

Comments from Councilor Greg Scott re: Occupancy Tax

I have one concern about the definition of "Rent". There is a house on Hwy 101 that Don and I have been monitoring for more than 2 years. I am convinced it is operating as a vacation rental without a license. The owner claims he is making it available to members of his church and that it is not a rental. However, I periodically see several vehicles parked there with license plates from several states and activities I have observed looks more like family gatherings.

When we were wrestling with Mr. Yount's rental practices, I seem to recall the city judge saying that if there was an exchange of value, the city was due a tax payment or words to that effect.

If we change the definition and remove the words "the consideration", I would like an opinion that the city is still due a tax payment so that we have the means to collect from people trying to dodge the system. Another alternative would be the inclusion of specific language that provided for a minimum tax payment when non-monetary consideration is involved. The more I think about this issue, the clearer we can make the intent of the ordinance, the easier it will be for Don to enforce. Perhaps the city attorney can suggest text to achieve this end.