

STR Ad Hoc Committee
Meeting Date: September 2, 2025
MEETING SUMMARY

I. Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM. Trustee Kathy Swartz welcomed the committee and the public, expressing optimism for a consensus-based process. Committee members in attendance included Town Administrator/Treasurer Wynn (remotely), Julie Bennett, and Samantha (Sam) Staley. Absent was Trustee Rick Stelter.

II. Discussion and Establishment of Meeting Ground Rules

Trustee Swartz proposed using a consensus-making model for committee decisions, outlining its key tenets:

- Everyone has a piece of the truth.
- Seek to understand, not just to respond.
- The facilitator will ensure everyone has a chance to speak and will manage interruptions.
- Committee members will act in the best interest of the town.
- The process should be fun and collaborative.
- Sam added a tenant against interrupting.
- A discussion was held on how to handle factual disagreements, concluding that disputed items should be flagged for further research.

Decision-Making Process:

- Any member can bring a motion forward after sufficient discussion.
- Voting will use a thumbs-up/thumbs-sideways/thumbs-down system:
 - **Thumbs Up:** Full support.
 - **Thumbs Sideways:** Has hesitations but is willing to go along.
 - **Thumbs Down:** Standing in the way (blocks consensus).
- Two or more "thumbs sideways" votes will trigger a reworking of the proposal.
- The committee discussed how to handle absences, agreeing that detailed notes and meeting recordings should be provided to absent members, who retain the right to bring concerns to a subsequent meeting for further discussion.

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III. Committee Purpose and Board Liaison

The committee affirmed its role is to bring recommendations to the Board of Trustees, which holds the final decision-making authority.

- **Motion (Stefen):** To ask the Board of Trustees to include a standing agenda item for the term of this committee for "Discussion of the STR Ad Hoc Committee and consideration of questions for the board."
 - **Second:** Yes.
 - **Outcome:** Motion passed. This is intended to be a formal channel for the committee to request resources, such as legal counsel, from the Board.

IV. Meeting Structure and Logistics

A. Agenda and Notes:

- **Motion (Sam):** To have the agenda and notes from the previous meeting available to the committee five (5) calendar days prior to the next scheduled meeting.
 - **Second:** Yes.
 - **Outcome:** Motion passed.

B. Role of the Facilitator:

- **Motion (Sam):** The facilitator (Trustee Swartz) will vote on decisions, is able to bring forth motions, and will contribute to discussion if bringing new information forward, while making a best effort to maintain neutrality.
 - **Second:** Yes.
 - **Outcome:** Motion passed. It was added as a tenant that any member can call the facilitator out for not remaining neutral.

V. Public Comment Procedures

The committee discussed multiple methods for gathering public input.

A. Digital Comments (SurveyMonkey):

- **Motion (Stefen):** To implement a SurveyMonkey survey after each meeting, open until the Tuesday following the meeting. The standard question will ask for thoughts/comments on the previous meeting and request the respondent's name,

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whether they are in-town or out-of-town, and if they are an STR owner. The committee may also add specific polling questions as needed.

- **Second:** Yes.
- **Outcome:** Motion passed.

B. Non-Digital Comments:

- **Motion (Sam):** To provide an alternative for non-digital participation via a drop box for written comments at Town Hall, specifically labeled for the STR committee. Comments will be collected and included in the next agenda packet.
 - **Second:** Yes.
 - **Outcome:** Motion passed.
- It was noted that public comments can also be emailed to the general town email (paonia@townofpaonia.com) with "STR" in the subject line.

C. In-Person Comment During Meetings:

- **Motion (Sam):** To allow public feedback throughout the meeting at the discretion of the facilitator. Members of the public must raise their hand to be called on, and comments are limited to three minutes.
 - **Second:** Yes.
 - **Outcome:** Motion passed.

VI. Brainstorming: Key Issues for the Committee to Address

The committee began a brainstorming session to identify broad topic categories for future meetings. The list included:

1. **Foundational Values:** Reviewing the Town's Comprehensive Master Plan, Mission & Values statements, Strategic Plan, and Affordable Housing Study to ground all recommendations.
2. **Owner-Occupied STRs:** Addressing the rental of rooms or entire homes where the owner maintains primary residence (connected to the current moratorium on renting rooms).
3. **Whole-House/Non-Owner Occupied STRs.**

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4. **General Standards:** Regulations applicable to all STRs, such as parking, noise, health, safety, and neighbor enjoyment.
5. **Fees, Monetary Penalties, and Sanctions.**
6. **Enforcement Mechanisms.**
7. **Proportion/Caps:** Discussing the appropriate number or density of STRs within the town.
8. **Private Property Rights:** Acknowledged as a significant concern raised by the public.

VII. Public Comment

A member of the public provided comment, urging the committee to consider the results of the recent election where 70% of voters chose to repeal the previous STR ordinance, as a significant data point reflecting public sentiment.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Ruben Santiago,
Town of Paonia Deputy Clerk