

**Town & Village of Woodstock
Select Board & Village Trustees Joint Meeting
April 17, 2024
5:00 pm
Town Hall & Zoom
Minutes**

Draft minutes are subject to approval.

Present: Chair Ray Bourgeois, Keri Cole, Greg Fullerton, Laura Powell, Chair Seton McIlroy, Brenda Blakeman, Frank Horneck, Lisa Lawlor, Eric Duffy, Nikki Levakis, Donald Wheeler, Roger Logan, Bob Crean, Carolyn Long, Jill Davies, Hayley Bauer

A. Call to order

1. Select Board

a. Chair Bourgeois called the joint meeting of April 17th to order at 5:00 pm.

2. Trustees

a. Chair McIlroy called the joint meeting of April 17th to order at 5:00 pm.

B. Additions & deletions from posted agenda – none.

C. Citizen comments

1. A request was made that Brenda Blakeman reconsider her statement recusing herself from the ongoing conversation regarding short-term rentals due to her ownership of two such rentals.

a. Derek Demas argued that her position is not necessarily a conflict of interest, citing the efforts of other members involved in creating the ordinance.

b. It was urged that her input would be valuable to the discussion.

D. Executive session to discuss appointments

Motion: by Chair Bourgeois to enter executive session under 1 VSA 313 to discuss appointments at 5:14 pm.

Seconded: by Laura Powell.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

Motion: by Chair McIlroy to enter executive session under 1 VSA 313 to discuss appointments at 5:15 pm.

Seconded: by Frank Horneck.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

The Select Board & Village Trustees left executive session and resumed the public meeting at 5:34 pm.

Motion: by Chair McIlroy to appoint Alex Mulley to the Planning Commission.

Seconded: by Frank Horneck.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

Motion: by Laura Powell to appoint Alex Mulley to the Planning Commission.

Seconded: by Keri Cole.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

E. Short term rental discussion

1. Various attendees provided comments regarding short term rentals, expressing concerns about fees, differentiation between owner-occupied and non-owner-occupied properties, and the enforcement of regulations.
2. The Boards talked about the proposed caps on short term rentals, with considerations for owner-occupied properties and concerns about enforcement and administrative costs.
3. The proposed ordinance caps the number of permits for short term rentals at 55 for owner-occupied and 55 for non-owner-occupied properties, reflecting about 5% of the current housing stock.
4. The Boards have the power to make alterations as needed.
5. No specific changes were proposed during the discussion, but support was expressed for maintaining the current 5% cap to prevent over development and offset the beautification of Woodstock.
6. The Boards discussed the classification of occupied and non-occupied short term rentals.
7. It was clarified that a homestead declaration was required to classify a property as owner occupied.
8. The boards also discussed the prevalence of non-registered short term rentals in Woodstock, with an estimate of 50 non-permitted and 70 legal ones.
9. Existing properties would be prioritized for registration.
10. The Boards discussed the management and cost of the short term rental program.
11. The Board discussed the potential for adjusting the cap after the fact and the need to balance owner-occupied and non-owner-occupied permits.
12. The Boards considered the possibility of hiring additional staff to monitor short term rentals more effectively.
13. There was a debate regarding the proposed fees for short term rental permits, with opinions varying on the necessity of covering costs versus providing affordability for property owners.
14. The questioned the high fees proposed by the Planning Commission, suggesting instead a base fee of \$500 for owner-occupied and \$1,000 for non-owner-occupied properties.
15. The Boards decided to keep the current rental fees, with a suggestion to possibility subsidize those who cannot afford them.
16. The excess revenue from short term rentals was proposed to be used for a program to incentivize long term housing.
17. It was decided to schedule another joking meeting for further discussion and potentially make adjustments to the proposed ordinance.
18. A follow-up meeting was scheduled for the next Wednesday to continue discussions.

F. Other business – none.

G. Adjournment

1. Select Board

Motion: by Keri Cole to adjourn the meeting at 6:26 pm.

Seconded: by Laura Powell.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

2. Trustees

Motion: by Chair Mclroy to adjourn the meeting at 6:26 pm.

Seconded: by Brenda Blakeman.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

*Respectfully submitted,
Nikki Levakis*