

**MINUTES
SHORT TERM RENTAL
IMPACT COMMITTEE
AUGUST 22, 2023 – 10:00 AM
CITY HALL BOARDROOM**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The Short-Term Rental Impact Committee met in regular session with the following members and City staff present:

2. ROLL CALL:

Members Present

Marcie Bell
Carrie Harbarger
Casey Gates Ward
Todd Buhr (via teleconference)
Patti Brown (via teleconference)
Denise Owens
Ken Wampler

Staff Present

Rey Bailey, City Clerk
Sharon Gardner, Records Specialist
Brian Davis, Code Compliance Deputy Director
Darlene Lebold, Code Admin. Asst.
Kimberly Kopp, City Attorney
Noell Bell, Building Official

VISITORS

Guy Tadlock, Resident
Alice Tadlock, Resident
Darryl Shelton, Resident
Councilmember Torey Geile

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- A. June 23, 2023**
- B. June 30, 2023**
- C. July 14, 2023**

Approval of the above minutes was tabled to the next meeting in order to correct some typographical errors and to give the members more time to review them.

4. NEW BUSINESS

Committee Vice Chair Marcie Bell announced she would not be available for a meeting on September 19th and requested that meeting be rescheduled. The consensus of the committee following a brief discussion was to cancel that meeting and add a meeting on October 24th.

The committee discussed the format of their report to the city council. It was the consensus of the committee that the report would be divided into the following categories with names of individuals who will prepare the first draft.

- Purpose Section: Kim Kopp
- Background Section: Patti Brown
- Economic Benefits Section (Pros): Ken Wampler
- Residential Impacts Section (Cons): Marcie Bell
- Conclusion Section: Todd Buhr (Due date to be determined)

It was also agreed that deliverables will be provided to the City Clerk by September 1st to be made part of the agenda for discussion at the September 5th meeting.

Committee member Ken Wampler recommends they tailor the format of the report to the Florida Keys Vacation Rental Report previously provided by Ms. Bell. It was requested that the City Clerk re-send a copy of that report to the members of the committee.

A. Home Exchange Program.

The description of a Home Exchange Program was given as house swapping with no money being exchanged. The question being asked was whether it falls under the city code.

According to the City Attorney Kim Kopp, the Home Exchange Program falls under the code, but the code needs to be clarified further in order to properly deal with it. Nevertheless, the code still applies and must be followed regarding the same rules and regulations as a short-term rental. This topic will be discussed further in subsequent meetings.

A. Impacts of Short-Term Rentals -Pros and Con List

Committee member Denise Owens noted that there are still 5 houses in her neighborhood that are not properly registered with the city but continue to rent their property. These are the same houses that have been reported to the city for the last 5 years, but nothing is being done.

Ms. Darlene Lebold of the Code Compliance Department stated that the department is currently very short-staffed. They are working hard to handle all the violations that area being reported, but there are processes and procedures that they need to follow.

According to Deputy Code Compliance Director Brian Davis, these problems are being addressed. They are being proactive in issuing a Notice of Violations and a Notice of Hearing to the violators and will continue to do so.

Ms. Owens addressed the issue regarding golf carts and Low-Speed Vehicles (LSV). She asked whether they are being counted with regards to parking at the short-term rentals.

Mr. Davis stated they are not counted based on the definition in the code.

Building Official Noell Bell will address this issue with the Community Development Director and will provide more information at the next meeting.

Councilmember Geile stated that it may be necessary to schedule a community workshop so that residents can discuss these types of issues with the Code Compliance Department.

Ms. Bell would like to discuss having golf cart companies register their rental golf carts with the city similar to livery vessels registration, as well as the possibility of the Sheriff's Office deputizing the city's Code Compliance Officers.

Committee member Ken Wampler then turned the discussion to the Pros and Cons list and how a lot of these issues on the Cons side are general issues and apply to the community as a whole and not just specific to Short-Term rental properties. These items are as follows:

- #1 - Over Occupancy.
- #5 - Sanitation Issues.
- #6 - No regard for private property.
- #10 - ADA Compliance Issues.
- #17 - Increased risk to residents due to Higher/Over occupancy of STR (This is a repeat of item #1)
- #18 - Alcohol related incidents (OCSO report showed involvement of a lot of Okaloosa County residents more so than STRs)
- #20 - LSV Use increasing and Reckless.
- #22 - Bicycles not following statutes (This is a community-wide issue)
- #25 - Additional vehicles (This is a community-wide issue)
- #27 - Revenue/Funding received only 10% (Is not accurate. Only 10% of available funds can be used for public safety).

He also stated that the 4 items he recommended they add under Pros are:

- #16 – Hospitality and restaurant jobs have increased.
- #17 – Generation of sales tax that comes back to the city.
- #18 – Increased real estate values related to short-term rentals.
- #19 – Short-Term Rental registration fees (Code enforcement funded in part via short-term vacation rental fees).

Committee member Casey Gates Ward spoke of the city having their own police department for better enforcement of city rules; adding that the lack of exacerbates their short-term rental issues.

Mr. Darryl Shelton, a Destin resident, commented that the OCSO would not enforce the city's ordinances unless they are Federal and State regulations.

Committee Chair Marcie Bell stated she will add "Lack of city police department" to the Con side of the list, and questioned if there was a way to have the TDC percentage amount for law enforcement raised to cover for more deputies.

5. Public Comments

Ms. Alice Tadlock spoke regarding how the Short-term rentals have residential impacts and are driving hard working people away from this community; adding that the committee needs to pick out the most important items on the list to present to the council.

Mr. Guy Tadlock stated that code enforcement, or the lack of it, shares with a lot of the blame for the short-term rental problems in the past. However, he is convinced that the new regime is equal to the task and will be able to address a lot of these issues. He also stated that the city has a lot of aging infrastructure, and yet he was present at a council meeting when the council issued a lien reduction of \$600,000 to a certain property that clearly violated the code, which is a direct insult to the code enforcement officers who clearly did their job.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 11:50 AM.



Marcie Bell, Vice-Chair