



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The Columbia City Council conducted a Work Session on Tuesday, August 5, 2025 at City Hall (Council Chambers), 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201. The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, Mayor called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. and the following members were present: The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr., The Honorable Will Brennan, Mayor Pro-Tempore, The Honorable Aditi Bussells, The Honorable Tina N. Herbert, The Honorable Peter M. Brown, and The Honorable Tyler D. Bailey. Also present were Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Moore Hammond, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion made by Mr. Brennan and seconded by Ms. Herbert, Council voted unanimously to amend **Item 4** to include Administration and to enter into Executive Session at 12:02 p.m. for the discussion of **Item 1**.

1. Receipt of legal advice relating to matters covered by attorney-client privilege pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2)
 - *Short-Term Rentals*
 - *Front Yard Parking*

Upon a motion made by Mayor Rickenmann and seconded by Mr. Brennan, Council voted unanimously to adjourn Executive Session at 1:26 p.m.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION AT 1:00 P.M.

2. Amending Short-Term Rental Regulations - Mr. David Hatcher, Director of Code Enforcement and Ms. Jessica Kinard, Senior Assistant City Attorney

Mr. David Hatcher, Director of Code Enforcement provided an overview of current staffing and workload in relation to short-term rentals. He shared plans to move to a more proactive response model. He also provided recommendations for ordinance revisions, software enhancements and staffing.

There was discussion about data accuracy; GIS mapping with STR labelling; signage; property upkeep and non-compliance; after-hours reporting; avenues of addressing complaints; and responsibilities of new staff.



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Ms. Jessica Kinard, Senior Assistant City Attorney reviewed potential ordinance changes including: responsible local representatives to hold a South Carolina property manager's license; both owners and managers obtain business licenses; raising the minimum rental age to 25; increasing the minimum stay from one to two nights; requiring at least two off-street parking spaces; clarifying occupancy limits; and adding neighbor notification and a local contact requirement. Additional provisions addressed guest screening for local renters, updated permitting procedures, enhanced enforcement tools, and a new catch-all allowing the Police Chief to immediately revoke permits for extreme behaviors.

There was discussion about age requirements in other municipalities; the inability to prevent maximum quantity of invitees to parties; lack of updated information resulting in violations; defining extreme infractions; life safety standards; consequences of non-compliance for permits; and working with Airbnb for responsible advertising.

Councilor Brown suggested focusing on the 149 unpermitted short-term rentals instead of adding burdensome rules for compliant operators. He supported additional staffing for Code Enforcement and penalizing repeat offenders.

PUBLIC INPUT

Mr. Justin Barstow, 2225 Rembert Street spoke in support of the 24-hour occupancy limit and party violations leading to permit revocation. He urged capping non-owner-occupied rentals at current levels, setting a maximum of two persons per bedroom or eight total, and targeting enforcement toward owners and operators rather than individual guests. He added that large rentals often operate like unmonitored hotels.

Councilor Brown asked about communication with short-term and long-term rental neighbors.

Mr. Justin Barstow, 2225 Rembert Street emphasized that guest-related problems are temporary, making it more effective to accumulate violations against owners/operators for enforcement. He contrasted this with long-term rentals, where relationships can address behavior, and expressed that a two-night minimum would have little impact as most operators already favor longer stays.

Councilor Herbert stated that while targeting the operator and ownership is important, some situations should be handled by Code Enforcement to ensure proper documentation and point accumulation.



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There was discussion about how different situations between long-term and short-term neighbors are handled.

Ms. Ellen Bundy, 2320 Park Street expressed concerns over the growth of STRs, urging they be regulated like hotels with higher fees and greater oversight. She supported the proposed two-night minimum stay, argued that STRs reduce available housing, and suggested increasing license fees to fund enforcement staff. She also noted a recent neighborhood incident that resulted in no violations and called for a cap on STRs in residential areas to protect neighborhood stability.

Mr. Ben Johnson, 521 Sims Avenue / Be Our Guest supported capacity limits and 24-hour occupancy rules to help address issues like large parties. He opposed requiring all operators to hold a property manager's license, arguing it adds no benefit to safety or party prevention and would burden owner-occupants. He also opposed the two-night minimum stay. It would drive away responsible one-night guests who contribute to the local economy without causing problems.

Mayor Rickenmann supported approving the ordinance on first reading with the intent to make edits before second reading on August 19, 2025. He stressed the need to have new regulations in place before the fall rental season. He emphasized giving Code Enforcement the staffing and resources needed to address issues and focusing enforcement on illegal operators who are often the source of complaints. He suggested gathering more input on one-night stays and ensuring application reviews confirm actual ownership.

There was discussion about owner-operated STRs needing property management licensure; real estate licensure being used instead of property management licensure; and enforcing a 25-year age limit with third party booking sites.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion made by Mayor Rickenmann and seconded by Mr. Brennan, Council voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session at 2:34 p.m. to discuss **Items 3** and **4** as amended.

3. Receipt of legal advice relating to a pending, threatened or potential claim pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2)
 - *Alissa Burch v. City of Columbia*
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- *Tanya Johnson v. City of Columbia*
 - *James Johnson v. City of Columbia*
 - *Shanteachia Quattlebaum v. City of Columbia*
 - *Jacquelyn Davis v. City of Columbia*
 - *Kozat M. Martin and Quinton D. Burr v. City of Columbia*
 - *Smith v. City of Columbia*
4. Discussion of the employment of an employee pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(1)
- *Public Relations, Media and Marketing Department*
 - *Administration*

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, CMC, CPM
City Clerk