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BV trustees to begin work on short term rentals policy, emergency order

By Douglas P. Marsh, Times reporter

Jun 18, 2021



The Buena Vista board of trustees meeting on June 22 will open with a 6 p.m., work session on short term rentals, review and policy discussion.

“Everybody’s got a perspective on this one,” said town administrator Phillip Puckett.

The discussion is around whether and how to control the percentage of available or built residential housing being used for short term rentals. “Any type of residential unit,” he said

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Puckett said that while the board did pass a motion at the last meeting to set a cap, there are many questions that need to be answered before they would be ready to issue any directives to Planning & Zoning, which would then return a motion for the board to consider.

The board also plans to discuss whether to extend the town’s pandemic Emergency Declaration again, as it expires at the end of this month.

Puckett stressed that the declaration is more directly related to local policies and state funding support, less so to public health, and totally unrelated to any political stance.

“It’s just a way to say that yes, we do have impacts from a disaster and we are in need of additional financial assistance as it’s available from the higher levels of government,” he said. He also mentioned the liquor premise extensions related to the declaration and the potential impacts on local bars and restaurants.

A related topic to be discussed is the board’s Remote Participation Policy. Puckett said the board intends to continue providing broader access to the public using Zoom and by publishing videos of meetings to YouTube. Less clear is what limits to place, if any, on remote

participation by board members themselves.

“That’s one of the things that changed quite a bit for us during this time. We added technology that enables a meeting in the community center that is totally engaged with people connecting through Zoom to participate remotely. It is very much our intent to carry that forward. But for board members, when is it appropriate? How much is it appropriate? Our policy is a little grey around that. It really comes back to the board as a whole to determine what’s appropriate for that,” he said.

Other returning topics include road improvements and a presentation of the 2020 budget audit summary.