



Town of Washington

Vilas County, Wisconsin

Minutes

Town of Washington Listening Session

Wednesday, May 10, 2023, 5:00 pm, at the Washington Town Hall
Located at 2301 Town Hall

Board Members Present: Jim Egan –Chairman, Art Granat –Supervisor, Carole Linn – Supervisor, Nancy Sobraliski – Town Clerk, Katie Hayes – Treasurer and Tiffany Bolte – Deputy Treasurer. There were approximately 90 people in attendance.

1. **Call to order:** Meeting called to order at 5:00 pm.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Verification of Postings:** Sobraliski stated the agenda was properly posted at the Wild Eagle Corner Store, MJ's Wayside, the Town Hall and on the Town's website. Local news media were notified more than 24 hours in advance.
4. **Approval of the agenda to be discussed in any order at the discretion of the Chairman.** Motion Linn, seconded Granat, all voting aye; approved.
5. **Discussion – Short Term Rental Ordinance:** Egan stated guidelines for the meeting. No action will be taken at this meeting. Tonight's session was scheduled to listen to concerns and answer questions about the Short Term Rental Ordinance. Due to the large number of attendees, comments will be limited to a 3-minute period. Attendees should respect other's opinions. Attendees should raise their hand to be recognized and state their name and address prior to commenting. Egan also explained the draft ordinance was written to address resident complaints related to noise, firework usage, and owners or property managers of rental property not being readily available to the guests.
6. **Concerns/questions raised by residents regarding short term rentals include but are not limited to:**
 - Parking issues
 - Blocking private driveways
 - Trespassing
 - Roaming animals
 - Firework usage
 - Late night activities / loud parties
 - Septic utilization vs existing Vilas County codes on size of septic system
 - Ability to enforce the new ordinance
 - Requirement of 6 days or less for rental period may negatively impact weekend events that promote area tourism
 - Requirement of not exceeding 180 days

- Requirement of property owner or property manager to be within 50 miles may be too great a distance
- Implementation of the ordinance may have a negative impact on rental property owners
- Criteria used to determine the number of people that can be housed in a rental property
- The impact of the sale of Lake Forest golf course and subsequent future development of short term rental properties at that location

Recommendations expressed by attendees:

- Work with Vilas County to ensure compliance with existing ordinances, i.e. noise ordinance, septic systems, occupancy limits, etc.
- Further define outdoor events
- Form an advocacy group to study the issue thoroughly to ensure the ordinance is addressing all concerns but not limiting the ability of the rental property owners

Next Steps: The Town of Washington will take tonight's feedback into consideration and will continue to develop the ordinance in a transparent manner.

7. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn Egan, seconded Linn, all voting aye; approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:46 pm.

Nancy Sobralski – Town Clerk
 Approved: 06/05/2023