

**WILLIAMSTOWN CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

**March 7, 2022**

**6:00 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Skinner; Kim Crupper; Ronnie Maines; Greg Middleton; Bob Perry; Gina Smith; Ronnie West; Jeff Shipp; Laura McClanahan; and Vivian Link

**ALSO PRESENT:** Cindy Philippo; AlAnn Feldman; Sarah Dills; Wade Gutman; Jamie & Amanda Smith; Earl & Deanna Breeden; Earl Breeden II; Misty Middleton; Brian Magee; Ed Feldman; Hans Philippo; Becky Manis; Matthew Saalfeld; Mary Ann Simpson; Jeff Feldman; Angie & Todd Cripe; Jacquelyn Ammer Riley; Leanne Arlinghaus; Richard Austin; Amy Harris; Greg Brockman

Mayor Skinner called the Meeting to order.

Mayor Skinner welcomed all in attendance and requested that all guests sign in.

Mayor Skinner requested all in attendance to stand and Pledge Allegiance to the American Flag.

**INVOCATION:** Kim Crupper

**AUDIENCE RECOGNITION**

All were welcomed to the meeting.

**Corrections and Approval of Minutes for Regular Council Meeting of February 7, 2022, and Special Council Meeting of February 15, 2022**

Bob Perry made the motion to approve the minutes for Regular Council Meeting of February 7, 2022 and Special Council Meeting of February 15, 2022. Ronnie Maines seconded the motion, and the vote was as follows:

Kim Crupper	yes	Ronnie Maines	yes
Greg Middleton	yes	Bob Perry	yes
Gina Smith	yes	Ronnie West	yes

All voted in favor. Motion carried.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- a. The next Special Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 15, beginning at 6 p.m.
- b. Mayor Skinner welcomed Greg Brockman, Mayor of City of Dry Ridge, to the audience.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Second Reading of Ordinance 2022-03, Land Erosion and Sedimentation Control Regulations**

As directed by Council, Jeff Shipp gave the Second Reading of Ordinance 2022-03, Land Erosion and Sedimentation Control Regulations, in summary.

Ronnie West made the motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 2022-03, Land Erosion and Sedimentation Control Regulations. Gina Smith seconded the motion, and the vote was as follows:

Kim Crupper	yes	Ronnie Maines	yes
Greg Middleton	yes	Bob Perry	yes
Gina Smith	yes	Ronnie West	yes

All voted in favor. Motion carried.

At this time, Gina Smith, stated she would not be voting, debating, or commenting on the discussion of Ordinance 2022-04, Short-Term Vacation/Housing Rental Policy, due to conflict of interest.

**Open Discussion of Ordinance 2022-04, Short-Term Vacation/Housing Rental Policy**

At this time Mayor Skinner announced to the audience that if anyone was wanting to speak, to please come to the podium and announce their names.

Misty Middleton, Superintendent of Williamstown School, was the first to speak. She wanted to clarify that the School is not responsible for pushing this on the agenda and no discussion was made on this subject. She further stated she does have concerns about the impact of the rentals on the school district. Currently there are over 50 houses classified as short-term rentals and was not aware there were so many. There are fewer children attending school who actually live in the Williamstown School District.

Ms. Middleton stated she respects the individuals who own the rentals and understands it is a business that wants to make a profit. She does question if the school and churches will survive. The City and School should mutually work together for the future.

Hans Filippo stated four to five years ago the Ark Encounter came to Williamstown. He stated this was a good thing for the City.

He purchased numerous properties located in downtown Williamstown that were in need of major repairs and remodeling. It would have been less costly to start the repairs on these properties from scratch.

Mr. Filippo questioned where did the Ordinance come from? Mr. Filippo stated he heard it was Council Members Greg Middleton and Ronnie West.

At this time, Ronnie West stated it came from him. Don't blame Greg Middleton or Williamstown School. Mr. West stated he was watching a Florence, Ky. meeting and they have a similar Ordinance in place. Mr. West is taking full responsibility for the proposed Ordinance and feels guidelines need to be set.

Mr. Philippo stated Bed and Breakfast rentals are a great business and are perfect for Williamstown at present. They bring in customers to local businesses. Most homes require improvements which increases the value of the home, which in return increases tax revenue.

He further stated if the School has a problem, they need to fix their problems. The school districts should be addressed and local businesses should be left alone. The Ordinance is not needed. In order to be a short-term rental, business owners are already doing the required steps imposed by the City. When businesses start flourishing, the City imposes restrictions.

Becky Manis, a resident, who lives on Cynthiana Street, stated her concerns. There are no young families able to find housing now. Anytime something comes on the market, it is bought and becomes a short-term rental. She believes there should be greater distance between the limits of these rentals.

Ed Feldman stated he was present to represent a number of people regarding the proposed Short-Term Rental Ordinance. Boone County is not Williamstown. If an Ordinance is going to be put in place, the City needs to look more apples to apples. He further stated he is a graduate from Williamstown School and currently the academic rating of the school is declining.

Most of the houses purchased for short term rentals need major repairs. Property values were decreasing on these properties and the rental businesses that have started operating in Williamstown has improved the values. People visiting the Ark Encounter are supporting the local businesses, because the locals can not fully support these businesses.

Mr. Feldman further stated rental owners are pro-Williamstown and want to see growth for the City.

LeAnn Arlinghaus stated she owns a house on Lake Street. She would like to see the Ordinance tabled. Williamstown can not be compared to Florence and Boone County, Ky. The neighborhoods are looking nicer due to the rentals.

Matthew Saalfeld stated he fell in love with Williamstown many years ago. He has a house he owns that is sitting empty and would love to be able to rent it. He does not agree with the 10 people limit in the proposed Ordinance and is strongly opposed.

Earl Breeden II stated he owned a house that was in need of major repairs. He completely remodeled the house and sold it for \$40,000 over its worth. He stated the

proposed Ordinance would hurt his property and possibly lose income for his family. ~~The rentals promotes local businesses in Williamstown. If the proposed Ordinance is passed, he believes all the revenue will go to hotels and motels.~~

Earl Breeden, a homeowner that resides on Charlotte Heights stated that most people using the rentals are visitors going to the Ark and are families. There have not been any issues with these visitors. The churches welcome these visitors and do not see a negative impact. Mr. Breeden stated he feels like Williamstown is not prepared for the impact and change.

Brian Magee stated he has been in business for two years doing maintenance work on Mr. Feldman's short-term rentals. He does work on the inside and outside from A to Z. Mr. Magee stated that once the property owners of the rentals invest in these properties, they keep it nice. The rental businesses are supplying him with a job and he doesn't have to travel north any longer. He has spoken with the neighbors of some these rentals and stated they do not worry about having bad neighbors any longer. The property is well maintained.

Sarah Dills thanked the Mayor and Council allowing the time to discuss the proposed Ordinance. Ms. Dills stated she has lived in Williamstown since 2007. Her daughters are enrolled in Williamstown Schools and she is currently employed by Grant County Library. She currently lives on Roselawn Drive and feels it to be special to Williamstown. Roselawn Drive is a place where you can feel safe. She told some stories about the different events that make living on Roselawn special.

Ms. Dills stated the visitors staying at the rental properties do not enroll in school or become new members at the Library. She further stated she was assured the rentals would not happen on her street and currently there are two. It's the people in your neighborhood that makes families want to stay there.

At this time, no other guests spoke.

Ronnie Maines stated that he understood everyone's concerns. He had three sons who were looking for houses and none could be found. He further stated City Council does not approve short term rentals and that is done through the Board of Adjustments. He does question where the stopping point is.

Kim Crupper stated he has always been pro-business and wants businesses to be successful. Mr. Crupper stated he has seen a number of the rentals and the improvements that have been done. He stated he will take all concerns in consideration when voting.

Bob Perry thanked all guests for attending. He further stated the proposed Ordinance does not set a number of short-term rentals and it is only stating there would only be one per 1000 feet. Mr. Perry believes every city has an Ordinance addressing short term rentals and doesn't think people will leave Williamstown.

At that time AlAnn Feldman spoke that it's the 1000 feet described in the proposed Ordinance that is concerning. She feels that is what needs to be removed and that is what will hurt the owners of the rental properties.

Greg Middleton stated he appreciated the input of all. He stated he had some residents on Roselawn Drive expressing their concerns on the short-term rentals. At that time, he met with Mayor Skinner and Laura McClanahan just to gather some information. He further stated he was informed that Ronnie West had already spoken with Mayor Skinner and Laura McClanahan on the same subject. At a later date, a working copy of the proposed Ordinance was presented to Council. Fees were lowered and other issues were addressed. After the first reading of the proposed Ordinance, the Mayor hosted a meet and greet, and this is where it is tonight. Mr. Middleton stated he would vote at what he thinks best for the City and its residents.

Ronnie West stated he was initially watching a televised meeting for Boone County and they have an Ordinance in place. Mr. West stated his concern was that regulations are needed. There is no guarantee that the visitors to the short-term rental locations will follow the guidelines.

Mr. Philippo stated Williamstown does not need to be compared to Florence or Boone County.

The audience expressed concerns about not being provided a copy of the proposed Ordinance. Jeff Shipp stated the working copy is a draft and is exempted from Open Records. Some of the audience members would like to see the Draft Ordinance and expressed their concerns why it is not available to review.

Bob Perry stated the 1000 feet issue can be addressed.

Sarah Dills stated she believes a middle ground can be reached.

Sarah Marksbury, who lives on Roselawn Drive, expressed her concerns on the short-term rentals. She asked if others would like this happening on their street. Laura McClanahan explained about zoning and deed restrictions that are in place in some areas of the City.

Mayor Skinner thanked everyone for attending and expressing their concerns.

**Second Reading of Ordinance 2022-04, Short-term Vacation/Housing Rental Policy**

At this time, Jeff Shipp explained the different options, the Ordinance can be voted on. Council can propose minor changes and vote. If the Ordinance requires substantial change, the Ordinance would have to start from the beginning. The Ordinance can be passed or voted down. The last option would be to table the Ordinance.

Bob Perry made the motion to table the Second Reading of Ordinance 2022-04, Short-term Vacation/Housing Rental Policy. Ronnie Maines seconded the vote, and the vote was as follow:

Kim Crupper	yes	Bob Perry	yes
Ronnie Maines	yes	Gina Smith	not voting
Greg Middleton	no	Ronnie West	no

Majority voting, voted in favor. Motion carried.

Mayor Skinner requested representation to discuss issues. If interested he has asked that the Mayor's Office be contacted.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**First Reading of Ordinance 2022-05, Supplement to the Code of Ordinances**

As directed by Council, Jeff Shipp gave the First Reading of Ordinance 2022-05, Supplement to the Code of Ordinances, in summary.

**Presentation by Wade Gutman on NKU-Grant County Center**

Wade Gutman thanked the City for their continued support for the NKU-Grant County Center.

Mr. Gutman is asking Mayor and Council to write a letter in support for the two new degrees that will be available at the Grant County Center. The letter needs to be on City Letterhead. All stated they would be happy to support.

Mr. Gutman advised Council the NKU Building needs a new roof. A bid has been received in the amount of \$45,000. Currently, NKU has \$25,000.

**Adjourn**

Kim Crupper made the motion to adjourn. Bob Perry seconded the motion, and the vote was as follows:

Kim Crupper	yes	Ronnie Maines	yes
Greg Middleton	yes	Bob Perry	yes
Gina Smith	yes	Ronnie West	yes

All voted in favor. Motion carried.

**Signed:**

4-12-22  
DATE

Vivian Link  
Vivian Link  
City Clerk/Treasurer

Rick Skinner  
Rick Skinner, Mayor  
City of Williamstown, Kentucky