

SHORT-TERM RENTAL AD-HOC COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

The Short-Term Rental Ad-Hoc Committee met on Tuesday, June 18, at 10:00 noon in the POA Administration building to discuss rentals, property management, and potential solutions. The meeting concluded at 11:40PM.

Attendees:

Gayle Cleaveland
Ian Cohen
Pattie Courtney
Jim Griner
Joe Homa

Doug Luba
Lee Smith
Bill Watkins
Andrew Schumacher

The Committee was joined by Mike Alsko of Coastal Home and Villa, Tiffany Woollacott of The Vacation Company, and Jamie Dalessandro of Palmetto Dunes Resort. Invited but not present were Todd Brooks of Island Getaway and Jeff West of Sunset Rentals.

The meeting began with a review of key results from our Short-Term survey, including owner verbatim comments. A group discussion ensued, revealing the following:

To communicate with guests, most property management firms use the App, ***Glad To Have You***. Guests are required to use the App as it contains both the **door code** for their property and **Internet/WiFi password**. It's worth a visit to: <https://software.homeaway.com/products/glad-to-have-you-mobile-app> to see the scope of functionality available within the App. It was estimated that **95% of their customers use the App**. Given sufficient lead time (the property needs to be booked at least three weeks prior to the arrival date), most property management firms mail guest their vehicle passes. Given their on-site location, Palmetto Dunes Resort requires guests to obtain their passes at their Welcome Center whereby guests are also provided a "guide" for their stay. It was universally agreed that **guests do not read** and effectively communicating rules is a challenge.

From an availability perspective, most firms operate from **8AM to 8PM on Saturday**, check-in day.

Regarding recent trends, **multi-generational vacations are popular**. This means large groups which may partially explain why larger homes are being constructed in Palmetto Dunes. It's interesting that the individual who books/pays for the vacation **generally does not share the rules and guidelines with all family members staying in the property**. Therefore, we have an additional communication challenge.

Most property management firms have a **three- or four-day minimum** stay period. However, the previously named "ResortQuest" has a **two-day minimum**—and the national trend may be pulling toward a one-day minimum.

To help manage occupancy concerns, the **maximum occupancy** and **available parking spaces** for each property are listed on the property management website. These limits are carefully developed in concert with the property owner. Some operators, but not all, visit their properties to ensure they are

not over-occupied. All stress the suitability of the home for a particular-sized group during the booking process. Higher rental rates are viewed as tools to “elevate” the clientele. It was suggested that Palmetto Dunes adopt a minimum age to rent a property like nearly all other plantations.

Importantly, the group agreed that a **disengaged owner is a bad owner**.

The concern of noise was discussed, and the participating property managers stated that noise only appears to be a problem among Villas or multi-unit properties.

Property managers would like additional information regarding any Villa/Horizontal Regime issues that may impact the guest experience such as:

- Pools being unavailable
- Parking lot work or restrictions
- The presence of scaffolds

Interestingly, property managers do everything possible to keep complaints or issues from being forwarded to property owners as many view it as a reflection upon their property management company.

What’s Unique about Palmetto Dunes

- Dunes Buggy: Nice drivers providing a positive guest experience.
- Turtle Trott/Walk: An event blending the resort and residential nature of Palmetto Dunes.

Educational Suggestions:

- Develop a video (silent) sharing key rules and loop it on screens within the Dunes Buggy and perhaps other locations such as the General Store, Big Jim’s, etc.
- Consider a dedicated Palmetto Dunes channel—on Hargray and/or Spectrum.
- Use an App and iPad within homes to push information into rental homes.
- Consider external signs conveying (property management) contact information.

Property Management Suggestions:

- There are too many rental companies—including individuals managing only a handful or properties.
- It may be desirable to build deeper relationships with fewer property management firms.
- Palmetto Dunes may want to consider a property management certification process.

Recommendations Palmetto Dunes Should Consider:

1. Registration of owners who rent their properties—enabling security to contact the property management firm or owner when issues arise.
2. Develop a rental property management certification process—preventing non-certified companies/VRBO owners from operating within Palmetto Dunes (applies to professional property management companies and self-renting owners).
3. Establish a minimal rental duration of at least 4 days.
4. Issue alerts to owners when their property is involved in a complaint—even if the issue is successfully resolved.
5. Require owners or property management companies to either: i) be on site within one hour, or ii) return a call within one hour.
6. Further limiting guest passes based upon the number of bedrooms—not just available parking.
7. Consider adding a minimum age (25 years old) to rent properties within Palmetto Dunes.

Next Meeting

The committee's next meeting will be with real estate agents. The objective is to understand how Palmetto Dunes is being marketed and sold. We'll target the week of July 15 or July 22—depending upon availabilities.

Bicycle Follow-Up:

As a follow-up from our June 4 meeting, we agreed the following bicycle rules are important:

1. Yield to vehicles (cars have the right of way)
2. Ride on the path where available
3. Ride on the right (on the path and the road)
4. Use lights at night

If only space for three rules exist, "lights at night" will not be included. Andrew indicated that he will work with Elizabeth to develop and place A-Frame signs within the community. Jim will work with Frank Gaston (of the Outfitters) to identify the bicycle location and finalize the sticker design.

Some research will be required to understand the opportunity to stencil instructions on the path—and perhaps eliminate signs that cause vehicles to inappropriately/incorrectly stop.

Andrew will work with his team to develop "Walk bikes on the beach path" signs—but this may take more time to ensure the signs are consistent with the aesthetic of all Palmetto Dunes signage.

Additional exploration is required regarding bicycle racks and bicycle parking—particularly at the beach.