



BALDWIN COUNTY WORK SESSION

August 06, 2024

1601 N Columbia St, Suite 220

5:00 PM

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

John Westmoreland
Kendrick Butts
Henry Craig
Emily Davis
Sammy Hall

OTHERS PRESENT

Brandon Palmer
Carlos Tobar
Dawn Hudson
Cindy Cunningham

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman John Westmoreland called the August 6, 2024 Work Session to order at 6:00 p.m.

ADMINISTRATIVE/FISCAL MATTERS

Short Term Vacation Rentals (STVR) Ordinance

County Manager Carlos Tobar stated a Public Hearing has been held on the proposed amendments to the STVR Ordinance, comments from Commissioners and citizens have been received, and the Ordinance has been revised by the County Attorney to reflect those comments and recommendations. Mr. Tobar stated County staff has confirmed that sample agreements from STVR property owners have been requested and received. He reported the County works with the Convention and Visitors Bureau in monitoring sites to determine the number of STVR area. The CVB keeps track of the rentals, and there are approximately 51 properties in the County with 4 pending applications.

Ms. Rebekah Snider of the CVB explained that the CVB partners with a marketing firm to monitor STVR sites and currently there are approximately 80 year-round properties countywide. She stated that there has been growth of 5% to 9% over the past five years which equates to 4 new properties coming online each year. She stated that through the work of the CVB and the marketing firm she can be sure that the number of STVR properties is as accurate as can be determined. She also reported that properties are cross referenced with Q Public and some properties that show up are actually located in Hancock and Putnam Counties rather than Baldwin County. Ms. Snider reported that the marketing firm only provides pictures of the properties, not the physical address. However, CVB staff who are familiar with the city and county, can determine proximity and actually cross with Q Public to obtain an address. She stated information is provided to the County on an annual basis and it assists the County in determining more information about the properties. Ms. Snider reported that Georgia Power has told them that the number of short-term rentals of properties on Lake Sinclair in Baldwin County is less than 1%.

County Attorney Brandon Palmer discussed revisions made to the proposed ordinance based on the public hearing, comments and suggestions from Commissioners and citizens. He discussed revisions pertaining to following: valid time period for STVR certificates being the calendar year with all STVR certificates expiring annually on December 31st; regulations shall apply to property owners, STVR agents and occupants; enforcement and violations; procedures for filing complaints, service of complaints to STVR owners, agents and occupants; process for providing notice of violation of non-compliance and service of citations. Mr. Palmer

stated citations will be handled through the Magistrate Court of Baldwin County. He discussed Subsection (i) penalties for violations and revocation of STVR certificate outlining penalties for first, second and third violations. Commissioners discussed whether the certificate should be revoked on the 2nd or 3rd violation and that the fine for 1st violation be increased to \$500.00. Commissioners recommended that Attorney Palmer revise fines to reflect fine for 1st violation to be no less than \$500 and no more than \$1,000; 2nd violation fine of \$1,000 and 3rd violation certificate to be revoked.

Discussion continued on various proposed amendments to include parking, number of occupants, revocation of certificate for non-payment of property tax and no use of property for venues for weddings, parties, etc. Comments were heard from members of the audience.

Attorney Brandon Palmer stated he will make revisions to the ordinance based on recommendations from Commissioners and will distribute the revised ordinance to Commissioners for their review and further consideration.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to adjourn the Work Session at 6:56 p.m. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



John H. Westmoreland
Chairman



Cynthia K. Cunningham
County Clerk