

MEETING MINUTES

City of West Fargo Short-Term Rental Committee

Tuesday, August 26, 2025

4:30 PM

Commission Chambers, West Fargo City Hall – 2515 6th St E

1. Call to Order

Chair Nelson called the meeting to order at 4:32pm.

2. Roll Call

Committee members present: Chair Nelson, Commissioner Anderson, Deputy Fire Chief Sprecher, Captain Burkhartsmeier

Committee members absent: Vice-Chair Jorgensen

3. Approval of Order of Agenda

Commissioner Anderson moved to approve the order of the agenda. Deputy Fire Chief Sprecher seconded. No opposition. Motion passed.

4. Approval of Minutes – July 28, 2025

Commissioner Anderson motioned and Captain Burkhartsmeier seconded to approve the meeting minutes from July 28, 2025. No opposition. Motion passed.

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

No public comments were made.

6. Public Survey

a. Review and discuss survey results

Manager of Public Affairs Rachel Richter-Lordemann presented the findings of the survey via PowerPoint. A total of 122 responses were received. 62 of those responses were able to be analyzed. The remaining 60 responses were unable to be analyzed due to no responses other than the first question.

7. Discussion on Key Policy Questions

- a. **Primary Residency Requirement – Should short-term rentals be limited to properties that serve as a primary residency, or should the city allow properties to operate STRs year-round without a primary residency requirement?**

- b. Occupancy Limits – Should occupancy limits for short-term rentals match those for long-term residential dwellings, or should STRs be permitted to host a greater number of guests?**
- c. Timing of Renewal Period – Should short-term rental licenses be renewed annually every calendar year (e.g., by December 31), or should an alternative timeline or a rolling 12-month renewal system based on the date of issuance be considered?**

Discussion took place regarding the necessity of primary residence requirements, how to clarify occupancy limits, the importance of having contact information for owners easily available, and other miscellaneous ordinance items.

Chair Nelson went over the rubric provided in the agenda packet and asked for committee interest in the steps moving forward. Upon initial discussion, there was general consensus that a primary residency requirement is not necessary and that occupancy should be based on the size of the unit as opposed to being tied to standard zoning occupancy restrictions for residential dwellings.

With increased flexibility for occupancy, Chair Nelson wondered if the committee should also review things such as parking requirements. The city currently has the same restrictions for any residence. Captain Burkhartsmeier said nuisance and parking ordinances apply to everything in the city, so he doesn't see a need for more restrictive requirements for STRs. Committee would like a recommendation from the building department about how to pursue occupancy.

Commissioner Anderson would like licensing annually, with the set timing being influenced by staff input. Deputy Fire Chief Sprecher would like an annual fee for licensing.

Part of licensing would include letters sent out to neighboring property owners to inform them that an STR would be operating within 150ft of the licensed premises. The license would need to be conspicuously posted in the entryway of the premises and include contact information for relevant parties. There was additional discussion regarding "good neighbor guidelines" that some cities require. Commissioner Anderson will share an example that he found with the committee and put it on the OneDrive.

Chair Nelson said that staff would support an annual licensing with a set date range- possibly something in the summer- to mirror what happens with the liquor licensing.

8. Next Steps

- a. Discuss and approve the next steps of the Committee, including research/informational needs, member assignments, and/or agenda items for the next meeting**

Committee is going to get details from Inspections on what amount of square footage qualifies as a bedroom. Staff will flesh out the code provisions and the pros/cons of following whatever path. Staff will also update the draft ordinance in the direction that the discussion has been going so far. If committee members want other inclusions in the draft agenda/ordinance, they are encouraged to share it with staff so it can be added. An updated draft of the ordinance will be put together for the next meeting. Additional discussion was held regarding the option for

“good neighbor guidelines,” which could either be included in the ordinance and/or implemented by staff as part of the application process. Tips to be a good neighbor could be provided to the property owners to encourage them to follow parking rules, animal waste disposal, property boundaries (city leash laws), and trespassing on neighboring properties.

Deputy Fire Chief Sprecher motioned that between now and next meeting, staff will discuss occupancy options with the Building Official and prepare an updated draft short-term rental ordinance for consideration by the Committee at the next meeting. The updated draft will remove the primary residency requirement, base occupancy on building code standards, adjust the renewal period, and may consider good neighbor provisions. Commissioner Anderson seconded the motion. Roll call vote 4-0. Motion passed.

b. Approve date, time, and location of next meeting

Monday, September 29th at 4:30pm in Commission Chambers was motioned as the next meeting date by Commissioner Anderson. The motion was seconded by Captain Burkhartsmeier. Roll call vote 4-0. Motion passed.

9. Adjournment

Commissioner Anderson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Deputy Fire Chief Sprecher seconded. Meeting adjourned at 5:33pm.