

**Minutes**  
**Bar Harbor Long-Term Rental Registration Task Force**  
**Wednesday, January 24, 2024**  
**Auditorium – Third Floor, Municipal Building**  
**4:00 P.M.**

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM. Members present: Michele Gagnon, Planning Director; Todd Hardy, Chair and landlord representative; Erica Brooks, landlord representative; Philip Galperin, resident at large; Matthew Bartlett, Bar Harbor Fire Chief; Angela Chamberlain, Code Enforcement Officer; Joe Minutolo, Town Council representative; Jennifer Richardson, resident at large; Amber Howard, tenant representative; and John Mountford, Ellsworth and MDI Housing Authorities representative.

Heidi Hambrecht, tenant representative was absent.

Also present: Mike Gurtler, Deputy Code Enforcement Officer; Cali Martinez, Housing and Community Planner; and Shawn Farrar, Bar Harbor Story.

**II. Recap**

The Task Force members introduced themselves as there were some new attendees in the meeting.

Ms. Chamberlain reminded the Task Force that they last met in May of 2022 and prepared a set of recommendations that were sent to the Town Council and on October 18, 2022, the Town Council unanimously adopted the Long-Term Rental Registration ordinance. At that same meeting, the Town Council amended the LTR Task Force Roles and Responsibilities to pause the LTR meetings until January 2024 when the group would reconvene to review the results of the LTR housing data gathered from registrations in 2023. That change also allowed the Task Force to meet as necessary to develop recommendations on an inspection component and any other elements of Chapter 130, and report those recommendations back to the Town Council.

She further explained that the registration requirement of the Chapter 130 ordinance went into effect on January 1, 2023. Over the course of 2023, the Code Office issued 468 LTR registrations and 34 new registrations to date in 2024. Two notification postcards were sent to property owners in 2023 to inform them that this was a new required registration and explain how to obtain an application.

**III. Review data gathered from the LTR registrations**

Chief Bartlett began by noting that he was pleased to see the number of registrations that had been received but was concerned with some of the requirements that property owners stated they were not in compliance with, such as units equipped with smoke and CO2 detectors. He added that this required by state law and not unique to just Bar Harbor.

Ms. Howard wondered if there was a way to get more information on insulation in units, particular the ones described as seasonal rentals. She thought it would be beneficial to know if houses were insulated, to understand if a seasonal unit could become a year-round rental. The Task Force discussed the issue.

The Task Force spent time discussing what employee housing was and how it could be more clearly described on the application to truly understand the demographics of the data.

Mr. Minutolo suggested that the application include a question asking if the landlord offers a lease to the tenant(s), and if so, for how long.

The Task Force discussed public outreach and education and ways to ensure proper information was readily available and easy for landlords and tenants to find. It was suggested and agreed upon, that an occasional newsletter emailed to landlords could be an efficient way to get information out. The Task Force also discussed whether a courtesy inspection should be offered. There was some discussion around what a courtesy inspection would look like and what inspectors would be looking for during those inspections. The staff agreed to come up with a draft outline of what a courtesy inspection might include.

Mr. Mountford explained some of the criteria that he uses as an inspector for the Housing Authority and suggested some documents that might be helpful for the group to look at.

Chief Bartlett cautioned the Task Force that he didn't want to totally abandon the safety component of what this group was tasked with considering. He was concerned that the life safety standards were being watered down.

Mr. Minutolo wondered if there was money available, maybe a grant, that could be used to purchase smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to give to tenants if they didn't have any. Chief Bartlett said that his department has on occasion, provided smoke detectors to people when there were none present.

For the next meeting, staff would update the application form as discussed, update the data spreadsheets, find out how many of the LTR registrations are also registered as short-term rentals, prepare a draft courtesy inspection list, and draft an educational newsletter for landlord and tenant outreach. It was suggested that the Task Force members look at the housing page on the town website and give suggestions for improvements at the next meeting.

#### **IV. Items for the next Agenda**

There was none.

#### **V. Adjournment**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:10 PM.

**Minutes approved by the LTR Registration Task Force on February 28, 2024.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Todd Hardy, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
 3/6/23  
 Date