

**CITY OF RUSTON  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
Wednesday, January 2, 2019**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

At 7:02PM Mayor Hopkins called the Regular Council Meeting to order. Councilmembers present were: Lyle Hardin, Deb Kristovich, Lynn Syler and Bradley Huson. Councilmember Hedrick was excused. Following the flag salute, Mayor Hopkins called for approval of the agenda. Councilmember Hardin moved to approve the agenda, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 4-0.

**MINUTES**

Councilmember Hardin moved to approve the minutes for the Regular Council meeting of December 18, 2018. Councilmember Huson moved to amend page 5, line 12, to replace the date from January 8<sup>th</sup> to January 2<sup>nd</sup> . As amended, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 4-0.

**STAFF REPORT** – Nothing at this time.

**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS** –  
Jennifer Jensen – Short Term Rental - see attached.

**BUSINESS** –

**Resolution 697 – Approval of Listing Agreement with Neil Walter Company** – The City Council authority to lease real property. The City has leased portions of the Ruston School to various entities. There is additional vacant space in the Ruston School that could be leased for office space. The City has used the commercial brokerage firm Neil Walter Company in the past for listing work. A copy of the standard listing agreement is attached to Resolution #697. The Agreement is effective January 1, 2019 and runs through December 31, 2019. Any leased executed during the list agreement will entitle the Firm to a five percent commission, which is standard in the industry. The only revision to the standard Agreement requested by the City is to exclude any existing tenants who renew in existing spaces. If the City renews a lease with an existing tenant, the Firm would not be entitled to a commission. If the City expands the space taken by an existing tenant, then the Company would be entitled to a commission for the expanded space lease. The listing is based on a rate of \$15/gross square foot per month and will require the City to pay a five percent commission for any executed leases. Councilmember Hardin moved to amend Resolution 697 and change Exhibit 1 - Exclusive Lease Listing Agreement, item 2, from \$15 gross per sq ft to \$15 NNN (Triple Net). As amended, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 4-0.

**CLAIMS AND PAYROLL** – Councilmember Hardin moved to approve Claims and Payroll, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 4-0.

**MAYOR’S TIME** – Mayor Hopkins addressed the Short-Term Rental Survey which was placed on the City of Ruston website for community feedback. It is the first time the City has launched a survey. This survey will be a month long, will be recorded and will track submissions. There are many sides to this issue and it is important that all voices are heard from both sides. The City will continue to look at ways to effectively reach out to the community via the newsletter or by email. Email communication requires a link to opt out or unsubscribe, so the City will investigate this requirement. Mayor Hopkins will attend the State Legislature to attend a Senate Local Government Work Session on Tuesday, January 15, 2019 at 8AM, to present an update on the Point Ruston Project. At this time the City of Tacoma has issued one permit. Mayor Hopkins requested the EPA to join this meeting. The developer will not be attending this session. The new City of Ruston website will be launched the week of January 7, 2019.

**COUNCIL TIME** –  
**Councilmember Hedrick** – Was excused.

**Councilmember Hardin** – Councilmember Hedrick was not in attendance as he traveled to the Rose Bowl to cheer on the Husky’s.

**Councilmember Kristovich** – Nothing at this time.

**Councilmember Syler** – Nothing at this time.

**Councilmember Huson** – Nothing at this time.

**MEETING AJOURNED** -

At 7:22PM Councilmember Hardin moved to adjourn, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 4-0.

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Mayor Bruce Hopkins

ATTEST:

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Judy Grams

I am prompted to speak by a Short Term Rental Survey that I received on December 28<sup>th</sup>

Full disclosure, I am a property owner and have an approved Short Term Rental in Ruston.

First the survey – I have never received a city survey before and I think this is a great idea. Gathering information and feedback from citizens is a nice step forward. I do have concerns with its distribution. I have spoken with many neighbors about the survey email and none acknowledged receiving the email. How broad a sample size will City Surveys receive with current email distro lists, thus how representative?

Second - Our Cities' approach to Short Term Rental Regulation

Based on the wording of the survey and comments in council, my sense is that the council is against Short Term Rentals and is considering banning them. This attitude has taken me by surprise

- I want to advocate allowing Short Term Rentals.
- I have spoken with many neighbors and have only heard support for Short Term Rentals
- Banning short term rentals, or even over regulating them, Goes against interests of individual property owners and small business owners
- One Concern raised by city council is flooding the market with STR property. Currently, they are unregulated and yet there are not many on the market (5)
- I am not aware of complaints or problems with those that are
- Another concern raised in the proposed ordinance is that the city has an obligation to protect the interest of the hotel against competition. The short term rental market and the hotel market are different markets. People that want to stay in a short term rental will just book it in Tacoma if they are unavailable in Ruston. The interests of the new hotel should not take precedence over the interests of existing small businesses/property owners.
- Another concern is that Short Term Rentals negatively impact neighbors, and detract from the community feel. Current town regulations and ordinances that protect us from our neighbors are sufficient and will continue to do so (we have noise ordinances, pet nuisance, parking, trash, requirements that would be as effective for STR as they are for long term rentals and ownership situations). In addition, the proposed ordinance requires property owners to live on site, maintaining the continuity and neighborly accountability

As a city, I think that it is important that we have Modern and up to date regulations. The regulation the council is considering is heavy handed and I think makes our city look out of touch and unable to manage progress. However, it is better than banning this property use all together.

Short term rentals provide our city with an opportunity to broaden our community while expanding our small business, cottage industry base. They bring tourism and consumers to our restaurants and shops. They generate revenue in both building fees and ongoing hotel and business taxes. In my own personal experience I paid almost \$8k in permitting fees to the city last year in order to prepare my space to be a responsible host. I will continue to pay hotel tax on each rental. This is a revenue boost to our city.

We don't need to be afraid of flooding the city with tourist traffic. We should embrace this opportunity to showcase our beautiful corner of Washington. If any council member would like to tour my rental and further discuss, I would be happy to host! Thank you for your work and attention to my comments.

Jennifer Jensen 5330 N. Highland St Council Meeting of 1-2-2019 @ 7PM