

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

CITY OF GENEVA, NEW YORK

April 10, 2024 5:15 PM

**Public Safety Building
255 Exchange Street
Geneva, NY 14456**

Presiding – Steve Valentino, Mayor

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Brennan, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Pealer, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Moracco, Clr. Grimaldi (arrived 5:20 pm) and Clr. Whitfield (arrived 5:20 pm)

2. WORK SESSION: SHORT TERM RENTAL LICENSE FEES

Mayor started session with his goals to move away with changes to ordinance and discussion of fees, and to set a meeting or 2 to keep the motion going. Amie reviewed what will happen as we draft the changes and how staff can carry it out in a reasonable and sensible manner. As part of looking at these issues we have purchased a software called RentalScape, which allows us to see a bird's eye view of what STR there are in the community and to help understand where we are at. Currently there are 92 properties (some fluctuations), renting a majority of self-contained units and not rooms. Host revenue is about \$ 2.2 million. Renting primarily single units and apts. Lots of info can be drawn out of RentalScape reports.

Clr Pealer asked what the software can provide to us? Would we be able to utilize it with STR or LTR? It is a forensic software and could potentially be used that way in the future. David West gave background on the resolution. Staff had a discussion and outlined what we are trying to accomplish with the resolution: How to compromise on existing regulations; what impact is from noise levels at night; what happens on a vacation is different that what may happen at home and how can it be controlled; concerns about parking, safety of building; what impact it has on the single family home sales/market (over 70% of single family homes in Geneva are STR). Resolution being reviewed by current council concerning the STR Special Use Permit and being able to revoke the license.

Clr Lavin commented that the zoning doesn't treat everyone the same and why does STR fall outside of zoning laws and not treated as a new use? Robert Marks addressed the question and explained there are tools we can use (parking, zoning and noise ordinances) but these are tools to treat the symptoms. Party concerns for STR such as noise can be monitored and could rescind the STR license if too many are received. Can you limit the number of times rented? Would like to see the STR contained to one area, giving those outside the area a sunset clause.

Clr Petropolis asked about a STR in his ward and their specific issues (ie: single drive & police can't do much except tow, and rents out for parties) and wondered how we can regulate these issues.

Robert answered that current laws can be clarified. Clr Grimaldi commented that parking restrictions and definitions of STR (bedroom, owner occupied, residents) need to be clarified.

David West fielded questions about.... adding a registry to make owners accountable, tying STR license to noise ordinances, parking, making hosts responsible for guests stays, how to revoke licenses for failing to comply with rules and regulations, are we able to prosecute, can we escalate fees if not corrected. He stated that most STR are not downtown.

Mayor added that once we execute regulations, violations can be filed by neighbors. The registry is public. Police can intervene. Limits of STR will need to be addressed with legal. Does not agree with limitations. Accountability and property management are key. He would like to give staff bullet points to work on the resolution. VRBO does not have an owner-occupied requirement.

Clr Pealer said he has mixed feelings on STR. He believes it is a blight -as giving up on the city. He thinks we should be able to revoke licenses, set fines which should escalate as needed. The goal should be to head off the violators.

Clr Brennan asked what do we want to do as a city? We have many disagreements; we need to fix the ordinance and this will help staff to move forward. We need to create something that is sensible and reasonable. What to charge? Higher rates will discourage. Would like to see a reasonable fee, bedroom vs people fee schedule, include parking requirements. Does not want to squash ABNB or VRBO but maybe reduce them to improve residential housing.

Clr Petropolis asked the difference of B&B vs STR. He believes they should be owner occupied and not rented as a party space.

Clr Gillotte asked how are to enforce codes? This is a new territory for us- a living document? Will it be easy for us to make changes such as limiting the number of STR. Would like to see more options from staff. Could fees be tied to assessment. We need to have families move back to Geneva.

Neal Braman brought up staffing and the need for 1-2 inspectors. GFD inspects commercial properties, would that include STR above commercial property?

Amie added that they used \$100-150/hr for staffing budget with annual inspections. We need to review how and what the city can do, and to define terms.

Clr Grimaldi would like to limit Airbnb with no inspections needed. Violations could disappoint renters and potentially lower fees. Could we change to occupancy tax (state issue).

David summed up what had been discussed to bring back to staff to work on: support staff; justify fees and changes to fees; review wording with legal to draft ordinance; remove special use permit; adjustments to parking and bedroom terms, limit of large gatherings; and inspection recommendations.

3. ADJOURNMENT

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Clr. Moracco

MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 7:23pm

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Alicia Jean
Deputy City Clerk