

ERIE COUNTY FAIR HOUSING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MINUTES

Tuesday February 11, 2020 10am

Erie County Rath Building – Department of Environment & Planning
95 Franklin Street, Buffalo NY 14202

Board Attendees:

Karen Rybicki – ECDSS (Chair)

Cheryl Andolino – Belmont (Vice Chair)

Karen King—Public Advocacy

Other Attendees:

Paul D’Orlando—DEP

Kristen Walder—Erie County Attorney’s Office

1. Approval of Minutes—November 12, 2019 meeting **(VOTE)**
 - a. Motion to approve—Karen King; 2nd – Cheryl Andolino; Unanimous approval
2. Status of Discrimination Complaints
 - a. DeAnna Eason, Executive Director of HOME, explained that on January 27, 2020 HOME brought five housing discrimination cases to the New York State Supreme Court. Three of the cases were in the City of Buffalo and two of the cases were in the Town of Cheektowaga. She explained that each case involved a landlord refusing to rent to tenant based on the fact that the tenant would have a security deposit agreement with the Erie County Department of Social Services. HOME took those cases to the NYS Supreme Court to try to gain a legal precedent at the state level for a conviction regarding the issue of security deposit agreements.
 - b. DeAnna Eason then brought two more cases to the Erie County Fair Housing Board for housing discrimination based on the fact that landlords refused to rent to tenants based on the fact that they would have a security deposit agreement with the Erie County Department of Social Services. The two cases were in the City of Buffalo. Eason explained HOME’s investigation work to the board and she stated that she will contact Paul D’Orlando with the contact information for the rental agent, landlord and tenant for one of the cases and will also make a formal discrimination complaint on behalf of the tenant to the board at that time. After

receiving the formal complaint, the board will then have 30 days to schedule a meeting to hear the case. Both the landlord and tenant will be notified of the meeting date by Erie County. The second case in question from HOME may also be moved forward by the board after HOME attempts conciliation efforts with the landlord.

- c. At least one of the cases and possibly two will be heard by the board at a meeting on March 10, 2020.

3. Discuss Annual Report

- a. Annual report for 2019 was submitted to the County Executive and Erie County Legislature on February 4, 2020.

4. Revisit Board Terms and Appointments

- a. Terms started in May, 2019
- b. One year term—Pamela—but could do another term if that is what is decided
- c. Two year terms for two members will be decided at the May 12, 2020 meeting

Meeting adjourned: 11:10AM

Minutes submitted by Paul D'Orlando on 2/17/2020

Next Quarterly Meeting: May 12, 2020 at 10am