

Meeting Minutes

City of West Fargo Short-Term Rental Committee

Monday, June 30, 2025

4:30 PM

West Fargo Room, West Fargo City Hall – 2515 6th St E

1. Call to Order

Planning Director Nelson called the meeting to order at 4:30pm.

2. Roll Call

Committee Members Present: Commissioner Rory Jorgensen; Commissioner Roben Anderson; Captain Randy Burkhartsmeier; Deputy Fire Chief Dell Sprecher; Planning Director Aaron Nelson.

Committee Members Absent: None

3. Election of Committee Chair and Vice Chair

Planning Director Nelson opened the floor for nominations of committee chair and vice-chair. Deputy Fire Chief Sprecher nominated Planning Director Nelson as chair and Commissioner Jorgensen seconded. Commissioner Jorgensen volunteered to be vice-chair. Director Nelson motioned to elect Commissioner Jorgensen as vice-chair. Commissioner Anderson seconded. No opposition: motion approved.

4. Approval of Order of Agenda

Commissioner Anderson motioned to approve the order of the agenda. Vice-Chair Jorgensen seconded. No opposition, motion passed.

5. Public Comment Period *(Members of the public will be allowed 2 minutes and 30 seconds to address the Committee)*

Kathi Schwan: Planning & Zoning Commissioner would like the committee to consider the unique demographics of people that utilize short-term rentals; specifically traveling medical professionals and organ transplant recipients that are required to stay in the vicinity of the hospital prior to a transplant surgery.

Eric Stuart: Short-term rental owner/operator would like to volunteer his knowledge and expertise as a resource for the committee. He has experience in multiple cities and would like to be a resource as a local expert.

Tom Seymour: 5066 Woodridge Lane believes that there should only be residential dwellings in an R-1A zoning district.

6. Committee Orientation & Scope Discussion

Chair Nelson presented the draft Committee Overview document, which intended to help clarify the committee's purpose and scope of work. The Committee Overview document is intended to be an informal guide and living document as the committee's work progresses. It was noted that this committee was established by the City Commission during the second reading of the draft short-term rental ordinance on June 16, 2025. Commissioner Jorgensen shared some of the feedback that he had received prior to this meeting.

General discussion on the work and scope of the Committee was had. Commissioner Anderson mentioned interest in providing a survey to the public for feedback. Vice-Chair Jorgensen asked where information for the first draft of the ordinance was researched initially. Chair Nelson noted that Planning staff members researched and reached out to communities in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Applicable ordinance provisions from these cities were incorporated into the draft West Fargo ordinance, along with information and input from other city departments (Fire, Finance, Police, etc.). The number of meetings and expectations of members was discussed. The Committee discussed assigning specific tasks during meetings and left the number of meetings undetermined.

Final deliverables/outputs of the Committee were discussed. The Committee will ultimately need to provide the City Commission with a recommendation, which could range from general recommendations to recommendations for specific edits to the draft ordinance, along with supporting materials.

The Committee discussed how to review any proposed survey questions. It was discussed that potential questions could be drafted prior to and reviewed at the next meeting, before having staff work with the Communications department to publish the survey.

7. Review of Draft Short-Term Rental Ordinance

The Committee discussed the current draft of the short-term rental ordinance. Upon review of the draft ordinance, the Committee discussed narrowing its focus to several key sections of the draft ordinance. The primary residency requirement was identified as a high priority for additional review. Additionally, occupancy limits, and timing of the renewal period were also identified as priorities.

8. Process & Next Steps

Commissioner Anderson requested access to the research that was done about rental ordinances in other cities prior to drafting this ordinance. Chair Nelson is going to compile example ordinances and make them available to the Committee. Chair Nelson will also update the Committee Overview document to reflect the identified focus areas that the Committee would like to explore further.

Commissioner Anderson will draft a set of survey questions to be reviewed by the Committee at the next meeting.

Discussion was had on the time and location of the next meeting. Vice-Chair Jorgensen motioned for Monday, July 28th at 4:30pm in the West Fargo Room at City Hall to be the time and place of the next Short-Term Rental Committee meeting. Deputy Fire Chief Sprecher seconded the motion. No opposition, motion passed.

Items for the next meeting agenda will need to be submitted to the Planning Department by the Committee members by Thursday, July 24th. The agenda will be published on July 25th.

9. Adjournment

Commissioner Anderson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Captain Burkhartsmeier seconded. No opposition. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 5:24pm.