



LOS ANGELES COUNTY

CONSUMER & BUSINESS AFFAIRS

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STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY RENTAL HOUSING OVERSIGHT COMMISSION

East Los Angeles Community Service Center
133 N. Sunol Drive, Room #242, Los Angeles, CA 90063

<https://dcba.lacounty.gov/rental-housing-oversight-commission/>

Monday, October 21, 2024

12:30 PM

Present: Chair KeAndra Cylear-Dodds, Vice Chair Ani Papirian, Commissioner Odest T. Riley, Jr., and Commissioner Clint Patterson

Absent: Commissioner Pamela Agustin-Anguiano

Call to Order, Land Acknowledgement, and Roll Call of the October 21, 2024, Rental Housing Oversight Commission Meeting.
Chair Commissioner KeAndra Cylear-Dodds called to order this regular meeting at 12:47 p.m. and read aloud the Land Acknowledgement followed by a Roll Call.

I. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

- A.** Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on items of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Commission.
No members of the public were present.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

- A.** Review and take appropriate action on the Rental Housing Oversight Commission drafted regular meeting minutes of August 12, 2024.

On motion of Commissioner Odest T. Riley Jr., seconded by Commissioner Clint Patterson, this item was approved with the following vote:

Ayes: 4- Chair KeAndra Cylear-Dodds, Commissioner Odest T. Riley Jr., Commissioner Clint Patterson, and Vice Chair Ani Papirian

III. PUBLIC HEARING I





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A. Appeal Hearing and possible action for case number **RSQ24-04416 for subject property located at **6006 Northside Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90022.****

Shaina Sims, Commission staff, reported that the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) was present. The Appellant and witness participated in the hearing remotely. The Respondent did not participate in-person nor remotely.

George Cerda, DCBA Enforcement Program Staff, provided a self-introduction along with a summary of the department's findings to the Commission with a PowerPoint Presentation. George Cerda noted that the subject property is in the unincorporated Los Angeles County jurisdiction, has an effective occupancy year of 1932, making this a fully covered unit under the Los Angeles County Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections Ordinance (RSTPO). The case being heard before the Commission concerns the appellant's request to overturn DCBA's decision on the Application for Rent Adjustment (ARA) for the unlawful rent increases imposed on the tenant.

George Cerda, DCBA Enforcement Program Staff, reported that on September 11, 2018, the tenant paid a monthly rent amount of \$1,125.00 (base rent). In December 2018, the appellant and landlord, Gina Stinecipher imposed a rent increase of \$175.00 (15.56%) raising the monthly rent to \$1,300.00. During this time Los Angeles County Ordinance had the allowable percentage for rent increase set at 3%. In February 2022, which was during the Los Angeles County's COVID-19 Rent Freeze, the appellant and landlord imposed a \$39.00 rent increase, raising the monthly rate to \$1,339.00. In September 2022, she removed the previous increase, returning the monthly rate to \$1,300.00. In March 2023, the appellant and landlord, Gina Stinecipher, corrected rent to the maximum allowable amount of \$1,158.75. On April 17, 2023, the appellant and landlord, Gina Stinecipher, sold the property to Daniel Zamora, making him a second landlord on this case. In June 2023, prior to registering the rental unit, as required by LACC Section 8.52.080 (A) & (D) – Annual Registration and Registration Payment, Daniel Zamora raised rent by 3% (or \$34.76) to \$1,193.51. The property was registered by Daniel Zamora for the 2023-2024 cycle on November 29, 2023, which would have required him to issue a new notice of rent increase order for the rent increase to be lawful, but he did not. In further discussion, George Cerda, DCBA Enforcement Program Staff, provided calculations of overpayments totaling \$7,824.35 due to the tenant; including \$347.60 of which was collected by Daniel Zamora from the rent increase after Gina Stinecipher sold him the property. In response to questions posed by the Commission, it remains in question which party will be held liable for the rent overpayment and if the money owed runs with the land. DCBA County Counsel, Hannah Flores, noted that property sales are outside of the scope of the RSTPO, therefore, DCBA did not investigate the escrow sale documents.



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The Appellant, Gina Stinecipher, who participated remotely gave a self-introduction and testimony to her time of ownership of the subject property. Gina Stinecipher stated that she inherited the property from her late father who did not upkeep the premises. During her testimony, she stated when she took over the property, she made capital improvements to the plumbing and electrical costing \$32,430.00 for repairs, therefore, she increased the rent. Gina Stinecipher stated that she was fully aware that the Los Angeles County's Rent Freeze was going into effect, so with the legal aid assistance of Cara Services she drafted the September 1, 2018, increase. She noted that she was told by Cara Services that she should raise the rent to \$1,400.00 but instead compassionately settled on \$1,300.00. In further discussion, Gina Stinecipher expressed that the tenant, Edward Estrada, caused disharmony within the complex by using common areas as his personal space. Moreover, he defaced the property, requiring frequent repairs, housed and fed unauthorized pets, destroyed landscape, and blocked the driveway from other tenants. Gina Stinecipher added that the tenant, Edward Estrada, violated his lease on several occasions by subletting to at least 5 people and doing his own alterations to the property without her consent. She emphasized that during the 10-year duration of his lease, her expenses of taxes, insurance, utilities, and maintenance increased tremendously, giving reference to documents submitted with her appeal application. In response to questions posed by the Commission, Shaina Sims, Commission staff, responds indicating Gina Stinecipher did submit documents with her appeal; however, they were deemed as new evidence and were not permissible. George Cerda, DCBA Enforcement Program Staff, confirmed he did not receive the aforementioned documents from Gina Stinecipher during the investigation process. Furthermore, Gina Stinecipher affirmed that she felt that her time as landlord made the living situation better for her tenants. She sold the property to Daniel Zamora on April 17, 2023, where she claimed that the tenant, Edward Estrada, received a payout during the sale however, there were no documents provided during the investigation to support this claim.

Jim Stinecipher, the Appellant's husband and witness, who participated remotely gave a self-introduction and testimony. He stated that during the time that he and his wife managed the property, they made the living situation better for the tenants. He added that the improvements that Gina Stinecipher made significantly upgraded the property and he does not feel that Edward Estrada's claims are valid or warranted. Jim Stinecipher stated that Edward Estrada was a difficult tenant who would do anything to get over and should not be trusted.

For the record, Commission staff, affirmed that the tenant and Respondent, Edward Estrada did not participate in the hearing in-person nor remotely.

In discussion, the Commission assessed whether there was enough information regarding the sale of the property from Gina Stinecipher to Daniel Zamora, and if the





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documents submitted helped in the decision making of this case. Brigit Greeson-Alvarez, RHOC County Counsel, stated that the Commission can refer this case back to DCBA for further review with instructions for DCBA to have an opportunity to gain clarity on their decision. She added that if the decision is to be referred to the department, it leaves questions of if this falls within the County's jurisdiction.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, George Cerda, DCBA Enforcement stated that there had been no record that the tenant, Edward Estrada, received money from the sale of the property through escrow.

In response to a question posed by the Commission, Gina Stinecipher clarified that she was not the escrow officer on the case, however, she was debited \$970.00 during the sale, that was to be given to Edward Estrada. She also noted that she did not have proof of the escrow document in which was signed by Edward Estrada, when he agreed to this amount.

B. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission regarding case number RSQ24-04416.

No members of the public were present.

After hearing the testimony of the parties and assessing the arguments presented by the appellant, witness, and the representatives of the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA), the determination of the Rental Housing Oversight Commission (RHOC) is to refer this case to DCBA for further review. DCBA is to seek the original rent increase notice served on tenant, Edward Estrada, on September 1, 2018; to determine if the tenant was compensated through escrow during the sale of the property for any of the owed rent amount; and to gather information provided by the landlord, Gina Stinecipher, to determine if rents owed run with the land. At this time, this case is under investigative review by DCBA and is eligible for appeal once a decision has been rendered.

In addition, George Cerda, DCBA Enforcement staff, requested for the record, that the Commission require the appellant and landlord Gina Stinecipher to provide these documents to DCBA.

On motion of Commissioner Ani Papirian, seconded by Commissioner Odest T. Riley, Jr., the Commission refers this case back to DCBA for further consideration, this item was approved with the following vote:

Ayes: 4- Commissioner Odest T. Riley, Jr., Chair Commissioner KeAndra Cylear-Dodds, Commissioner Clint Patterson, and Vice Chair Commissioner Ani Papirian





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Absent: 1- Commissioner Pamela Augustin-Anguiano

BREAK

The Commission took a recess at 1:57 p.m. and reconvened at 2:10 p.m.

IV. REPORT

- A.** Report back on Department of Consumer and Business Affairs' procedures surrounding general counseling, rights, and responsibilities.

Jessica Palafox, Commission staff, reported that the Affirmative Literature team suggested that the Enforcement presentation be conducted as a training. RHOC County Counsel, Ayano Wolff, affirmed the support for this method.

V. DISCUSSION

- A.** Discussion and possible action for a presentation by the Department of Animal Care and Control (DACC) requested by the Commission.

Commissioner Clint Patterson shared the topic of animal welfare with the Commission and how this affects tenants. Landlords who want to evict tenants because they have a pet(s), creates stress on the tenants and can produce homelessness. Board of Supervisor, Janice Hahn, has indicated that this is affecting tenants who may need an emotional support companion. The Commission supports this presentation. Commission staff will coordinate with DACC for a future meeting.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS

Matters Not Posted

- A.** Matters not on the posted Agenda to be presented and placed on the Agenda of a future meeting.

1. The Commission has requested to learn more on capital improvements. Is there any assistance for the landlord available since they incur expenses for needed repairs which benefit tenants? How are costs calculated that are incurred by landlords?
2. The Commission is requesting a better understanding of the DCBA investigation process. Furthermore, the Commission has offered to





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recommend insight to help make the process clear. County Counsel, Ayano Wolff, suggested that most of these questions will be answered during the enforcement presentation.

3. The Commission voices that they want thorough clarification on the questions that are recurring during appeal hearings. The Commission prefers an administrative meeting to discuss and learn instead of separate training sessions. The Enforcement Presentation is to be scheduled for a date as an administrative meeting.
4. The Commission requested an update to the Board of Supervisors Annual Report. Commission staff, Shaina Sims, informed the Commission that there has been an extension requested, and the staff will produce the report by next meeting.
5. Next potential meeting dates are for November and December 2024.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

- A. Adjournment for the regular meeting of October 21, 2024.

On motion of Chair KeAndra Cylear-Dodds, there being no objections, this meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

