

Meeting Minutes
Manchester Township
Rent Leveling Board Meeting
January 4, 2024

- 1) Call to Order
 - a) Board Secretary, Kaylan Ricotta, calls the meeting to order at 4:30 PM with the salute to the Flag and reading of the statement.
- 2) Roll Call
 - a) Ms. Sugden, Ms. Kavanagh, Ms. Norris, and Mr. Kerstein are present.
- 3) Nomination and Election of Chair
 - a) Nominations for Chairperson are opened. Ms. Norris nominated Mr. Kerstein for the position of Chairperson. Ms. Sugden seconds this. Mr. Kerstein receives a gavel and makes a statement.
- 4) Chairman's Statement
 - a) Emphasizes the meeting's judicial nature and sets expectations for decorum and relevance in discussions. Meeting end time is specified as 7pm.
- 5) Bills
 - a) No bills to review.
- 6) Correspondence
 - a) No correspondence to review.
- 7) Resolutions
 - a) No resolutions to discuss.
- 8) Proposed Rules and Regulations
 - a) Mr. Kerstein presents proposed rules and regulations, including adding a Vice Chairperson, introducing a formal application process, document submission requirements, and compliance checks by Board Attorney.
- 9) Applications
 - a) Pine Ridge South, LLC, and Pine Ridge at Crestwood, LLC applications carried to the next meeting on January 18, 2024.
- 10) Reports
 - a) No reports from board members.
- 11) Public Comment
 - a) Motion to open public comment made by Mr. Kerstein, seconded by Ms. Norris, All in favor, Ayes.
 - i) Kenneth Daddario sworn in by Board Attorney – 4 Badge Court, Pine Ridge at Crestwood
 - (1) Mr. Daddario asks if 3.5% has been resolved or CPI? Mr. Kerstein states that 3.0% is appropriate for 2024. Mr. Daddario asks for clarification as their lease was due in August of 2023, how would the ordinance that started in February at 2% work with the negotiated to 3%? Mr. Kerstein states that it is 3%. Mr. Daddario says that the landlord is sending threatening letters with a credit of \$89 and listing the base rent as what they set the original lease. He says that since they have been violating the ordinance since August, they should owe him for the

increases. He states that he never signed the original lease. Ms. Rumpf asks if he had a conversation with the landlord about this. Mr. Daddario states that he sent a paper saying I was disputing the amount on December 15th. He received a letter that stated the previous rent is \$665 (July) and new rent is \$705 (August), which would violate the 3% stated in the ordinance. In December he was charged a late fee for not paying the additional amount. Mr. Daddario passes his notice to quit to Mr. Kerstein for review. Ms. Frisch mentions that the ordinance was passed in March 2023 and received her Notice 1 week before the ordinance was passed for a lease start date in August 2023. She states that Pine Ridge at Crestwood send their increases at different times of the year. She mentions that there has not been clarification on whether the 6.8% increase is correct or incorrect due to receiving the letter before the ordinance's start date. Mr. Daddario agrees with Ms. Frisch. Ms. Rumpf mentions Section 326:16 makes the effective date January 1, 2024, and voids any increases made in 2023 except for Pine Ridge at Crestwood and Pine Ridge South. Ms. Rumpf mentions that he needs to send his information to the board for review. Mr. Daddario asks the board what to do about the letters he is receiving that say they will take him to court. Ms. Rumpf reiterates that the mobile parks need to be provided with notice and review from the board, and that she nor the board can provide legal advice. Ms. Rumpf mentions that he can place the amount in a separate account and pay the amount through that account. Mr. Kerstein states that Mr. Daddario should submit a claim and all necessary information to the board and landlord for review.

- ii) Michael Minutillo sworn in by Board Attorney -15 Badger Court, Pine Ridge at Crestwood
 - (1) Received an increase starting February 1 for \$30 more and wants to know what the board is doing about it. Ms. Rumpf mentions that this is the first meeting, and they need to submit a claim and all necessary information to the board and landlord for review. Ms. Minutillo mentions that they received a Notice to Quit on December 18, 2023. Mr. Kerstein states that under the ordinance Pine Ridge at Crestwood would have had to file a notice with the board. For the board to review and issue a determination, they need to issue a request to the board and landlord to be reviewed on January 18th at the next meeting. Mr. Minutillo asks why there are increases and that there have not been any increases in service or amenities to justify the increases. Mr. Kerstein explains that the board is only meant to enforce the ordinance and has no authority over that issue. The board would be able to respond to rent reductions based on service reductions but do not have the authority to respond to conditions or security as it is out of the purview of the board.
- iii) Richard Rosin sworn in by Board Attorney – 1426 Forrest Way - Pine Ridge South
 - (1) Mr. Rosin comments on previous residents' questions and states that residents should attend council meetings to change the ordinance to suit their needs. He explains that this board can only examine issues pertinent to the Rent Leveling Ordinance. He states that seniors need to be protected and thanks Mayor Arace for implementing this ordinance as a first step. He makes mention of 10% increases in 2 years as well as 6.5% and 5.5% and states that something needs to

be done. He asks that the board comes to a fair decision for residents and landlords.

iv) Denise Kerrins sworn in by Board Attorney – 79 Pine Ridge Blvd – Pine Ridge South

(1) Ms. Kerrins asks the board where to find the ordinance as it is not yet on the township website. Ms. Rumpf offers to email it directly. Ms. Kerrins said that she could not be represented by the Community Health Law Project and wants to know what she can do to keep her increase at 3%. Mr. Kerstein states that a copy of her letter was sent to the Rent Leveling Board and will be reviewed to determine whether it is in compliance with the ordinance. Ms. Kerrins asks how she should pay her check to the landlord since she is not in agreement with the amount. Ms. Rumpf states that she cannot give legal advice, but Ms. Kerrins can put the additional funds in a separate account and if the board determines the increase to be correct then the funds will be readily available.

v) John Gasionowicc sworn in by Board Attorney – 3 turn court – Pine Ridge at Crestwood

(1) Mr. Gasionowicc asks about increases related to service. Mr. Kerstein says this is not in the purview of the board.

vi) Mr. Kerstein states that the ordinance was submitted by the clerk and should be available online within a few days.

vii) Sophia Torjusen sworn in by Board Attorney – 52 Eagle Drive, Pine Ridge at Crestwood

(1) Ms. Torjusen received a notice to quit on December 18, 2023. She asks the board how the landlord and disregard the original lease. She states that her amount went up beyond the ordinance cap starting February 1, 2024, and will now be month to month with no negotiation. She asks if she can write on the check that she is in protest of the increase. Mr. Kerstein states that if her letter is dated December 18, 2023, then the landlord was required to send it to the rent leveling board and the board with automatically be reviewing her increase. He states that if it is not in compliance then they will notice the landlord and provide due process for the landlord to make their case ending in a ruling from the board. Ms. Rumpf states that writing on the check has no legal bearing, and that if the increase is deemed inappropriate then the resident will be issued a refund.

viii) Lori Greenberg, Esquire – representing Pine Ridge at Crestwood

(1) Ms. Greenberg mentions that all notices were submitted, and that the CPI used was national and that the ordinance does not state regional CPI. Mr. Kerstein disagrees. Ms. Greenberg asks what will be happening at the next meeting. Ms. Rumpf explains that the board will review submissions and that she and the accountant will make suggestions to the board. Ms. Greenberg states that she does not think the board will have enough time to review submissions before January 18th. Ms. Rumpf asks if Pine Ridge at Crestwood would halt increases and penalties in the interim. Ms. Greenberg says no. Ms. Rumpf states that they will be reviewed on January 18th.

b) Motion to close public comment made by Mr. Kerstein, seconded by Ms. Norris, All in favor, Ayes.

12) Adjournment

a) Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Norris, seconded by Ms. Sugden at 5:24 PM.

Meeting minutes prepared by Kaylan Ricotta, Board Secretary