

Watersmeet Township Planning Commission
Wednesday, June 5, 2019
Final and Approved
Special Meeting Minutes

Location: Watersmeet Community Center

Meeting called to order by Chairman Peterson at 6:00 PM

Roll Call:

Members Present: Jeff Zelinski, Jeff Wasson, Pete Peterson, John Cestkowski, Peggy Tuttle, Roy D'Antonio, Craig Hesse, Yvonne Clark, Paul Kemppainen

Members Absent: None

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Craig and 2nd by Jeff W. Motion carried

Public Comment: Greg Clark asked the commission how we can keep going forward and asked if there were any questions behind the rationale for changing the short-term rental process as it presently exists. He explained some of the problems associated with short-term rentals on small lakes; use of jet skis and fishing pressure predominantly. The proposed ordinance allows for more short-term rental opportunities than any other in the state. R&F would not be included in the 30 maximum rentals allowed. In addition, there would be no repercussions for those who have done renting for a long period of time without a permit if they can verify it. Jerry Kahn questioned when a draft copy of the proposed ordinance would be available on the website and who is presently working on it now. It was explained to him that a committee had been established and that until a public hearing is held the proposed ordinance would not be available to the public. Any ordinance change has to be approved by a majority vote of the commission and a public hearing held prior to it being sent to the Township Board. Mark DeGrave from Crooked Lake expressed a question about the acreage requirement for short-term rental. Tim Schmidt from Crooked Lake was concerned about short-term rentals and the increase in boats and jet skis in a lake tied to the Sylvania Wilderness Area.

Discussion of Proposed Short-term Rental Ordinance: Yvonne Clark gave a handout about decreased size requirement for short-term rentals and the number of permits and locations. Jeff Zelinski expressed his concerns about making any changes and felt that the new ordinance would create more problems than what exists. He then made motion to keep the ordinance that is presently in place. A second was made by 2nd by Jeff W.

The following is a summary of some of the comments that members of the Planning Commission made concerning short-term rentals. Roy felt that he couldn't support the new ordinance as written feeling that it would shut-down some of the current permits and take away rights from many and doesn't address resorts that been previously divided. Paul stated that the new ordinance would not affect those presently renting and would only apply to L1, L2 and Transition zones. The new ordinance provides the township with a way to report those responsible for collecting use tax as required by law which was a concern of resort owner. A mechanism would be in place to resolve problems that might come up regarding short-term rentals. Craig said that he didn't want any area lake turn into a situation such as exists on Lake Gogebic. Pete felt that there is no problem at this time and there is no rush to get a new ordinance passed at this time. Yvonne stated that the new ordinance would not be on a case by case basis, it would

be an administrative task. If need be we can go back to the case by case basis if this is the consensus of the commission. Peggy questioned about how we can move ahead and promote tourism and get quality people to come to Watersmeet. Yvonne stated that if we went back to the old way that the Township make sure that use tax is being paid and that inspections be done. Pete felt that grandfathered permits should be subject to yearly inspections. Paul felt that we would be making a big step backwards and if we went back to where we were, we would have to decide who is responsible for turning in non-compliant renters along with the collect of taxes. If permits are issued under the old system our zoning administrator should be able to note that proof of a use tax license needed to be done within 60 days. Pete brought up the idea of at least one rental on lakes under 600 sq. acres and local lake owners deciding whether they were in favor or not or a short-term rental.

Chairman Peterson called for a roll call vote. Those in favor were Jeff Z. Jeff W. Roy D., Pete P. and John C. Those against were Peggy T. Yvonne C. Craig H. and Paul K. Motion to retain current short-term rental policy carried.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Craig and 2nd by Yvonne. Motion carried. Meeting ended at 7:30 PM

Next Regular Meeting on Wednesday, July 10, 2019 at the Regular Time of 5:00 PM

Submitted by: Paul D. Kemppainen – Planning Commission Secretary