

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CITY OF SEAFORD RENTAL LICENSE COMMITTEE

February 13, 2017

4:00 PM

Mayor Genshaw called the Rental License Meeting to order with Assistant City Manager Charles Anderson, Josh Littleton, Building Official, Harry Daisy, Deric Parker, and Jim King were present. He welcomed the participants of the Committee.

Mayor Genshaw asked the Committee members if they had any other suggestions or comments from issues that were discussed at the previous meeting. Members suggested that the City contact the trash companies in regards to some of the trash issues that occur during regular pick-up's. They stated that a lot of trash is being scattered around the neighborhoods as a result. Sometimes this comes from the trash companies not disposing of the trash when they should or how they should.

Mr. Anderson came forward to present communication options, suggestions, and other initiatives. He stated that the City is working on modifications to the Code brochure to include both Spanish and French-creole to better communicate between the City and its residents. These brochures will be available at City Hall, but can also be given to landlords for them to provide to their tenants as well. Committee member Derick Parker stated that he had a resource that could translate the information in Spanish and would assist with that effort.

Mr. Anderson also stated that he wanted the Committees suggestions or opinions on incentives for home ownership, such as, a tax credit for converting a rental into an owner-occupied property or providing an interest free loan program to homeowners for qualified improvements. He also asked for suggestions or incentives for investors to purchase and rehab properties, and possibly providing an interest free loan program to investors for qualified improvements. This would allow investors to purchase and invest in condemned and substandard properties to produce affordable, sustainable housing opportunities.

Mr. King, Committee member, stated that he wants to invest in more properties in Seaford, but doesn't want to be penalized, by having the taxes reassessed after the work is done.

Mr. Anderson stated that the City currently has a reinvestment incentive ordinance that provides a tax credit for a 5-10-year time period, whereas the taxes would increase from the current assessed amount after the improvements were made to the property and the owner would receive the value of the increase for the 5 – 10 year in cash upfront to assist with defraying costs. The Committee thought that it would be a good idea to look at expanding this to houses that need renovations in the City.

Mr. Anderson stated the City wanted potential leverage options to apply to reluctant landlords to comply with code requirements. This could include potentially streamlining procedures for violation notifications for habitually distressed properties, dedicating additional staff time to substandard rental properties and additional ordinance options. He also informed the committee that the City of Seaford is partnering with Habitat for Humanity to provide low income homeowners in the “core” area of Seaford to receive services such as cleaning up properties, power washing, painting, winterization, and other services. Hopefully by doing these things, it will motivate the residents in the area to participate and help improve the look of the area. The Rock the Block event will take place on April 8, 2017.

Mayor Genshaw thanked the Committee Members for their input and the Committee will meet again at a later date to discuss any further ideas they may have to resolve these issues.

Mayor Genshaw adjourned the meeting at 4:57 pm.

Shannon Elliott, Secretary