

Ben Rough

From: John Sunderland <John@methowconservancy.org>
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2015 9:37 AM
To: Ben Rough
Cc: info@centralreservations.net
Subject: FW: FW: Nightly Rental Project

Ben,

FYI

John

From: Central Reservations [mailto:info@centralreservations.net]
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2015 9:18 AM
To: John Sunderland <John@methowconservancy.org>
Subject: RE: FW: Nightly Rental Project

John,

Thanks for this...one more item I might mention is that compliance by 2020 is laughable...how about they don't operate unless they are licensed, and they are fined? They went into business in a "nano-second" with no licenses, and they can go out of business just as quickly.

I believe with the recent loss of revenue for all licensed lodging facilities (we lost the 2nd half of August, Labor Day weekend, and much of September) AND many weddings cancelled due to the fear factor of the Methow Valley being a charred ruin, that unlicensed people do not deserve the same consideration as those that are following the current laws.

My Best,

Kathleen

Central Reservations, your Methow Valley lodging source since 1982...keep it local!
800-422-3048
www.CentralReservations.net

Original Message

Subject: FW: Nightly Rental Project
From: John@methowconservancy.org
To: "John Sunderland" <John@methowconservancy.org>; "nikiandkook@yahoo.com"; "krise@erlandsen.com"; "hjranh@live.com"; "Ben Rough"; "Jason Paulsen"; "Jon Wyss - Personal"; "Perry Huston"
CC: "info@centralreservations.net" <info@centralreservations.net>
Date: 2015-09-17 09:11:54

All-

See emails string below. Kathleen is the owner of Central Reservations in Winthrop. I know Ray in particular is sensitive to this, because his daughter used to own Central Reservation. Evidently enforcement is not as difficult as some have thought, vis-à-vis online rental sites like Air B n B.

I also had a discussion with several folks about a Nightly Rental requirement for insurance that covers nightly rentals, evidently it isn't that difficult to acquire, see below.

I'll follow this with an email string about the insurance issue.

Ben, I know this issue isn't on the agenda of the Commissioners' work session on Wednesday, but would it be possible to take 5 minutes at the end of the work session on Wed for Kathleen to speak to the issue?

Thanks to all,

John

From: Central Reservations [<mailto:info@centralreservations.net>]
Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2015 2:42 PM
To: John Sunderland <John@methowconservancy.org>
Subject: Nightly Rental Project

John....First off, I so appreciate your returning my call, and the thoughtful work that has been put into the Nightly Rental Regulations moving forward. I can tell that it has been looked at from many angles. From our perspective, the unregulated homes on national and international websites is like having Walmart move into Winthrop and make all new rules for how we do business. It is very unfair to those who are following the rules. Central Reservations started in 1982, and my husband and I are the 4th owners. We have steadfastly followed the rules and turned down at least 4 new properties a week, and then we find ourselves competing with them online. So, we opened a retail gallery/store called the Purple Sage and our office is at the back, the Gallery is the living room for Central Reservations. We decided to promote the fact that we are local

folks. The cost of competing with Google Ad words, Bing, and everything else is staggering per month...almost as much money as we take home as a minimum salary.

It is very simple to identify the homes that are legal to rent. I can easily tell you who is legal at this time, because we know them all. It would be so simple to send out a "directive" telling people they need to be in compliance. The fact is....Air B n B would remove them if they were contacted by an authority figure....such as the Okanogan County Health Department.

See below what the Town of Winthrop sent out to unlicensed homes on the VRBO website. To do this, you don't even need to look up the parcel number or tax payer name. I thought this was very clever, and I did forward this to Mike Harr with the County Health Department and to the Planning Department and Ray Campbell at one time. I do know that Mike Harr has been sending out enforcement letters for unlicensed places, and he was thorough enough that he got the list from the State of Washington Health Department to be sure that folks were not licensed through the State and then he cross referenced his list, and he double checked with me and our website. His goal is to get the unlicensed places in compliance, which I admire him for that.

So far as the Air B n B site, I do not know if any enforcement has been attempted. When a property owner lists a property on the site, they are agreeing that they are zoned appropriately and have all licenses necessary, and they hold Air B n B harmless, etc. So far as collection of sales and lodging taxes, that is not an option that is offered as an added on fee on the Air B n B site. Our office (Central Reservations) in order to remain viable and competitive in the current ever changing market have listed properties on Air B n B. I have to very cleverly price things to include sales taxes, and then I convert the reservation into a Central Reservations stay with our code numbers, etc. As I mentioned on the phone, my son and daughter-in-law got summarily shut down in Long Beach, CA, as the town came down on Air B n B properties that are not zoned appropriately.

VRBO also requires owners to agree that they have all necessary licenses and permits when you list a property on their site.

The beauty of the two above lodging sites is that the owner has to spend almost nothing to get a place up and running...you are "instantly" in business, and under the "radar".

This is not rocket science...and a bureaucratic stance that it is not enforceable or possible, or that it takes too much time, is very short sighted. IF people can be brought into compliance, it is a lot of tax revenue for the State, County, and the local lodging taxes help fund promotion of the Methow Valley.

I would be more than happy to help in any way that I can. Nobody wants to be the "bad guy" that blows the whistle on others, but "fair is fair" so far as licenses and permits are concerned.

Please keep me in the loop. I would love to attend the next hearing that includes this issue. When did you say it was? PLEASE BE SURE TO SCROLL DOWN SO YOU CAN SEE WHAT THE TOWN OF WINTHROP DID.

My Best,

Kathleen, downtown Winthrop, on the boardwalk

Central Reservations, your Methow Valley lodging source since 1982...keep it local!

800-422-3048

www.CentralReservations.net

Original Message

Subject: Inquiry from Cindy Hicks: VRBO.com #620615
From: sender@messages.homeaway.com
To: "Kathleen Jardin" <info@centralreservations.net>
Date: 2015-06-16 12:49:51

Hello, Cindy Hicks is interested in your property.

	
Property	#620615
Dates	
Flexible dates	Yes
Guests	2 adults, 0 children
Traveler name	Cindy Hicks
Contact info	View in your dashboard
Inquiry from	VRBO.com

Message from Cindy Hicks

This business must cease immediately. You do not have a business license with the Town of Winthrop under Title 5. Under Section 5.04.140 you are subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$25.00 nor more than \$100.00 dollars per day. Contact me at 509-996-2320 by June 30, 2015 or I will direct the Marshal's Office to start the civil penalty process. Thank you. Cindy Hicks / Deputy Clerk Town of Winthrop

Respond in your dashboard

 Or, reply to this email

Respond quickly to increase your chance of securing the booking.

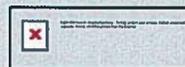
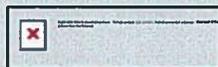
Response Time: Within 12 hours **Response Rate:** 90%

Looking for more inquiries? Listings with a quality score of 80% or greater get 15%* more demand! Follow the customized recommendations in your dashboard **now**.

* Based on internal metrics taken from data on VRBO.com between December 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014

To help keep you protected, email addresses will be removed from conversations between owners and travelers. If you include an email address in your message, it will appear as ----@----- to the recipient.

Download the HomeAway app so you can reply to travelers, send payment details, manage your calendar, and more on your mobile device.



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