

**TOWN OF DANDRIDGE, TENNESSEE
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
Regular Meeting
9 April 2024**

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. The Dandridge Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BMA) met in a regular session in Dandridge, Tennessee on Tuesday, the 9th day of April 2024.
- B. Mayor GEORGE GANTTE was present and presiding and called the meeting to order.

II. ROLL CALL

- A. A roll call of the BMA was conducted with the following members responding:
 - Mayor GEORGE GANTTE
 - Vice-Mayor TODD KESTERSON
 - Alderman JESSICA ELDER
 - Alderman JEFF DEPEW
 - Alderman MARIANNE REESE
 - Alderman MIKE CHAMBERS
 - Alderman MIKE NELSON

ABSENT:

- B. A quorum being present, the following business was conducted and entered on the record:

III. PUBLIC HEARING

- Second Reading of **Ordinance No. 23/24-22** Establishing Regulations for “Short Term Rentals” within the Corporate Limits of the Town of Dandridge, TN.

***Town Attorney Jeff Greene** – After last month’s meeting, there were several calls with regards to Section 14-702: Eligibility to Obtain a Permit. Only those property owners in R-1, R-2, R-3, B-1, B-2, and B-4 are eligible to use their properties for short-term rentals. Everything else was taken out, there are no qualifiers. If your property is in one of those zones, you are qualified if it’s a legal use.*

***Janet (836 Lakeshore Drive)** – Using VA eligibility to purchase a home in Dandridge to specifically use for short-term rental. Chapter 972 of the Tennessee Code (Section 66-38-104) A local government should not prohibit using a property as a short-term rental or regulate a short-term rental based on the rental’s use, classification, or occupancy. Additionally, the TN act contains a legacy grandfather clause which states short-term rentals already established prior to the enactment of local ordinance are regulated under the laws when the short-term rental was established and are not affected by a new ordinance. There has been no clear evidence that renters need any more protection than what is already required by short-term rental platforms. A short-term rental may not be regulated any differently than all other residences.*

***Jason Martin** – Should embrace history of providing hospitality to travelers. Short-term rentals play a vital role in providing travelers with a unique opportunity to understand the history and culture of Dandridge.*

***Kesley Tucker** – Every single page of the ordinance has problems. November of 2023 court ruling stated that Airbnb’s are not commercial and not hotels. Can’t be regulated as either. They are residential and are to be governed as residential. Board recently passed an ordinance to allow gun sales in homes and deemed that as safe, but have a problem with people coming and using homes in the same manner the homeowner would be using property. Not opposed to a permitting process or inspections. Who is going to be in charge of the permitting process? Who is going to fund it? Where is the clear and convincing evidence that the public’s health and safety is in jeopardy.*

Town Attorney Jeff Greene – Public Chapter 972 is an advisory paper that was written before the law was passed, it is not the law. TCA 13-7-601 is the short-term rental act. What we have written is legal. We should listen to people’s concerns.

Stacey Martin – Doesn’t have a short-term rental, speaking on business and welfare of community. Comparing us to Pigeon Forge is apples and oranges with this ordinance. Long-term rentals should be treated the same way we are looking at short-term rentals. The Point is full of short-term rentals. Airbnb’s fuel my business. The tourists put money into this city. Clause in ordinance says owners have to be within 45 minutes of property 24/7. Why can’t police respond?

Emily Miller - we need tourism for local economy without giving up local charm. Let’s be fair to the rental homeowners. We cannot stop progress from moving into Dandridge. Worked in major tourism areas such as San Diego, Dallas and Las Vegas...currently work at Mountainview. Offering assistance as an operating agent who can respond within 45 minutes to an occurrence on the property. Will physically check property and can hit every properties within 48 hours.

Sonja Hill – not here to talk about the ordinance. Quick analysis of property and sales tax of short-term rentals and workers equates to loss of \$229,000 for the city if short-term rentals go away. What will happen to all the wedding venues we have is people can’t find somewhere to stay for the wedding? Snowball effect will take hold financially.

Aurora Pulliam – doesn’t think anyone truly wants to get rid of short-term rentals. Not opposed to tourism, small business...but I’m concerned because everything in my neighborhood is being promoted as an Airbnb. One of the biggest problems is trash collection and should be addressed in the ordinance. Doesn’t believe \$300 fee isn’t enough to manage the program correctly. Copy and pasting another city’s ordinance is not the right approach because they aren’t Dandridge.

IV. READING OF THE MINUTES

It came on a motion by Alderman ELDER, seconded by Alderman DEPEW, to approve the Regular Session minutes of the March 12, 2024, meeting as written.

On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously, and was so ordered.

V. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS/COMMENTS

None

VI. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, MEMORIALS, REMONSTRANCES, AND COMMUNICATIONS

None Presented

VII. BUSINESS PRESENTED BY THE MAYOR

Tax Rate (Town Administrator Shockley):

2019 last appraisal year: .999/.9138

2020: .91

2021: .95

In the last 6 years, Dandridge has not had a tax increase.

VIII. FINANCIAL REPORT BY THE TOWN RECORDER

<u>Bank Balance:</u>	<u>BMA Acct:</u>	\$5,922,840.66	<u>DVFD Balance:</u>	\$ 213,718.22
	<u>Drug Fund Balance:</u>	\$ 23,645.19	<u>DWMF Balance:</u>	\$4,037,020.07

IX. PRESENTATION OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

- Second and Final Reading of **Ordinance No. 23/24-22** Establishing Regulations for “Short Term Rentals” withing the Corporate Limits of the Town of Dandridge, TN

It came on a motion by Alderman REESE, seconded by Alderman CHAMBERS, to approve Ordinance No. 23/24-22 on final reading.

Mayor Gantte – would like Attorney Greene to go back through the ordinance thoroughly and make sure we meet all state law criteria before something is passed.

Alderman Elder/Depew - Max Occupancy should be looked at. 2 people/bed is good guidance. Take out maximum limit.

Alderman Nelson – If we take out maximum limit and it’s a big house, where is the parking going to be? This is why we need somebody close to handle problems that arise. Alderman Reese – 45 minutes is adequate time frame. Alderman Nelson – this was not mean to shut down short-term rentals, we just want short-term rentals to be safe.

Attorney Greene – State has codes in place already for both long-term rentals and rv parks. Sewer is not addressed in this ordinance. Some of this the homeowners have to regulate themselves.

A roll call was asked for and the BMA responded as follows:

Alderman CHAMBERS	NO	Alderman NELSON	NO
Alderman ELDER	NO	Alderman REESE	AYE
Alderman DEPEW	NO	Mayor GANTTE	NO
Vice-Mayor KESTERSON	NO		

On a roll call vote, the motion failed 1-6, and was so ordered.

It came on a motion by Alderman DEPEW, seconded by Alderman CHAMBERS, to table Ordinance No. 23/24-22 indefinitely until it’s brought back to the board.

It came on a motion by Alderman ELDER, to amend Alderman DEPEW’s motion to table Ordinance No. 23/24-22 until next month. Alderman DEPEW accepts the amended motion and seconded by Alderman CHAMBERS.

A roll call was asked for and the BMA responded as follows:

Alderman CHAMBERS	AYE	Alderman NELSON	AYE
Alderman ELDER	AYE	Alderman REESE	AYE
Alderman DEPEW	AYE	Mayor GANTTE	AYE
Vice-Mayor KESTERSON	AYE		

On a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously, and was so ordered.

- First Reading of **Ordinance No. 23/24-23** Amending Title 18, Chapter 1, Section 106 of the Dandridge Municipal Code to Update Water Fee Structure

Town Administrator Shockley – Last month we discussed and agreed upon the fees. They need to be in ordinance form because it will be a change in the municipal code.

It came on a motion by Alderman ELDER, seconded by Vice-Mayor KESTERSON, to approve Ordinance No. 23/24-23 on first reading.

A roll call was asked for and the BMA responded as follows:

Alderman CHAMBERS	AYE	Alderman NELSON	AYE
Alderman ELDER	AYE	Alderman REESE	AYE
Alderman DEPEW	AYE	Mayor GANTTE	AYE
Vice-Mayor KESTERSON	AYE		

On a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously, and was so ordered.

- **Resolution No. 23/24-15** Revising the Terms of the Appalachian Regional Commission Funds for Sewer System Improvements

***Town Administrator Shockley** – Comes back from CDP to match terms, passed resolution last month. \$1,464,407 is the total cost but the project hasn't been bid yet. If there are cost overruns, state says we will be responsible.*

It came on a motion by Alderman NELSON, seconded by Alderman REESE, to accept Resolution No. 23/24-15.

On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously, and was so ordered.

- **Resolution No. 23/24-16** Amending and Revising the Town of Dandridge, TN Personnel Handbook

Town Administrator Shockley:

Page 3 - At will employer

Page 4 – Only accept applications when job is open

Page 7 – Gives town administrator option to hire someone with special skills at a fair market value

Page 8 – Clarifies overtime calculations

Page 12 – Clarifies holiday pay

Page 25 – Inclement weather policy

It came on a motion by Alderman REESE, seconded by Alderman ELDER, to accept Resolution No. 23/24-16.

On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously, and was so ordered.

X. OLD BUSINESS

None Presented

XI. NEW BUSINESS

- Approval of Bids for FODAC Storage Building

***Town Administrator Shockley:** Approved 2 budget cycles ago. Delays due to engineering. 41'-12' storage facility on the backside of gym 2 at activity center. Staff recommendation is to not accept bid and look into alternative.*

Bids

McSpadden - \$338,900

Creative Structures - \$390,000

It came on a motion by Alderman DEPEW, seconded by Alderman CHAMBERS, to decline the storage building bid and look for another alternative

On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously, and was so ordered.

- Approval of Interlocal Cooperation Agreement with Fourth Judicial District Drug Task Force

***Detective Lodwick:** Will provide man power, vehicles, fuel to cover \$25,000 contributions. Primary function will be on interstates in the county around motels where there are a lot of problems. Helps them out a ton and there will be a sharing of assets.*

It came on a motion by Alderman NELSON, seconded by Alderman REESE, to Approve the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement with the Fourth Judicial District Drug Task Force.

On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously, and was so ordered.

XII. DEPARTMENT HEAD UPDATES

- Fire – Steve Williams
 - Mailouts for donations will go out next week
 - Applied for AFG Grant that reopened on April 4
 - Worked large fire last night at Jasper Jones
 - Mayor Gantte – commends Chief Riley on presentation at County Commission Budget Meeting
- Dandridge Water Management Facility Superintendent Tana Benson
 - Received new jetter trailer today
 - CDBG project construction started April 1/Completion end of summer
- Finance Director Kendall Moore
 - Have hired new human resources clerk started last week - Laura
- South-Jefferson Jeff Batson
 - Baseball was supposed to start tonight/Signups went well
 - Opening Day on May 4 at 10:00 am
- Parks and Recreation Director James Baker
 - 180 Revolution Volleyball signups
 - Had successful toy show on March 23rd
 - Spring shopping expo went well this past Saturday
 - Home and garden expo is coming next weekend.
 - Basketball tournament on April 21
 - Fishing tournament registration on April 19
 - New personal trainer – Teresa Bones
- Codes Enforcement/Building Inspector Terry Reneau
 - Planning Commission approved of concept plan for new car wash on Hwy 92
 - Inspections are good and permit request are steady
- Public Works Director Donald Whaley
 - Trimming and spring cleaning
- Detective Lodwick
 - New cars are rolling
- Town Administrator Chris Shockley
 - South Jefferson Little League budget is in supplemental packet
 - Frank Nicely congratulates town on \$100,000 tourism enhancement grant
 - Jimmy Dunn has invited board to national victim crimes rights week ceremony Friday April 26 at Coker County courthouse
 - Next month we will have first reading of budget/amendment and paving bid.
 - Farmers Market on April 20
- Alderman Nelson – Mayor Gantte has decided not to run for Mayor again in November. Will plan on running for Mayor and asks board for support.
- Alderman Reese – thanks employees for their hard work.

XIII. MISCELLANEOUS

None Presented

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

It came on a motion by Vice-Mayor KESTERSON, seconded by Alderman NELSON, that the meeting of April 9, 2024, be adjourned.

On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously, and was so ordered.

George Gantte, Mayor

ATTEST:

Zach Reese, Town Recorder

MINUTES-BMA-040924