

**CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
RENT STABILIZATION COMMISSION
THURSDAY, AUGUST 14, 2025 - 7:00 PM
WEST HOLLYWOOD PARK PUBLIC MEETING ROOM - COUNCIL CHAMBERS
625 N. SAN VICENTE BOULEVARD**

MINUTES

- 1. CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Rorie called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair Rorie led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 3. ROLL CALL:** Rent Stabilization Commission Secretary Brandee Thornton took roll call.

PRESENT: Commissioner Bass, Commissioner Kimberly Copeland, Commissioner Josh Kurpies, Commissioner McCafferty, Commissioner Agassi Topchian, Vice Chair Rena Goldman, Chair Frank D. Rorie

ALSO PRESENT: Acting Rent Stabilization Manager Gloria Aviles, Legal Counsel Kellan Martz, Acting Human Services and Rent Stabilization Director Christine Safriet and Rent Stabilization Commission Secretary Brandee Thornton
- 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

ACTION: Approve the amended agenda of August 14, 2025, to reflect the change of moving item 9.A. **Motion by Chair Rorie to approve the August 14, 2025 agenda, seconded by Commissioner Kurpies and approved with a vote of 7-0.**
- 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

ACTION: Approve the minutes of July 24, 2025. **Motion by Chair Rorie to approve the July 24, 2025 minutes, seconded by Vice Chair Goldman and approved with a vote of 5-0,** noting the abstention of Commissioner Bass and Commissioner McCafferty.
- 6. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

MICHAEL RUSSNOW, WEST HOLLYWOOD provided public comment related to recommendations to amend the Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO) to support tenants.

CATHY BLAVIS, WEST HOLLYWOOD provided public comment related to comments made by a Planning Commissioner related to rent stabilization.
- 7. MANAGER REPORT:** Acting Rent Stabilization Manager Gloria Aviles reviewed the Look Ahead Calendar.
- 8. NEW BUSINESS:**
 - A. Discussion on Security Deposit Interest Rate Methodology for Rent Stabilized Units.**

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Acting Rent Stabilization Commission Manager Gloria Aviles provided a report on the security deposit interest rate methodology for rent stabilized units.

LAURA STONE, SANTA MONICA spoke on the security deposit interest calculation.

ERIC BUSHARD, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke on the security deposit interest calculation.

JACOB POMPEI, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke on the security deposit interest calculation.

ANN PRICE, LOS ANGELES spoke on the security deposit interest calculation.

CATHY BLAVIS, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke on the security deposit interest calculation.

STEPHANIE HARKER, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke on the security deposit interest calculation.

The Commission generally expressed support for retaining the current method of determining security deposit interest rates based on rates offered by online banks. As an alternative, they proposed allowing landlords to remit the actual interest earned annually, similar to what the City of Los Angeles requires. Another suggestion voiced by Commissioners was to allow tenants to select a bank of their choice to hold their security deposits, with tenants receiving the annual interest earned. Commissioner Copeland inquired whether landlords are permitted to place security deposits in a certificate of deposit (CD). Legal Counsel Martz advised the Commission that a court case in Santa Monica confirmed this practice to be unlawful, as CD funds are locked for a year or longer and cannot be accessed when market rates change. Legal Counsel Martz also requested the opportunity to investigate the matter further to provide additional feedback on the case.

The Commission also recommended differentiating requirements between small scale and large corporate property owners. Commissioner Bass suggested imposing penalties on landlords who fail to comply with the requirement to refund security deposit interest. Commissioner Topchian did not support this recommendation. However, Commissioner Kurpies added that further tracking and community outreach would be necessary before such a measure could be effectively implemented.

The Commission requested that staff research the actual interest rates offered by the online banks used in the rate calculation, rather than relying solely on advertised figures. The Commission also inquired about the potential to extend the security deposit interest requirement to units not subject to rent control. Chair Rorie expressed his view in favor of removing this requirement entirely, noting that the interest collected is minimal compared to the actual deposit. He acknowledged, based on the comments from the other Commissioners, why the Commission wants to keep this requirement in place and stated he would not pursue the matter further. Manager Aviles, and Legal Counsel Martz recommended staff return with further research on methodology, implementation feasibility, and a broader survey of practices in other rent-stabilized cities.

After Commission deliberation, **a motion was made by Chair Rorie to table this item to a later date, seconded by Commission Topchian. The motion passed with a vote of 5-2**, noting the ‘no’ votes of Commissioner Bass and Commissioner Kurpies.

Chair Rorie recessed the meeting at 8:35pm and reconvened at 8:49 pm.

9. APPEAL

A. D-5023 1155 Horn Ave. #4

Legal Counsel to the Commission Kellan Martz provided a case summary and analysis of the appeal as provided in the staff report.

MARK TAVAKOLI, LOS ANGELES presented their oral argument.

BRENT MCEWAWN, WEST HOLLYWOOD presented their oral argument.

After Commission deliberation, **a motion was made by Chair Rorie to affirm the Hearing Examiner’s Decision as to application No. D-5023, seconded by Vice Chair Goldman. The motion passed with a vote of 6-1**, noting the ‘no’ vote of Commissioner Bass.

B. D-4930R 1279 N. Harper Ave. #104

Legal Counsel to the Commission Kellan Martz provided a case summary and analysis of the appeal as provided in the staff report.

DANIEL MONGE, LOS ANGELES presented their oral argument.

J. ROBERT PRETE, WEST HOLLYWOOD provided their oral argument.

After Commission deliberation, **a motion was made by Chair Rorie to remand the Hearing Examiner’s Decision as to application No. D-4930R, seconded by Commissioner Copeland. The motion passed with a vote of 7-0.**

10. ITEMS FROM STAFF:

Manager Aviles informed that the Human Services Division, in partnership with Metro, will host an “On the Move Riders Workshop” on Tuesday, August 26th, from 9:00 am to 10:30 am at Plummer Park, rooms 5 and 6. The workshop will cover topics such as navigating public transportation, benefits of the Senior TAP card, on-site registration, trip planning strategies, navigating the Metro system, and an overview of West Hollywood transportation programs.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

12. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS:

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Commissioner Topchian requested appeal testimony is printed for the Rent Stabilization Commissioner meetings.

Commissioner Kurpies expressed appreciation to staff for their outreach efforts regarding the security deposit interest rates and clarified statements made to Commission Copeland during the meeting.


Commissioner Bass thanked colleagues and staff for their condolences following a personal loss and asked what protections are in place to ensure the confidentiality of lease applications and legal documents shared between tenants and landlords.

- 13. ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 10:28 p.m. The next meeting of the Rent Stabilization Commission will be held on Thursday, August 28, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers.

These minutes were submitted by Brandee Thornton, Commission Secretary, and approved by a motion of the Rent Stabilization Commission on this 28th day of August 2025.

A copy of the audio recording of this meeting can be obtained from the City Clerk's office upon request. You may also view a video of this meeting at <http://www.weho.org/weho-tv/other-city-meetings>.

ATTEST:

Signed by:


Frank D. Rorie, Chair

Brandee Thornton

Brandee Thornton, Commission Secretary