerald introduced the Fair Rent Commission (FRC) Complaint Form which is modeled after the one used in West Hartford, CT. The form is fluid if the Commission feels fields are needed or not. The Chair proposed this current form be put into use with revisions made to it as needed.

Commissioner Haberfeld asked about the timing of when a tenant could file a complaint and was advised that a tenant can file at any time. Chairman FitzGerald then reviewed a couple of scenarios when a tenant might file a grievance. Commissioner Pyzynski asked if the form was available on line, to which the Chair replied it is not yet but he would like it to be and that is being worked on.



At this time, the Chair requested a motion to adopt the FRC Complaint Form as presented. Commissioner Alford brought the motion forward and it was seconded by Commissioner Pyzynski. There was no further discussion, all were in favor and the motion was approved and passed into the record.

**8. To discuss a schedule of meeting dates and times and to take any action as necessary**

The Chair proposed a training workshop for the Commission to be held under the leadership of Connecticut Council of Municipalities. A date for the training is yet to be determined and is in progress, possibly for July 2023. The Commission felt this was an excellent idea to provide tools for them as they serve.

In regards to a Commission meeting schedule, the options are to hold complaint driven meeting dates, or to schedule set monthly meeting dates. The Chair noted that the Commission needs to meet within thirty (30) days from the time the complaint is received. It was clarified that if a fixed meeting schedule is set, and there is no complaint, the meeting would be cancelled. Mayor Caggiano suggested three to six meeting dates be set up to meet the current demand of complaints that need to be heard.

Commissioner Pyzynski made the motion for the Commission to schedule a set meeting schedule whereby meetings would be cancelled if no complaint was before them. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Costa. There was no further discussion and the motion was approved and moved into the record.

The following meeting schedule was discussed

- *Meetings will be held the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) Wednesday of the month, with the exception of the November meeting which will be held on the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) Wednesday of the month due to the Thanksgiving holiday*
- *Meetings will be held at 6:00PM*
- *The meeting location will be determined, and the Bristol Public Library Room #2 will serve as default*

**Note:** *A meeting will be held Wednesday, July 19, 2023 for the purposes of regrouping if no workshop with CCM is held before then. If the CCM workshop is held, then the July 19<sup>th</sup> meeting will be cancelled.*



### Regular Meeting Schedule

July 26 <sup>th</sup>	October 25 <sup>th</sup>
August 23 <sup>rd</sup>	November 29 <sup>th</sup>
September 27 <sup>th</sup>	December 27 <sup>th</sup>

The Chair asked for a motion to accept the meeting schedule as discussed and provided above. Commissioner Alford brought the motion forward and it was seconded by Commissioner Pyzynski. There was no further discussion, and the motion was approved and moved into the record.

### 9. **Public participation**

Stephen Bynum with the City of Bristol – Parks and Recreation, Youth and Community Services asked about the general steps for the complaint process. The Chair advised the tenant files a complaint with the Town Clerk, the Town Clerk alerts the Commission, and the Commission holds the meeting to hear and help resolve the grievance.

Mayor Caggiano advised that the Commission has a city domain email address which is [fairrent@bristolct.gov](mailto:fairrent@bristolct.gov).

Commissioner Brown asked about the responsibilities of the Commission Secretary. The Chair advised that, in the event a Recording Secretary wasn't able to be present, the Secretary would need to take the minutes. It was also expressed that only audio recordings of the meetings would be needed, and no Zoom meetings would be offered. This is due to the personal nature of the items brought before the Commission and that the in-person discussion is most helpful to the process. The Chair also advised that in his and the Vice Chair's absence, the Secretary would be called on to run the meeting.

Dr. Dawn Leger with the City of Bristol – ECD CDBG Grants Administrator suggested to the Chair that an introduction to the various City departments the Commission will need to call on to assist with their processes would be beneficial. Commissioner Alford suggested the city departments join the Commission at the workshop.

Commissioner Haberfeld asked about conflicts of interest, such as knowing someone who is coming before the Commission. The Chair stated that when the Commissioners know someone well, they should not participate in the meeting that person is appearing at before the Commission.

#### **City of Bristol**

111 North Main Street  
Bristol, CT 06010  
[www.bristolct.gov](http://www.bristolct.gov)



**10. To adjourn**

The Chair requested a motion to adjourn which was brought forward by Commissioner Alford and seconded by Commissioner Pyzynski. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 6:34pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Arsego  
Recording Secretary

DRAFT