

AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FORM

Department: Rent Program

Department Head: Nicolas Traylor

Phone: 620-6564

Meeting Date: August 19, 2020

Final Decision Date Deadline: August 19, 2020

STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE: Members of the community have sent letters to the Rent Board and Rent Program staff members. Staff members recommend letters that do not pertain to a specific item on the Rent Board agenda be included as consent items for consideration by the Rent Board.

INDICATE APPROPRIATE BODY

- | | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> City Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Redevelopment Agency | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Authority | <input type="checkbox"/> Surplus Property Authority | <input type="checkbox"/> Joint Powers Financing Authority |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finance Standing Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety Public Services Standing Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Reuse Authority | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Rent Board</u> | |

ITEM

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation/Proclamation/Commendation (3-Minute Time Limit) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing | <input type="checkbox"/> Regulation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>CONSENT CALENDAR</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contract/Agreement | <input type="checkbox"/> Rent Board As Whole | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grant Application/Acceptance | <input type="checkbox"/> Claims Filed Against City of Richmond | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution | <input type="checkbox"/> Video/PowerPoint Presentation (contact KCRT @ 620.6759) | |

RECOMMENDED ACTION: RECEIVE letters from community members regarding the Fair Rent, Just Cause for Eviction, and Homeowner Protection Ordinance, RMC 11.100 – Rent Program (Cynthia Shaw 620-5552).

AGENDA ITEM NO:
F-3.

Cynthia Shaw

Subject: FW: cost of living rent increases announced in June

From: Sara Sunstein [<mailto:sarasun18@humboldtmail.com>]

Sent: Sunday, July 12, 2020 9:20 PM

To: Rent Control

Cc: Tom Butt - external; Ben Choi; Nat Bates; Eduardo Martinez; Demnlus Johnson; Jael Myrick; Melvin Willis; Uwahemu, Uche; john_gioia@bos.cccounty.us

Subject: cost of living rent increases announced in June

Dear Board Members,

Personally I was shocked to see that you've authorized rent increases for this year. Please consider a re-do: re-adjust it to 0%

It's bad enough that rent increases are compounded each year—the rent increase is current % rate of current rent instead of the base rent at the time we moved in.

But THIS YEAR?!! There is absolutely NO REASON to raise rents. The Fed rate is 0.25%, Social Security has announced a 1.6% cost of living increase for beneficiaries for 2020 (which will be about \$5 for me/month), unemployment is the highest since the Great Depression, and we've been given 12-months grace period to repay rents we haven't been able to pay due to unemployment. Yet you're allowing landlords to raise our rents, almost 3%? I find this outrageous.

According to Ycharts.com, unemployment in Richmond was 16.2% in May, down from 17.1% in April, and more than 50% higher than our long term average of 9.13% (which is absurdly high anyway).

I have been out of work since mid-March with absolutely no idea of when I'll be able to re-open my therapeutic bodywork business again. I applied for PUA funds the first week I was able to, heard a month later that my application was accepted, yet 6.5 weeks after that I'm still waiting to receive benefits that are retroactive to mid-March. So I had to wait 6+ weeks to apply for unemployment when my business shut down, and it's been over 10 weeks since I applied, and I'm still waiting. Even worse than my dilemma is that I know I am not alone in this "how am I going to carry on financially?"

The county and city have yet to extend the "no eviction for no rent" beyond July 15. I don't know how I will pay August rent, and come September 1, when the landlord demands a rent increase from me, he's sure to evict me if he hasn't already—unless the EDD decides to come through with my promised benefits in the next 2 weeks. I've stopped holding my breath.

WHAT ARE WE UNEMPLOYED RENTERS TO DO?!!!!?

Please reconsider the rent increase you've allowed for this year. Readjust it to 0% Take care of us renters. PLEASE.

Sara Sunstein
1664 San Benito

Cynthia Shaw

Subject: FW: Please Reconsider Richmond Rent Increase

From: Daniel Flores [<mailto:daf5@stmarys-ca.edu>]
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 6:02 PM
To: Rent Control
Subject: Please Reconsider Richmond Rent Increase

Dear Richmond Rent Board,

As a fellow low-income renter in Richmond, I am asking you to please reconsider the 2.9% rent increase that landlords can impose beginning September 1st. This had been a very difficult year for us all. My brother lost his job due to Covid-19 which has made it more difficult to pay our rent. As a fellow public administrator, I believe that central to our agendas must be the preservation of our communities and to minimize displacement vis-a-vis gentrification and high housing costs. Please reconsider and show empathy to the many renters in Richmond who have lost their jobs and are struggling to pay their rents.

Respectfully,

Daniel F.
daf5 @[stmarys-ca.edu](mailto:daf5@stmarys-ca.edu)

Cynthia Shaw

Subject: FW: please reconsider the 2.9% rent increase this fall

From: Darcy Long [<mailto:darcy.jean@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 10:19 AM
To: Rent Control
Subject: Fw: please reconsider the 2.9% rent increase this fall

Hello.

I just read that the board approved a 2.9% increase that landlords may impose on renters as of this September. With so many in Richmond out of work, any increase at this particular time seems completely unreasonable. I understand that cost of living increases are par for the course in a normal economic environment. However, when wages for living are not increasing in a commensurate manner, how can rental increases possibly make sense? I am a teacher with WCCUSD and due to the district's budget deficit our union made an agreement that teachers would forgo the raise we were supposed to receive this year until August 2021. I am requesting, that as in this example, the rent board would rescind their approval of rental increases for a year in order to better support residents financially and emotionally in this time of great need, overwhelm, and anxiety.

Thanks in advance for your consideration,
Darcy Long

***** "Ask yourself [what makes you come alive](#), and go do that, because what the world needs is people who have come alive." ~ Dr. Howard Thurman

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