

Special Town Council Meeting
Discuss Short-Term Rentals Survey Results
June 14, 2023

Mayor Tacke called the special meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Those Present: Mayor Tacke; Council Members: Chuck Brown and Ron Dauwalder via phone, Carmen Staigmiller, and Scott Hoyt; Public Works Department, Nick Dale; and Clerk/Treasurer, Tammy Comer.

Also Present: Vonnie Jacobson, Choteau Acantha; Pool Concessionaire, Emilee Lear; and community members Kevin McWilliams, Kristen Becker, Chad Becker, and Doug Bouma.

Public Comment: None

Mayor Tacke began the meeting by stating there were 122 respondents to the short-term rental survey. The results of the survey were split just about evenly between those wanting and those not wanting short-term rentals. He felt the biggest concern in the survey was where to allow them and how many of them to be allowed in town. Mayor Tacke asked the council to express their opinion on the subject of short-term rentals.

Councilor Staigmiller began by stating this was a tough subject that would be very difficult to please everyone. She was in favor of short-term rentals but felt there needed to be an Ordinance in place that explained the rules and regulations of them. She did question whether to allow this business in residential zoning. Councilor Hoyt expressed the same concerns as Councilor Staigmiller.

Councilor Brown was also in favor of short-term rentals and felt VRBO regulations should be met. As to how many and where to allow the short-term rentals, he felt was a tough decision to make.

Councilor Dauwalder said what he got from the people of the community was how many to allow in town. He felt the short-term rentals should be allowed in both residential and commercial zones but to limit the number allowed.

Mayor Tacke then asked for comments from the attending public. Kevin McWilliams stated he had stayed in a number of short-term rentals and was in favor of having them in town. He did feel that the number of short-term rentals should be limited and should be required to have a town business license. He felt there should not be any issues with the care of them. He said it is harder to get rid of bad long-term renters.

Kristen Becker didn't see why this was an issue.

Chad Becker felt the property owner should be able to manage their property as they see fit, but there did need to be some rules to follow. He said that people moving south for the winter may want to rent their homes during that time.

Doug Bouma didn't think there would be many short-term rentals come into Fairfield, but since there were no motels in town, short-term rentals would provide a place to stay for people coming into town. He did not see the difference in a long-term and a short-term rental. He felt that short-term rentals would be taken better care of and easier to rent to good renters. He also stated that a lawn mower and a mechanic business were currently allowed in the residential zone.

Mayor Tacke stated that daycares are exempt, allowed in the residential zone, and are required to have a town business license.

With no further discussion, Mayor Tacke thanked everyone for their comments then closed the special short-term rental meeting at 7:19 pm.

Loren B. Tacke, Mayor

ATTEST:

Tammy L. Comer, Clerk/Treasurer