



Town of Oneonta
TOWN BOARD

Regular Meeting Minutes
July 13th, 2022
07:00pm

The regular meeting of the Oneonta Town Board was held on July 13th, 2022, @07:05pm, with the following members present:

Town Board Member:	Brett Holleran	(BH)	
Town Board Member:	Skylar J. Thompson	(SJT)	
Town Board Member:	Patricia Riddell Kent	(PRK)	
Town Board Member:	Kim Fierke	(KF)	
Supervisor:	Randal I. Mowers	(RM)	
Town Clerk:	Ryan F. Pereira	(RFP)	
Town Attorney:	Robert Panasci	(RP)	ABSENT

Others present: Dale Webster; David Webster; David Cyzeski; Theresa Cyzeski; Andrea Lister; Andrew Stammel; Mary Pierce; Hannah Calhoun; Patrick Calhoun; Nathan Mann; Victoria Spataro; Steve Kent.

RESOLUTION 2022-54 Motion made by Holleran, seconded by Fierke to appoint Robert Wood to Budget Officer, followed by a presentation of the Budget Process by the newly elected officer.

VOTE – Ayes 5, Nays 0 BH KE Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2022-55 Motion made by Holleran, seconded by Riddell Kent to open a Public Hearing on a proposed moratorium writ large to the issuance of short-term transient rental permits. The opening statement made by Board Member Fierke, followed by Andrew Stammel, Theresa Cyzeski, Andrea Lister, as well as others, and written statements will be entered into the record at the end of this document. Many voiced their thoughts both in favor and in opposition.

VOTE – Ayes 5, Nays 0 BH PRK Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2022-56 Motion to leave the Public Hearing open.

VOTE – Ayes 5, Nays 0 PRK BH Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2022-57 Motion made by Fierke, seconded by Thompson to have public hearing held at the next public Town Board meeting, July 13th, 2022, to research a moratorium writ large on the issuance of short-term transient rental permits for a suggested minimum term of six months, allowing the Board time to explore the matter.

VOTE - Ayes 5, Nays 0 KE SJT Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2022-58 Motion was made by Riddell Kent, seconded by Thompson to approve the Sewer rates for; the West End, West Street, and Southside, which wholly remain unchanged from the prior year.

VOTE - Ayes 5, Nays 0 PRK SJT Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2022-59 Motion was made by Holleran, seconded by Thompson to authorize the Town to spend \$9,100.00 of “Green Space Money”, funds built up over preceding years, earmarked for park improvements.

VOTE - Ayes 5, Nays 0 BH SJT Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2022-60 Motion was made by Holleran, seconded by Thompson to appoint Ryan F. Pereira, Town Clerk as Town Marriage Officer.

VOTE - Ayes 5, Nays 0 BH SJT Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2022-61 Motion was made by Thompson, seconded by Holleran to appoint Thomas J. Trelease as alternate on the Zoning Board of Appeals. Board Member Riddell Kent voiced dissent on the appointment due to unfamiliarity with the individual, as well as questioned the selection process.

VOTE - Ayes 4, Nays 1 PRK RM SJT Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2022-62 Motion was made by Fierke, seconded by Riddell Kent to appoint Cheryl L. Shackelton as alternate on the Planning Board.

VOTE - Ayes 5, Nays 0 PRK BH Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2022-63 Motion was made by Fierke, seconded by Riddell Kent to authorize the approval of the County Of Otsego IDA to administer a CDBG Small Cities Grant on behalf of Systematic Powers System, dba IOXUS.

VOTE - Ayes 5, Nays 0 PRK BH Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2022-64 Motion was made to authorize the Supervisor to sign any and all documents necessary for the transaction to be completed in regards to the aforementioned grant.

VOTE - Ayes 5, Nays 0 KE PRK Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2022-65 Motion was made by Riddell Kent, seconded by Fierke to pay the bills.

VOTE - Ayes 5, Nays 0 PRK KE Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2022-66 Motion was made by Riddell Kent, seconded by Thompson to accept the June 08th, 2022 minutes.

VOTE - Ayes 5, Nays 0 PRK SJI Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2022-53 Motion was made by Thompson, seconded by Riddell Kent to adjourn.

❖ Meeting adjourned 09:10pm. SJI PRK Motion Carried

Respectfully submitted,



Ryan F. Pereira
Town Clerk

Statements for the record:

Thank you to my colleagues on the Board and to those in the audience tonight for coming to listen and to offer insights into short-term rentals. I am very eager to hear what is on the minds of those in attendance. As this public hearing begins, I wanted to take a few minutes to express what I've been thinking about.

I will fully disclose that my husband and I rent our house in the summer and have benefited from the extra income it has brought us that we have used to make updates to the house and help pay for tuition for our children. I absolutely have no desire to prohibit anyone in our community who chooses this route as a path to make extra income. I also believe we have a good permit process. One that allows community members the opportunity to rent their property and also provides a yearly permit renewal process that ensures the homes are providing a safe environment.

After examining the data that is available, I offer that in 2017 there were a total of 32 short-term permits in the Town and when plotted on a map showed no saturation in any particular community. Fast forward 5 years and in 2022 there are currently 68-70 active permits. In five years, this is an increase of 46%.

There are very few formal complaints to the Town with only 2 so far this year and an average of 2-3 each year. And revocation of permits is rare to non-existent with only 1 being revoked in 2020. In addition of the 70 total permits, 40 or (57%) are owner-occupied. Which leaves 33% as investment property.

I've had the opportunity to speak with people who have expressed their views and that has brought forth questions that I'd love to hear others' opinions about.

- What concerns (if any) do people have about short-term rentals in our community?
- Is there a difference between those properties who are owner occupied versus properties that are investments and not the owner's primary residence?
- Should investment property owners pay a different fee than those who are owner occupied?
- Is there concern about saturation in your community? Should the property owners in that community determine the number of short-term rentals?
- How should the Town handle renters that do not abide by the 'no party' rule? We currently do not have law enforcement in the evenings or weekends.
- Are there any ideas for reporting homeowners who do not handle renters or allow the property to become unsightly? I have spoken to neighbors who are upset about the way the rental property in their neighborhood looks but are uncomfortable confronting the homeowner (it is an investment property).
- What are opinions about investment properties during the other 8 months of the year? Is it okay to leave them vacant, rent them to students, rent them to professionals but then force the professionals to vacate before baseball begins again?
- What is the concern to the impact on property values? I am very much aware of young professionals who cannot afford to purchase a home in the area and have left for other places.
- What about those who are operating in the Town without a permit?

I would love to hear from others your thoughts on my questions as well as anything else that is on your mind. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Kim Fierke

In Support of Moratorium on Short Term Rentals

Submitted July 13, 2022, to the Town Board by Andrew Stammel, 42 School House Lane

The Town Board is wise to consider this moratorium and I would like to speak in strong support of it. A moratorium would not be a forever ban on all short-term rentals. It would be a recognition that the quickly evolving facts on the ground have gotten far out ahead of our laws. In 2014, when the Comprehensive Plan was passed, the Planning Board reviewed and approved only 5 short-term rental applications the whole year. In 2022, they have reviewed 10 so far and we are only halfway through the year. And the nature of the rentals has changed. While earlier rentals were entirely local people trying to earn some extra income, renting a portion or all of their own homes, now we have out of state investors buying up properties as a commercial business. This trend will only accelerate as the baseball camp transitions away from a mom-and-pop operation to a 100+ million dollar out of state corporation.

Rental moratoriums are not new and have been put in place throughout the state, including in Cooperstown and the City of Oneonta. It would be a sensible pause, allowing the Town to determine where and in what manner rentals are appropriate and to amend zoning as needed, which dovetails nicely with the Board's efforts to update our Comprehensive Plan. Some Town Board members have voiced the need to address the current housing crisis or to protect the quality of life in our residential neighborhoods. I agree with both efforts. These challenges can only be addressed by our elected Town Board, through thoughtful deliberation and community consultation. A moratorium will allow for that.

Tourism and hospitality are important to our economy and short-term rentals will likely always comprise a portion of our lodging. But I do not agree that they are appropriate or beneficial in every case. While some rentals will provide benefits, particularly when a local homeowner rents their residence for part of the year and reinvests the income locally, other rentals offer little to no benefits and many negatives. In our neighborhood, a large 15 year old home that had previously been occupied full time by a family was bought by out of state investors purely for short term rentals. The house will be rented for a few months a year and stand empty for the rest of the time. The rent money will go out of state and the town will receive back only a portion of the occupancy tax related to the rental activity. It would be a more productive use of the home to have full time residents, paying taxes, working locally, sending kids to school, starting businesses, and spending money locally all year round- including on big ticket items like cars. If the property is neglected and suffers deferred maintenance it will also bring down surrounding home valuations and tax assessments, leading to a net loss to the Town budget and economy.

Our current housing market has a severe shortage of available homes for sale. Any employer will tell you how difficult it is to attract new employees and residents and to find housing for them. Does it make sense from a policy perspective to remove some of the newest and most family friendly housing from the residential market during a housing crisis? Now, every time a house goes up for sale, instead of welcoming new professionals and families to our town, we face having corporations or commercial investors bring in a pile of cash to outbid any potential residential buyers. And under the town code the special use rental permit runs with the land in perpetuity. Essentially, our population shrinks and new quality housing will forever be removed from local housing stock and wasted, exacerbating our crisis.

Our town code and zoning are overdue for reforms. Please do the responsible thing and approve this moratorium to allow time to fix these problems to better protect our residents' quality of life, our housing stock, and our local economy. Thank you.

July 13, 2022

Town Clerk Ryan F. Pereira
Town of Oneonta

Dear Planning Board Members:

Although my wife and I cannot attend the meeting, I am writing to you in strong support of a moratorium on short-term rentals in the Town of Oneonta.

I can speak with confidence to the fact that those who bought and own homes in our Winney Hill Commons neighborhood did so with the expectation that, unlike many properties within the city, owners would reside in the neighborhood, maintain their homes to a high standard, and not use them as a source of income. I strongly suspect that these sentiments are true for the majority of others who own homes in the town. Before any more short-term rentals are approved, it is sensible to take time to consider carefully whether we want the Town to set a higher standard for ownership of properties than the City of Oneonta.

Thank you for your attention to this matter/

Sincerely yours,

Ron and Allayne Heyduk
50 School House Lane