



Wauwatosa Police Department

Departmental Correspondence

DATE: 10/17/24
TO: Government Affairs Committee (GAC)
FROM: Capt. Luke Vetter and Sgt. Kurt Svatek
SUBJECT: Proposal to amend and add to Ordinance 7.60 - Hotel Registration and Security
ATTACHED: Proposed ordinance language

Timeline

- Present to GAC on 11/12
- If approved, present to Council on 11/19

Background

Currently, Wauwatosa Ordinance 7.60.010 requires all hotels and motels in the City to identify any renters paying by cash. As evidenced by COVID in 2020, cash has been and is being phased out throughout the country, including no longer being accepted by hotels and motels.

The Police Department responds to hotels in the City of Wauwatosa regularly for juveniles in rooms either violating hotel policy, being disorderly, or smoking in the rooms. The juveniles are not the renters of these rooms and the hotel often does not have a record of the adult who rented the room. Unfortunately, often the renter is not on premise supervising the large group of juveniles at the hotels.

One of the most egregious incidents of this occurred at one of our hotels where Officers responded for several rooms full of juveniles being disorderly in the hotel and disrupting other guests. The adult who rented the rooms was not on premise. In this case, over the span of eight hours, the Officers responded to this hotel eight (8) separate times. Officers removed dozens of juveniles from the hotel. These calls took up a considerable amount of police resources. In order to appropriately handle the first call for service alone, the entire second shift staff of ten (10) Officers was held past their shift on over-time to clear out approximately eight different rooms of juveniles within the hotel.

Hotel staff advised that in one of these rented rooms, Officers removed twelve (12) juveniles in violation of Ordinance 7.60.070, and learned the absent renter provided a fictitious address to the hotel.

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Proposed Ordinance Addition

This proposal is seeking two (2) changes to ordinance 7.60. This addition would allow hotel management and police to contact responsible party/renter of a room, and would also allow police to issue municipal citations to the absent renters if violations occur. This proposal has been discussed and reviewed with our City Attorney's Office.

- 1) **Adjust 7.60.010(2):** The first proposal is to require all hotels and motels to keep on file (for a period of the time the room is rented) a copy of a valid form of identification for any adult renter of a room, regardless of whether payment is made by cash or card.
 - a. Allows for accountability of guests at hotels
 - b. Allows hotel management and police to contact the responsible party/renter when problems arise

- 2) **Add 7.60.010(3):** The second proposal is to add language that holds the renter liable for incidents of disorderly conduct or large groups causing disruptions within the hotel, especially when the renters are not present.
 - a. This addition would be added as "Renter's liability" clause
 - b. Allows hotel staff to be a complainant, and police to issue municipal citations if violations occur

See proposed language for 7.60 on the attached document. Thank you for considering these changes to make our City's visitors at our hotels more pleasant, safe and secure.

Respectfully,
Captain Luke Vetter & Sergeant Kurt Svatek.