Date posted: NOVEMBER 15, 2022 by 4:00 P.M.

All items on this agenda are to be discussed and/or acted upon.

TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON
TOWN COUNCIL
Town Hall – 40 Commons

MEETING OF NOVEMBER 17, 2022

Live streaming at
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNoKeQBPqI33aEtqzOXHO9g

AGENDA

7:00 P.M.

Salute to the Flag

Public Hearing on proposal to amend Chapter 15-2.1 and 15-4.1 of the Little Compton Town Code to replace “an exemption of $18,000 on real property owned” with “a reduction of $250 of real property taxes owed” Effective Date for both proposals. This section shall take effect as of the assessment date of December 31, 2022.

Also to amend Chapter 15 to replace “Board of Assessors” with “Tax Assessor” in every instance used in the Chapter to update the current structure of the Department. Effective Date for this proposal. This section shall take effect upon passage.

Announcements:

Approval of Minutes - November 3, 2022

Department Head Reports: none

Old Business:

   a. Receive additional comments submitted to the Town Clerk for this subject
      i. From Isabel Mattia offering a clarification of data on affordable housing, housing stock and percentage of rentals
      ii. From Mike Steers suggesting the problem be defined, caution of unintended consequences and potential liability.
      iii. From Sue Thibault expressing concerns that may affect local businesses, policing and enforcement issues, potential burdens on homeowners with potential loss of revenue among several comments.
      iv. From Norm Paasche noting he has rented for several years and has not had complaints
2. Request from Jim Lock to update the Council regarding his research conducted concerning solar on municipal buildings
3. Receive update from Town Administrator regarding purchase of Public Works Truck

New Business:

1. Consider advertising a Request for Proposals for Municipal Legal Services, Town Solicitor
   a. Acknowledge receipt of a letter of interest filed by Richard S. Humphrey to continue in the role of Town Solicitor for the Town of Little Compton

Board of License Commissioners: none

Communications:

1. Request to renew a victualling license received from Sakonnet Events, Inc. d/b/a Wilhelminas Catering operating out of 41 South Shore Road
2. Request from Coll Walker to obtain a Holiday Sales Licensor for Walkers Roadside Stand

Consent:

1. Four (4) emails received from Frank Haggerty forwarding information and articles on Commonwealth and Mayflower wind projects.

Payment of Bills

Consent Agenda - All items listed are considered to be routine by the Town Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a council member or citizen so requests in which event the item will be withdrawn from the General Order of business and considered in the normal sequence on the agenda.

All are welcome to any meeting at the town, which is open to the public. Individuals requiring communication assistance or any accommodation to ensure equal participation will need to contact the Town Clerk at 635-4400 not less than 48 hours prior to the meeting.
TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON RHODE ISLAND
PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER XV
OF THE LITTLE COMPTON TOWN CODE

To amend in both Chapter 15-2.1 - Exemption for Veteran and
Chapter 15-4.1 – Exemption for person visually impaired

To replace “an exemption of $18,000 on real property owned” with “a reduction of $250 of real
property taxes owed”

*Effective Date for both proposals.* This section shall take effect as of the assessment date of
December 31, 2022.

Also to amend Chapter 15 to replace “Board of Assessors” with “Tax Assessor” in every
instance used in the Chapter to update the current structure of the Department.

*Effective Date for this proposal.* This section shall take effect upon passage.

The existing Little Compton Town Code and this proposed ordinance change may be viewed at
the Town Hall, Town Clerk’s Office, 40 Commons, Little Compton during normal business
hours, Monday through Friday, 8 am to 4 pm.

At the public hearing opportunity shall be given to all persons interested to be heard upon the
matter of the proposed amendment. The proposal may be altered or amended prior to the close of
the public hearing without further advertising, as a result of further study or because of the views
expressed at the public hearing. Any such alteration or amendment must be presented for
comment in the course of said hearing.

Individuals requesting interpreter services for the hearing impaired must notify the Town Clerk’s
Office at (401) 635-4400, 72 hours in advance of the hearing date.

HEARING DATE: November 17, 2022
TIME: 7:00 PM
PLACE: Town Hall, Town Council Chambers, 40 Commons,
       Little Compton, RI

Sakonnet Times - November 10, 2022
Minutes of a Town Council meeting held on November 3rd, A.D. 2022 at 7:00 o’clock PM held in-person format at the Town Hall, Council Chambers, 40 Commons, Little Compton, RI. Members present: Paul J. Golembeske, Andrew W. Iriarte-Moore, Patrick McHugh and Robert L. Mushen. Absent at this time: Gary S. Mataronas. Also present: Richard S. Humphrey, Town Solicitor and Antonio Teixeira, Town Administrator.

Salute to the Flag.

The Council President opened a Remonstrant’s Hearing for the purpose of considering the renewal of several Retail Beverage Licenses. The Council President asked for comments as each Class came up for vote, receiving no comments.

**Motion made by Councilor Iriarte-Moore, receiving a second by Councilor Golembeske, all in favor**
*(Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen)*: To grant the renewal of the following Class A Retail Beverage Licenses, contingent upon meeting state and local requirements:

- Adamsville Wine & Spirits, LLC d/b/a Adamsville Wine & Spirits
  81 Stone Church Road in the Village of Adamsville
- Meetinghouse Spirits, LLC d/b/a Meetinghouse Spirits 39 Meeting House Lane

**Motion made by Councilor Iriarte-Moore, receiving a second by Councilor Golembeske, all in favor**
*(Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen)*: To grant the renewal of the following Class BV-L Retail Beverage Licenses, contingent upon meeting state and local requirements:

Class BV-L Licenses
- Common’s Lunch, Inc. d/b/a Common’s Lunch for premises located at 48 Commons
- Simmons Café & Marketplace LLC d/b/a Simmons Café & Market for premises located at 78 Crandall Road in the village of Adamsville

**Motion made by Councilor Iriarte-Moore, receiving a second by Councilor Golembeske, all in favor**
*(Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen)*: To grant the renewal of the following Class BV Retail Beverage Licenses, contingent upon meeting state and local requirements:

Class BV Licenses
- M & K LLC d/b/a the Barn Restaurant for premises located at 15 Main Street in the village of Adamsville
- RL Flounders, Inc. d/b/a RL Flounders, 90 Pottersville Rd.
- StoneHouse Resort, Inc. d/b/a Stone House for premises located at 122 Sakonnet Point Road

Richard S. Humphrey, Town Solicitor recused himself from the StoneHouse matter.

**Motion made by Councilor Iriarte-Moore, receiving a second by Councilor Golembeske, all in favor**
*(Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen)*: To grant the renewal of the following Class D Retail Beverage Licenses, contingent upon meeting state and local requirements:

Class D Licenses
- Sakonnet Golf Club for premises located at 79 Sakonnet Point Road
- Sakonnet Point Club for premises located at 11 Bluff Head Avenue

Richard S. Humphrey, Town Solicitor recused himself from the Sakonnet Point Club matter.

The Remonstrant’s Hearing was declared closed by the Council President.

The Council continuing as the Board of License Commissioners voted the following:
Motion made by Councilor Iriarte-Moore, receiving a second by Councilor Golembeske, all in favor
(Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen): To grant an Indoor Entertainment License to RL
Flounders, Inc. d/b/a RL Flounders for premises located at 90 Pottersville Road, contingent upon meeting all
state and local requirements.

Motion made by Councilor Iriarte-Moore, receiving a second by Councilor Golembeske, all in favor
(Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen): To grant a Victualing License to each of the following
establishments, contingent upon meeting all state and local requirements:

Delvin Corp d/b/a A-1 Pizza
The Art Café
M & K, LLC d/b/a the Barn Restaurant
Dionysus Acquisition LLC d/b/a Carolyn’s Sakonnet Vineyard
Commons Lunch, Inc d/b/a Common’s Lunch
RL Flounders
Sakonnet Golf Club
Sakonnet Point Club
Simmons Café & Marketplace LLC d/b/a Simmons Café & Market
StoneHouse Resort, Inc. d/b/a Stone House
Wilbur’s General Store
Young Family Farm LLC d/b/a Young Family Farm
Warren’s Point Beach Club

Councilor McHugh commented for the record that he recalls Peter Medeiros, Zoning Official having written a
letter that stated “restaurant use is prohibited in residential zones”. It seems to him in granting a victualing license to
the Vineyard were are granting under the same use code (C13) which also prohibits lunchroom, café or tavern in a
residential zone. He wanted the record to show his concern.

Richard S. Humphrey, Town Solicitor recused himself from the Dionysus Acquisition LLC d/b/a Sakonnet
Vineyard, Sakonnet Point Club, StoneHouse Resort, Inc. d/b/a Stone House, Young Family Farm LLC d/b/a Young
Family Farm and Warren’s Point Beach Club.

Motion made by Councilor Iriarte-Moore, receiving a second by Councilor Golembeske, all in favor
(Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen): To grant a Holiday Sales License to each of the
following establishments, contingent upon meeting all state and local requirements:

Delvin Corp d/b/a A-1 Pizza
The Art Café
M & K, LLC d/b/a the Barn Restaurant
Dionysus Acquisition LLC s/b/a Carolyn’s Sakonnet Vineyard
Commons Lunch, Inc. d/b/a Common’s Lunch
RL Flounders
Sakonnet Golf Club
Sakonnet Point Club
Simmons Café & Marketplace LLC d/b/a Simmons Café & Market
StoneHouse Resort, Inc. d/b/a Stone House
Wilbur’s General Store
Young Family Farm LLC d/b/a Young Family Farm
Warren’s Point Beach Club
Meetinghouse LLC, d/b/a Meetinghouse Spirits
Richard S. Humphrey, Town Solicitor recused himself from the Dionysus Acquisition LLC d/b/a Sakonnet Vineyard, Sakonnet Point Club, StoneHouse Resort, Inc. d/b/a Stone House, Young Family Farm LLC d/b/a Young Family Farm and Warren’s Point Beach Club.

**Motion made by Councilor Iriarte-Moore, receiving a second by Councilor Golembeske, all in favor (Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen):** To grant a Mobile Food Establishment License to each of the following establishments, contingent upon meeting all state and local requirements:

- Anita Couto d/b/a Anita’s Ice Cream
- Anita Couto d/b/a Seashore Hotdogs
- Hawaiian Jim Ice

**Motion made by Councilor Iriarte-Moore, receiving a second by Councilor Golembeske, all in favor (Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen):** To grant the following miscellaneous licenses, contingent upon meeting all state and local requirements:

- Juke Box License – RL Flounders
- Moving Picture License – LC Community Center

**Motion made by Councilor Golembeske, receiving a second by Councilor McHugh, all in favor (Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen):** To approve, as written the October 20, 2022 Town Council meeting minutes.

**Department Head Reports – discussion/review**

The Town Administrator was asked to offer updates and clarification on a few matters:

- Curbing on commons – Councilor Iriarte-Moore asked that ADA needs be considered when enclosing Pike’s Peak.
- Senior Van – Councilor McHugh inquired of status and clarity. Mechanical work stated was a review of the engine, body work and painting town name were primary needs which have been completed. Councilor Mushen noted that the van was a FORD, but not the year.
- Drivers for the van – It was noted that the Council will need to authorize who drives the van and report those names to our town insurer. Drivers must be approved before they can drive the van due to liability.
- Van – coordinating drivers and events. Stay at Home has declined to continue overseeing drivers due to shorter staffing with their firm. Amy Mooney, Director at the LC Community Center has agreed to assist.

**Motion made by Councilor Iriarte-Moore, receiving a second by Councilor Golembeske, all in favor (Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen):** To place on file the following Department Head Reports:

1. Town Clerk
2. Tax Assessor
3. Finance Director
4. Police Department
5. Fire Department
6. Town Administrator

**Motion made by Councilor Iriarte-Moore, receiving a second by Councilor McHugh, all in favor (Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen):** To adopt the following resolution:

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON

URGING THE RHODE ISLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
TO RECOGNIZE JUNE 19, JUNETEENTH NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE DAY, AS AN OFFICIAL RHODE ISLAND STATE HOLIDAY

WHEREAS, in 2021, the United States Congress enacted the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act, codified into law at Title 5, Sec. 6103(a) of the U.S. Code; and

WHEREAS, the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act recognizes Juneteenth National Independence Day, June 19, as a federal holiday, commemorating the anniversary of the last African American slaves being freed in Texas on June 19, 1865; and

WHEREAS, to date, the Rhode Island General Assembly has not yet enacted a law making Juneteenth an official State holiday;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Little Compton Town Council respectfully urges the Rhode Island General Assembly to adopt legislation making Juneteenth a State holiday.

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be sent to the clerks of all cities and towns in Rhode Island, and on January 4, 2023 to Little Compton’s members of the RI General Assembly, The Speaker of the RI House of Representatives, President of the RI Senate, and the Governor of the State of RI.

Passed as a resolution of the Little Compton Town Council this 3rd day of November, 2022

Robert L. Mushen
Town Council President

Ben Gauthier addressed the Councilors expressing his concerns with some of the proposed amendments to the Home Rule Charter. He was unable to supply his concerns during the public hearing held Oct. 20, 2022 as well as unable to participate in meetings held during the Charter Review Commissions process. Mr. Gauthier served on the Budget Committee for a number of years. He feels the committee should execute their responsibilities and conduct the review of department budgets as has been past practice. He feels the separation of powers is necessary to offer checks and balances for the budget preparation process. He worries that placing too much on the Town Administrator position is not healthy for that person nor for the budget process.

Councilor Mushen was grateful for the comments and suggested a review of the results of the election by the Council and Charter Review commission to make a public awareness of the roles and responsibilities of the Budget Committee, Town Administrator and other town officials in the budget preparation process. Mikel Folcarelli, a current member of the Charter Review Commission thanked Mr. Gauthier for his letter and thinks it would be a good exercise to review the Charter after the election to discuss further the budget preparation process.

Motion made by Councilor Golembeske, receiving a second by Councilor Iriarte-Moore, all in favor (Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen): To create a sub-committee entitled “Post Referendum Budget Development Process Sub-committee” to be made up of a representative from the Town Council, a representative from the Budget Committee, a representative from the Charter Review Commission, Mr. Ben Gauthier and the Town Administrator who will be charged to make an outline of how the Town should move forward in its budget process. The Town Clerk shall serve as an advisor for this committee.

Councilor McHugh offered an update on a meeting held this date regarding possible funding under the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) Program. He would like to see high-speed internet brought to every home in Little Compton. Noting that Little Compton needs to be prepared with supporting data for the municipal level of the program. Currently the Federal Government has just opened the program up to the State officials. Jonathan Gabriel (IT Director Wilbur-McMahon Schools) also attended the meeting and agrees that we should continue to participate in the discussion and prepare for the need to hire a consultant to assist in gathering data on broadband needs and potential costs to meet those needs. Both Councilor Mushen and the Town Administrator agreed with this assessment. It was agreed by all that there is a great need in town and to ensure we (the town) continues to
participate in order to be able to lobby to receive funds to bring broadband to our residents. Mr. Gabriel has some case study that might be of interest to the Council that he will forward for their use.

Motion made by Councilor McHugh, receiving a second by Councilor Golembeske, all in favor (Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen): To set the 2nd and 16th of November 2023 for the regularly scheduled Council meeting dates in order to avoid meeting on Thanksgiving.

Motion made by Councilor Golembeske, receiving a second by Councilor Iriarte-Moore, all in favor (Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen): To place on file a copy of an electronic communication received from Amy Veri regarding music at Carolyn’s Sakonnet Vineyard.

Richard S. Humphrey, Town Solicitor recused himself from this matter.

At 8:02 PM the Town Council sitting as the Board of License Commissioners voted the following:

Motion made by Councilor Golembeske, receiving a second by Councilor Iriarte-Moore, all in favor (Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen): To grant a Class F-1 One Day Retail Beverage License to the Little Compton Game Club for a Surf & Turf Dinner to be held on November 12, 2022 at the John Dyer Road facility.

Motion made by Councilor Golembeske, receiving a second by Councilor Iriarte-Moore, all in favor (Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen): To place on file the consent calendar as follows:

1. Copy of an email received from Frank Haggerty forwarding a link to a court docket involving Siemens Gamesa A/A v. General Electric – Vineyard Wind 1 LLC
2. Copy of an email received from Frank Haggerty forwarding an article by Bridget Reed Morawski claiming Developers (Commonwealth and Mayflower wind projects) say Massachusetts offshore wind farms “no longer viable”

Motion made by Councilor Golembeske, receiving a second by Councilor McHugh, all in favor (Golembeske, Iriarte-Moore, McHugh, Mushen): That the bills be allowed and ordered paid as follows:

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<th>Description</th>
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<td>Jeffrey Hs Lopez - Public Safety Complex</td>
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<td>Denise M. Cosgrove - Assessor</td>
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\$1,982.28

\$14,433.43
Cox - computer $105.34  
RI Energy - Town Dock $18.88  
RI Energy - Street Lights $105.33  
East Bay Media Group - contingency $136.50  
East Bay Media Group - contingency $136.50  
East Bay Media Group - Probate $15.00  
East Bay Media Group - Zoning $156.00  
Paul's Press - Charter Review $443.00  
Heather J. Cook - Canvassers $36.13  
Verizon - Wastewater Treatment Facility $56.22  
Verizon Wireless -Highway - DPW $113.07  
Tiverton Sign Shop - Highway $1,436.00  
Sakonnet Tree Inc. - Tree Warden $11,417.50  
Wilbur's General Store - DPW $23.39  
West Parts & Supplies Inc. - DPW $93.80  
Home Depot - DPW $428.62  
Madden Electric - Town Hall restoration $897.16  
Valcourt Heating Inc. - Town Hall $140.00  
Traffic Signs & Safety Inc. - Highway $324.00  
Lisco Irrigation - civic rec $200.00  
Western - Transfer Station $150.00  
Markings Inc. - Highway $8,511.17  
Electrical Wholesalers Inc. - Public Safety Complex $170.86  
Griggs & Browne Co. Inc. - 32 Commons $80.00  
Griggs & Browne Co. Inc. - 40 Commons $120.00  
griggs & Browne Co. Inc. - Transfer Station $360.00  
allMetals welding & fabrication - Highway $1,500.00  
Lynch Corp. - Highway $180.60  
Effluentia Technologies - Wastewater Treatment Facility $1,350.00  
United Construction & Forestry LLC - Highway $1,844.25  
Sakonnet Tree Inc. - Town Hall restoration $2,088.00  
RM Construction - Highway $11,000.00  
Ballard Mack Sales & Service Inc. - Highway $182.94  
Medeiros & Sons Construction, Inc. - Highway $740.10  

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Having no further business before the Council the meeting was declared adjourned at 8:03 PM.

Carol A. Wordell, CMC, Town Clerk
Excerpt of minutes from October 20, 2022, RE: Short Term Rentals.

A draft ordinance proposal was submitted by Councilors Mataronas and Mushen. Councilor Mataronas spoke of rising concerns regarding short term rentals (STR) within town. He offered his desire to see a minimum of a five (5) day rental avoiding 1 or 2 night stays. He believed this might reduce party environments. A quick review of the proposed ordinance was made for those present while additional copies of the draft were being made.

Councilor Mushen noted that he considered this discussion as round one to review, gather comments and return with a revised draft. He believes we should continue in this manner until satisfied the ordinance can serve the town residents.

Councilor Iriarte-Moore arrived at 7:15 PM.

Suggestions and comments made:

- Bonnie Phinney – can we define “bedrooms”, also concerned that five (5) minimum might be problematic for some existing rental properties. Maybe consider a different standard for summer vs. winter rentals.
- Amanda Toste – concerned that addressing properties with cesspools or waters that are not cleared for human consumption might be needed. As a realtor she knows (hears) of properties that have water problems as well as cesspool problems that sometimes are not disclosed to the renters. She also hopes an ordinance drafted does not restrict the true Air B&B especially those owner occupied residences where this serves to complement their limited income.
- Councilor Iriarte-Moore doesn’t see this proposal to limit the single bedroom rentals.
- Richard S. Humphrey, Town Solicitor feels this is an excellent simple draft.
- Sal Marinosci suggest the town treat this as another license type. Similar to the format for liquor licenses, limit the number of license and consider penalties where you would lose the license if violations persist. He also expressed concerns regarding properties with cesspools and monitoring number of individuals who can be on the property.
- Bill Mackintosh – can we define the difference between Bed and Breakfast and VRBO properties. Local owner occupied vs. non-resident owner properties. Some residents use this rental method to supplement income. Is VRBO more of an industrial business as it is operated solely as a business? How to control or monitor these properties?
- Councilor Mataronas calls for a local agent/manager to be registered, hoping this will help.
- Councilor McHugh reviewed Jamestown ordinances. They call for 183 day residency requirement and he would like to see that included. He would also be in favor of a seven (7) day minimum. He also believes the owner or manager needs to be able to answer a call about problems within 2 hours and be available 24/7.
- Andrew Rhyne – suggests a moratorium on this type of business. Some areas of town effected more than others. Would like to see the council look at how many roadways can access the property. Those with limited access (single ingress/egress) should be restricted from operating this type of rental.
- Isabelle Mattia – STR have an impact on affordable housing and the housing stock in town. She would like to see some percentage of proceeds from this licensing/violation penalties go into the Housing Trust Fund for use with goals in meeting affordable housing needs.
- Need to get a better handle on how many STR properties actually exist in town.
- Councilor McHugh – keep in mind, Little Compton has been a seasonal rental community for a long time. It was only recent that the ill effects have been felt.
- Councilor Iriarte-Moore – seasonal rentals or STR properties are beginning to be seen in neighborhoods as opposed to the pre-existing summer homes that have been the standard rental properties for the town.
- Consider limit to # bedrooms able to rent, or available parking spaces, or number of cars able to park whether sleeping on site or visiting during a period of time.
- Cricket Snow – he has used Air B&B for the past 8 years and most of his customers are 3 day reservations. Increasing to 5-7 days would be a hardship for his rental property.
- Councilor Golembeske does not want to hurt the local resident who rents to make ends meet and pay their bills.
- Lavignia Gadsden – VRBO’s pay 7% tax to the state
- Dawn Simmons expresses her concerns. She explained that she now manages her Grandmother’s home as a method to help pay for her nursing home care and preserve her family home. She has had no problems with rentals, but has many security methods in place such as cameras and back ground checks. They have had very respectful patrons.
- Councilor Mushen recognizes that the Council needs to be careful to acknowledge that some operating STR have been good neighbors.
- Maureen Rego – her family has used STR for many years for 2, 3, 4, and 5 night visits. She cautions limiting terms to longer lengths offering to let the homeowner control. She feels the regulations seem to be a good start and believes it might be good to look into a moratorium.
- Kristen Silveira has owned and operated several rental properties with her husband for about 11 years. They have had excellent experience operating. The sales tax is 7% with a portion that goes to the towns. She would have a problem with the minimum extended to 5 or 7 days especially during wedding season when they often rent for 1, 2 or 3 nights.
  - She verbally offered quite a bit of data from the census on owner occupied homes and percentage rentals
- Currently the weekend short term rentals seem to be the stumbling blocks mentioned by most concerned.

It was offered that the Councilors should review the Clerk’s notes, assemble their own comments and submit through the Clerk for collection. A compilation of the comments will be brought back for the November 17th Council meeting.

Additional comments received after meeting:

- Email received from Isabelle Mattia offering clarification on census data presented during the Oct. 20, 2022 and her desire to reduce STR’s and increase Affordable Housing.
- Comments received from Michael Steers electronically expressing his thoughts that we should define the problem and focus on that rather than causing unintentional consequences
- Comments received electronically from Sue Thibault a part-time homeowner who rents her home during those months she is not in residence. Cautions responding to quickly without a thorough review of the facts at hand. Offers to sit on an advisory committee if one is established.
- Offer to speak on this subject as he has been renting for several years without receiving complaints.
Carol Wordell

From: Isabel Mattia <isabelmattia@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 25, 2022 6:05 PM
To: Town Council; kristins@sakonnetfarm.com
Subject: Responding to Short-term rental hearing.

Dear Kristen and Town Council,

I am writing to respond to Kristen Silviera's testimony at the Town Council meeting.

In the meeting, Kristen shared some numbers. Here is what she said:

"According to the 2020 US census [there are] 2451 homes in Little Compton. 79% of those are owner occupied, and 20% of those are rentals... There's a site AirDNA which pulls data from VRBO and AirBnB and will give you combined data, so of course that does not count in any of the people who are renting not on those two websites. From those two, they say there's 119 active rentals in Little Compton as of today, 96% of those were renting of the whole house... and so if we take 119 out of 2400 homes, that's 0.4% of our housing stock is being used as short term rental listed on AirBnB or VRBO..."

Respectfully, that math is incorrect, and I didn't correct her in the meeting because I wanted to be really sure that I heard her correctly before speaking up, so I rewatched the testimonies on youtube.

When I looked up the 2020 housing stock number for LC, I found a slightly lower number: 2375. But for the sake of clarity, let's stick with Kristen's numbers for now. 119 is 4.85% of 2451, not 0.4%. Even if you only count the 96% of 119 that Kristen said represents whole home rentals, (114) that would amount to 4.65%. However you slice it, around 5% of our housing stock is currently tied up in short term rentals. This is certainly significant. The true number is likely higher as AirDNA only pulls from two websites, and the data in October is likely not fully representative of what is available in the summer. Of course, I do not believe that Kristen made this math error intentionally, but I want to be sure that none of us continues to repeat this incorrect number.

If we look at the most recent data, the 2022 census lists LC as having 2,435 housing units in the town. Currently in LC, we have 9 units that qualify as affordable housing in the whole town, or 0.37% of our housing stock. I haven't seen a house on the market for less than 450K in ages. As we all know, there is a state mandate that every community should have 10% of its housing stock be designated as affordable. I don't actually care about the state mandate personally, I am much more concerned about community markers and impacts of a lack of housing affordability including rising home and land costs, declining school population, and the lack of available first-time homebuyer, farmer, workforce, senior, and disability friendly housing. However, for this conversation, the 10% mandate is at least a useful number to compare to. At 9 units, our current affordable housing rate is 0.37%, in order to achieve 10%, we would need to add around 225 units. I don't expect us to do that, and I am not even saying that we can or should aim for that many, but I think it is striking that the number of short-term rentals is somewhere similar to our "official" affordable housing deficit.

To address our housing needs in town, some development will have to happen, but as we carefully and thoughtfully address how to build in a meaningful, smart, affordable and appropriate way in LC, it is all the more important that too many homes, especially modest ones that would be appropriate year-round dwellings, are not snapped up into the short-term rental market while year-round people are struggling so hard to find places to live here. We are already actively losing valued community members because they are not able to find or stay in their homes.
I hope that as you build this ordinance, you will ask the question: **How much of our housing stock are we comfortable with being tied up in short-term rentals?** Some people might think 5% is an ok number, others might prefer a higher or lower number, but I do think it is important to at least set some goals and intentions about how big a market this should be in the context of our broader housing stock. Perhaps our short-term rental percentage should not exceed our affordable housing percentage? However you decide to define it, I hope you'll find ways to make the affordable housing percentage increase, and the short-term rental percentage decrease.

I think there is also an opportunity for the regulations to differentiate between a short term rental that is not really an appropriate long-term rental, (like a room in a house or an uninsulated cottage with no heat source) vs. a place that would be liveable for an individual or family year-round (like a whole home, apartment, or cottage with heating.) With the situation we are in now, modest year-round housing should be looked upon as a precious resource in this community, and should be protected as such.

I believe that we can and should continue to welcome wedding guests, vacationers, and seasonal residents to Little Compton, but not at the expense of a working year-round community. We need a balance. We should be a town that swells to welcome guests in the warm months, not a vacation community with a few year-rounders desperately clinging to their properties, as has become the case in some other New England vacation destinations. Short term rentals are not the only contributing factor to this imbalance, but they are certainly part of the equation.

There aren't a lot of business opportunities in town, and I am sensitive to that, but I do think that if the short-term rental market remains unregulated, or if the ordinances, zoning, fees, and taxes, don't take broader housing affordability into account, we run the risk of missing the big picture. It is perfectly reasonable for an individual to seize the opportunity created by an unregulated market, so the onus is really mostly on the policymakers, rather than the individual business owners.

As councilor Mataronas correctly said in the meeting the other night, We aren't going to be able to make everyone happy with this. I agree. Such is the nature of setting rules and regulations, unfortunately. However, I hope we can use accurate data to guide our decision making, and keep the long term sustainability and longevity of our community as our main focus. Even if that hurts a bit in the short-term, we will be glad we were decisive and proactive in the long-term, when we still have a strong, intergenerational community and a great school in 15 years and beyond.

thank you for bringing your careful attention to this deeply important issue,

Isabel
Carol Wordell

From: A Michael Steers <amsteers@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 29, 2022 3:37 PM
To: Carol Wordell
Subject: Short term rental comments

Carol,

At the Council meeting, I think it was suggested that comments be forwarded to you.

The biggest question in my mind is defining the problem. I think the Council needs to develop a problem statement.

I’ve heard two STR problems articulated, unruly tenants, disturbed the peace, excessive cars, General disorderly conduct with no one to contact.
Second is a feeling that the purchase of these houses as investments is driving up prices and therefore denying the local next generation residents the opportunity to purchase a home.

First, I am aware that there have been complaints of unruly behavior, excess cars and a general lack of consideration for neighbors.
These situations have been attributed to short term rentals by absentee landlords.
If that is the case can we look at specific police reports that would indicate number of houses. Which ones and number of incidents at a house (bad Landlord). Analyze the specifics, parking, partying, drinking, disorderly conduct, etc.
Review our existing ordinances and see if what we have apples to the problem or needs amending.
Do the police have the ability to shut a party down, send visitors home, restore order, cancel the rental, etc.

At the meeting It was clear that there are some residents who manage their property without incident. Little Compton has had summer rentals forever. This has been a way of life for many property owners, We must be very mindful of history and what has worked for many years.
We must focus on the specific problem.
I would suggest we identify the problem landowners, notify them of the complaints and clamp down on the offenders.
Expand the disorderly conduct and noise ordinance to include immediate consequences.
Word will get out that Little Compton is not the place for an absentee VRBO investment.

if the Town is going to get into the business of inspecting and licensing rentals I think it must be for all rentals regardless of term; Safety, (fire, egress, electric) septic and parking are important for any and all rentals.

Unintended consequences.

This ordinance has the ability to upend a way of life in Little Compton and forcing people to sell. Exacerbating the problem of people buying for investment not personal use. There are many seasonal family compounds that manage to get by for two or three months in a do it yourself fashion.
There are winter caretaker rentals that benefit year rounders.

Town liability.
If the Town gets into the business of licensing property rentals, after inspecting for safety and septic code conformance won’t it have some liability if something happens?
For example the fire on Bailey’s ledge last summer. Electrical fire caused by phone charger or outlet.
Are all the houses with cesspools going to be prohibited from renting?

There are many camp like summer (seasonal) shelters not much more than a tent.

So, what is the “problem”?  

How many police reports were made this summer?  

Can we list the VRBO houses? How many are absentee owners? 

Much more information is needed.

Thank you,  
Mike

Sent from my iPad
October 31, 2022

Town of Little Compton Town Council

Dear Councilors,

After renting property in Little Compton for summer vacations with our daughter for over 30 years, we finally made the plunge in 2019 and are now part-time residents of Little Compton. We have lovingly restored our beautiful, beach home, saving it from years of neglect. The home had become overrun with rodents, raccoons, birds and insects. We restored every square inch - we disinfected the house with a commercial disaster company, repainted everything inside and out, replaced all carpeting, refinished the hardwood flooring, upgrading plumbing, updated bathrooms, replaced the boiler, replaced the oil tank, replaced the water softener, replaced all appliances, gutted and replaced the kitchen, replaced all exterior shingles, rebuilt the outdoor shower, refinished the decks, added new gravel to the driveway, and restored and refurbished the landscaping. We also manage and care for a lot for which the building rights have been dedicated to the LC Agricultural Conservancy. We work hard to keep it clear of invasive vines, dead trees and trash. We are very proud of our work and love spending as much time here as we can. When we are not here, however, we do allow other families to rent our beautiful property to enjoy during visits to our beautiful town, as we did for so many years.

In my career as the Assistant County Attorney for a small county in Colorado, I understand the need to be responsive to the complaints and concerns of the community. But I also know, and very well, the need to act prudently, cautiously and with the complete set of facts before recommending any solutions. We understand that the Little Compton Town Council is under some pressure to impose regulations for Short Term Rentals (STRs) at the request of a few residents. As we understand it, the concerns seem to be with two issues - parking and partying by STR guests.

The proposed STR Regulations (Draft – Revision 2), however, are sweeping and go far beyond the few concerns raised. Such a sweeping response can have many negative effects and have unanticipated and unintended consequences for the entire community. I urge the Council to proceed cautiously here and to arm themselves with all the information they can gather before deciding to enact such measures.

Further, I believe it would be prudent to appoint an advisory board to consider all aspects of the alleged problem, and to study and make informed recommendations for any action required by this Council, if any should be necessary. It is advisable that you consult with homeowners, STR owners, STR organizations, businesses, real estate professionals, town departments, and that you at least review some of the positive feedback from the many STR guests who come here with family to enjoy the beaches and the quaint rural feel of the area, attend funerals and weddings. You will need to consider:

1. The effects such action will have on local businesses who rely on visiting guests for their income.
2. The deterring effect such action will have on potential future guests who wish to visit for only a few days or those who cannot afford to stay in the area for the extended period of time being proposed.
3. The additional policing and enforcement issues for town police and other government officials that such action will create and the costs related.
4. The burdens such actions will place on home owners by eliminating or drastically reducing their ability to generate some income to offset the costs of restoring and improving their properties.

5. How such action will discourage home ownership in our communities for part-time residents.

6. How such action may result in less investment in our community by homeowners, businesses and visitors.

7. How such action will decrease property values in our community overall.

I know we are all working to keep our community safe, beautiful, and the wonderful place to live, work and visit that it has always been. Let’s work together on this and create solutions that work for all and not just a few. I would like to be a part of the solutions and hereby offer to serve on the advisory committee to assist the Council in considering this issue further.

Most Sincerely,

Sue Thibault
Carol Wordell

From: Norm Paasche <norm426@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 2, 2022 5:02 PM
To: Town Council
Cc: Norm; Renee Welchman
Subject: Town meeting agenda topic

There are many property owners, such as me, who have been renting short term for several years here in Little Compton. Personally I have rented my property at 56 Indian Road for six years and have never had one single complaint from any of my neighbors. I also have witnessed home owners themselves coming to their own summer homes in this neighborhood on summer weekends who have parties with loud music past midnight.
Who do you regulate?
Perhaps a “3 strike you’re out” regulation enacted when 3 legitimate noise complaints are issued the property owner forfeits certain rights.
I would be happy to speak on this issue. I use my Airbnb earnings to:
1) make property improvements
2) pay part of mortgage
3) save for retirement
My wife and I are 70 years old, resided in LC for 23 years, and are lifetime RI residents.
Sincerely yours,
Norm Paasche
56 Indian Road
Little Compton, RI 02837
401-635-8201

Sent from my iPhone
Update to Little Town Council about Solar Panels on town roofs.
November 10, 2022

Dear Ms. Wordell,

As a follow-up to my presentation last month, I would like to address the council next week about the progress made so far to get solar panels on the roofs of town buildings. I’ve received data from two different sources and give the council an overview of what we learned, and consideration for next steps. I promise I will be less that 10 minutes. Thank you for your help.

Jim Lock
To: Honorable Town Council

From: Antonio A. Teixeira
Town Administrator

Date: November 17, 2022

Subject: DPW truck replacement

Bill Moore, Director of Public Works has done a procurement with three Dealers to purchase a replacement for the current Mack truck. He contacted the following dealers:

McGovern Automotive Group – they had a truck with 10’ plow and dump body, it can be used as a multipurpose truck, readily available for $127,155.00

Fall River Ford - they are unable to acquire trucks of the size that would fit our fleet.

Island Tech Services & Associates – they are unable to acquire trucks of the size that would fit our fleet.

I recommend that the Town Council approve the purchase of the much needed replacement as the winter approaches.

The purchase will be covered by the sale of the current Mack truck through GOV/Deals, budgeted Capital funding and the drop-off of the payments for backhoe due June 2023.

Thank you!

Cc: Bill Moore, Director of Public Works
Joe DeSantis, Director of Finance
**FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY**

**BUSINESS NAME**: Town of Little Compton RI  
**CONTACT**: Bill Moore  
**Address**: Little Compton, RI 02837  
**E-Mail**: wmoores@littlecomptonri.org  
**Home Phone**: (401) 641-1342  
**Cell Phone**: (401) 533-4784

**VEHICLE**  
**Stock #:** FM3505  
**New / Used:** New  
**VIN:** 1FDN6F6DC2PDF05774  
**Mileage:** 5  
**Vehicle:** 2023 Ford F-650 Diesel  
**Color:** Oxford White  
**Type:** Base Regular Cab Base  

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**Customer Approval:**  
**Management Approval:**  

By signing this authorization form, you certify that the above personal information is correct and accurate, and authorize the release of credit and employment information. By signing above, I provide to the dealership and its affiliates consent to communicate with me about my vehicle or any future vehicles using electronic, verbal and written communications including but not limited to eMail, text messaging, SMS, phone calls and direct mail. Terms and Conditions subject to credit approval. For Information Only. This is not an offer or contract for sale.
November 10, 2022

Robert L. Mushen and Members
of the Little Compton Town Council
P. O. Box 226
Little Compton, RI 02837

Dear President Mushen and Members of the Honorable Little Compton Town Council:

Congratulations on your election to serve on the Little Compton Town Council for the next two years. As per custom, I would be grateful if the Town Council would consider re-appointing me to serve as the Town Solicitor for the next two years.

It is my hope that my service to the Town, the results we have achieved through litigation and mediation, as well as my respect for the Town of Little Compton speak well for my application. I would be grateful if you would look with favor upon request for re-appointment.

Warmest regards,

Richard S. Humphrey

RSH:paf
Subject: Commonwealth and Mayflower wind say Massachusetts offshore wind farms “no longer viable”
Developers say Massachusetts offshore wind farms “no longer viable”

by Bridget Reed Morawski

October 31, 2022


OFFSHORE WIND: The developers behind the Commonwealth and Mayflower wind projects in Massachusetts say the facilities are “no longer [economically] viable” and that their contracts need to be renegotiated and a regulatory review should be paused. (State House News Service)
ALSO: Federal officials release a draft plan to conserve the North Atlantic right whale around offshore wind projects along the East Coast, with public comments open until December 4. (Associated Press)
Subject: Offshore Boston Wind Submarine Cable Avoids Falmouth

Falmouth, Massachusetts November 1, 2022

Offshore Boston Wind Submarine Cable Avoids Falmouth

Inflation Reduction Act provides 369 billion towards "enhanced planned off-shore transmission grid." (369 that is "B" Billion)
Picture: Offshore Submarine Cables Paid For By Inflation Reduction Act Avoids Falmouth Onshore Cable Route

For two years offshore ocean wind contractors proposed onshore cable routes through Falmouth, Massachusetts to get power to Boston via land routes. There are up to seven offshore companies looking at the same route for the easiest and most inexpensive solution to get their power to the Massachusetts market.

The future plan is to send 3600 megawatts or about five times the output of the Pilgrim nuclear plant over a land route to high use energy locations over the bridge north of Cape Cod. Estimates are as high as costing electric ratepayers as much as 1.7 billion dollars to upgrade the existing land power grid.

Some of the power routes require buried cables through residential locations in Falmouth. At a June 8th Falmouth public forum it showed overwhelming opposition to the buried cables.

The best and easiest solution to advance clean energy in Massachusetts is an ocean wind submarine power cable directly to Boston out around Cape Cod from offshore wind sites.

The offshore wind electric transmission dilemma is two fold. By upgrading and using land routes to get to Boston the Massachusetts electric rate payers finance the project through their electric bills. By providing a submarine cable to Boston offshore wind contractors get a very expensive bill as XLPE submarine cable costs are prohibitive.

The solution to provide the offshore submarine cable to Boston and additional locations is the Inflation Reduction Act. The IRA could provide an "enhanced planned off-shore transmission grid" that can significantly reduce the necessary onshore upgrades.
The Inflation Reduction Act was signed into law on August 16, 2022, will significantly impact clean energy by providing 369 billion for energy and climate change programs. The Act directs around $369 billion toward energy and climate spending, including wind and clean energy storage.

The act makes it simple to cash in renewable energy credits permitting direct pay for tax exempt groups and allows taxpayers to sell credits to unrelated parties.

Out of 369 billion voted by Congress it makes sense to create a planned off-shore submarine cable grid to advance clean energy for the foreseeable future.

Do it once and do it right.
"The DPU said Commonwealth and Mayflower must decide whether they intend to move forward with their contractual obligations or file a request to dismiss the proceedings."

Massachusetts Denies Motion to Delay Offshore Wind Contracts
November 8, 2022


Massachusetts utility regulators denied offshore wind power company Commonwealth Wind's motion to suspend its power purchase agreement with state electric utilities, raising questions about the future of Commonwealth's proposed offshore wind project.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU) said in an order on Friday that Commonwealth "is a sophisticated market participant well capable of factoring economic contingencies into its contract prices ... and exercising its options under the existing (power purchase agreements)."

Commonwealth is a unit of U.S. power company Avangrid Inc, which is majority owned by Spanish energy company Iberdrola SA.

Commonwealth said in an October filing seeking a one-month suspension of the DPU proceedings that the project "is no longer viable because of recent global commodity price increases" due to "the war in Ukraine, interest rates, supply chain constraints, and persistent inflation."

Avangrid spokesperson Craig Gilvarg said the company "can present a proposal that would return the project to economic viability" and intends to present that information to the state in coming days.
In May, Massachusetts utility units of Eversource Energy, National Grid PLC and Unitil Corp sought DPU approval of two long-term contracts to purchase offshore wind from Commonwealth and Mayflower Wind.

Commonwealth, however, said it "remains committed to the project" and still expects it could enter service in 2028.

Mayflower, which is owned by units of Shell PLC and Ocean Winds, said the DPU should grant Commonwealth’s motion "to address the impact of current extraordinary global economic conditions" on the agreements.
Ocean Winds is owned by units of Portuguese energy company EDP Energias de Portugal SA's majority-owned EDP Renováveis SA and France's ENGIE SA.

The DPU said Commonwealth and Mayflower must decide whether they intend to move forward with their contractual obligations or file a request to dismiss the proceedings.

(Reuters - Reporting by Scott DiSavino; editing by Grant McCool)
Subject: Massachusetts : Vineyard Wind Ship Heads To Quonset Point RI - Not New Bedford

Vineyard Wind Massachusetts Offshore Cable Ship "Cable Enterprise" Avoids New Bedford Ma. Heads To Quonset Point, Rhode Island

Nov 11, 2022
[Website Link]

Ship name: "Cable Enterprise"

CABLE ENTERPRISE

Cable Layer, IMO 8645806