

# Town of Plymouth, Vermont

## Meeting – Voting – Short Term Rental Ordinance

Tuesday, August 15, 2023 @ 7:00 PM

**Board Members Present:** Jay Kullman Rick Kaminski

**Board Members Absent:** Keith Cappellini

**Staff Members Present:** Angela Kissell Elaine Pauley Naomi Moyer

**Others Present:**

|                     |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Bruce Pauley        | Karen Evans         | Steve Radonis       |
| James Tepper        | Mark Fletcher       | Tina Fletcher       |
| Frank Vetere        | Adriana Curutchet   | Margo Marrone       |
| Rick Martin         | John Curutchet      | William Denker      |
| Cheryl Davis        | Sam Gidding         | Steve Moyer         |
| Kathy Lynds         | Beverly Johnson     | Cedric Johnson      |
| Tess Malloy         | Emily Shea          | Colin McCarrick     |
| Terry Bascom        | Susan Mordecai      | Michael Scomillio   |
| Midge Tucker        | Bruce Tucker        | Ayal Baram          |
| Allie M.            | Steve C.            | Andrew Bontrager    |
| Rose Vetere         |                     |                     |
| David Olster (zoom) | Linda Olster (zoom) | Joyce Cooper (zoom) |

### Call to Order:

- a. Jay Kullman called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. Discussion on Short-Term-Rental Knox Box Requirements:
  - a. Jay Kullman started by saying that we are here discuss and Vote on the Short-Term Rental Ordinance Amendment.
  - b. Bruce Pauley made a motion to allow non-voters to speak. It was seconded and the motion carried.
  - c. Steve Radonis asked if we were going to have a Moderator.
  - d. Jay Kullman said we do not have one therefore, agreed to be it.
  - e. Frank Vetere opened by saying that he took over as the Short-Term Rental Administrator in May of this year. He felt that the process was expensive and complicated. We look to the Fire Marshall for safety requirements. This isn't a perfect system, but it works well. Frank also stated that the Knox Box doesn't meet the criteria for life safety. Frank also pointed out that if this is for safety, why isn't there a requirement for primary homes?
  - f. Al talked about his experience with regard to Short-Term Rentals and Knox Boxes. He feels that a Knox Box is good for rental properties, but not necessarily the house you live in.

- g. Tina Fletcher asked why we are only talking about the Knox Box and not the insurance.
- h. Jay commented that we are only discussing the Knox Box at this time, the insurance will be next.
- i. Steve Radonis said he wanted to speak on behalf of himself and not the fire department. He did talk about gaining access quicker with a Knox Box and how seconds do matter. When there is a medical call, it allows us quicker access. He also noted that when someone installs a Knox Box, he puts a red sticker on the homeowners 911 number/sign and that indicates the Knox Box is on site.
- j. Bruce Pauley spoke that he is entirely in favor of a Knox Box; however, singling one group out is not good. He doesn't agree that just because you rent your house you should be required to have one. Require everyone to have it then.
- k. Mike Scomillio spoke out that he thinks the Knox Box is a risk to the Town and made a comment on background checks for the fire department members.
- l. Steve Radonis spoke up and said that the fire department does a criminal background check on all applicants before they're brought onto the department.
- m. Margo Marrone added that she remembered when her husband, Tom was on the fire department. A call would come in at 3:00 am and they had to walk around the house sniffing to see if they could smell smoke as they couldn't access the building.
- n. Rick Martin introduced himself as the owner of the Plymouth Country Store that will be opening soon. He also said that as long as he has had rental properties, he has never been required to install a Knox Box. He prefers the fire department break down the door, he'll pay for a new one. He also added that he will fight this tooth and nail.
- o. Adriana Curutchet said that she has lived here for 30 years and she is all for the Knox Box as it can save lives. She also added that Bridgewater requires them on all businesses.
- p. Susan Mordecai added that she has lived her for 37 years and asked why wouldn't you want a Knox Box? She recalled, recently, that she was able to gain access to her neighbor's house (at the request of neighbor) and let them know there was five feet of water in it.
- q. Rose Vetere asked why it isn't a requirement for all if it's about safety? It should be for primary residents, long-term rentals as well as short-term rentals.
- r. Midge Tucker asked if we were going to be talking about nuisance as well as dog ordinance. There are a lot of things that need to be addressed and we need to make the requirements stricter.
- s. James Tepper said that he is in favor of the Short-Term Rental and supports the Knox Box, but every building should have one. He talked about the future and electronic locks coming down the road and how we can access them via our telephone. Locks with codes can be an issue as the code generally gets changed after each short-term renter leaves.
- t. Tina Fletcher said we shouldn't be foolish and unsafe because we can't address all the issues tonight. Start tonight and continue to make changes in the future.
- u. Bruce Pauley added that the Knox Box is really for convenience not safety. No reason to make it mandatory for a matter of convenience, it should be a personal choice.
- v. Steve Radonis commented that businesses have to jump thru hoops and Rick Martin might have some valid points.
- w. Rick Kaminski commented that asking to share keys and push pad are old technology. The newest technology is a phone that can gain you access.

- x. Frank got up and spoke about the insurance requirements that are being voted on. He looked at the original ordinance and the amended ordinance and doesn't see much of a difference.
- y. Steve Radonis added that in his conversations with insurance companies the economy sharing doesn't cover Short-Term Rental along with insurances that don't cover a Short-Term Rental.
- z. Jay Kullman, for clarification purposes, read the insurance line on the paper ballot that is being voted on.
  - aa. Frank Vetere asked, that you can't vote for one or the other.
  - bb. Jay clarified that it is both or nothing.
  - cc. Jay asked Rick Kaminski if he agreed.
  - dd. Rick Kaminski agreed.
  - ee. Adriana said that we should have a chance to vote on this rental thing again.
  - ff. Karen Evans said you have what you have.
  - gg. Midge Tucker added that there are more issues than this and we have dog issues. We need to have more control.
  - hh. Mike Scomillio asked if you're a homeowner just renting a room will commercial insurance be required?
    - ii. Jay Kullman added that we are just looking for a Short-Term Rental Endorsement.
  - jj. Bruce Pauley spoke that he felt the changes were fair and adequate.
  - kk. There were comments from others that the Town has limited resources and if we keep making this more and more strict are they able to monitor it.
  - ll. James Tepper echoes the comments and he also added, instead of punishing everyone, address each one individually.
  - mm. Rick Martin said, when you overregulate you begin to have problems.
  - nn. Tina Fletcher said she doesn't agree with overregulation comment. She added that the DMV requires you to have insurance. They might be able to enforce it and control it after, but they still require that you have it. Just because it can't be policed doesn't mean we can't make it mandatory.
  - oo. Terry Bascom doesn't like the idea of making it mandatory. He would like to see it strongly recommended. Just requiring people to have it doesn't keep people safe. He is in favor of just leaving each other alone.
  - pp. Karen Evans made a motion to pass out paper ballots. It was seconded then passed.
  - qq. Angela Kissell just added, she is not encouraging people to vote yes or no, but the reality is the fire department doesn't get a lot of calls and the majority that we do, the people are there. Also, a Knox Box is great, but works best if you have a system that calls in so dispatch can notify the fire department. If you don't have it tied to alarm company, it can go off and no one will hear it.
  - rr. Jay Kullman re-read the ordinance information from the paper ballot.
  - ss. Paper ballots were handed out at 7:48 pm to those who could vote.

Results: Disapprove: May 15, 2023, Changes - 17  
 Approve: May 15, 2023, Changes - 13

Based on the results the Amendment was overturned.

13. Adjourn:

- a. Steve Moyer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 pm. Jay seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Kissell  
Town Clerk  
Recording Secretary

**Select Board**

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Jay Kullman, Chairman

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Rick Kaminski

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Keith Cappellini