

Opinion

Daytona Beach pursues skewed penalties for enforcement | LETTERS

Posted Sep 22, 2019 at 11:06 PM

On Sept 17, the [Daytona Beach News Journal](#) reported that APM Construction has delayed the completion date for the First Step Homeless Shelter a fourth time. Quoting The News-Journal, “City officials are deciding now whether to subject APM to daily fines up to \$3,000 that are allowed under the contract.” They are “deciding?” Providing shelter, care, counseling, and job opportunities for our homeless population is an urgent priority for our community. Why is imposing fines in response to a fourth delay even a question?

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The very next evening, at the Sept. 18 Daytona Beach City Commission meeting, Commissioner Quanita May victoriously confirmed with City Attorney Bob Jagger that a magistrate can impose fines of up to \$15,000/day for homeowners who operate what the city deems “illegal” vacation rentals. (She originally made this request at the Aug. 7 City Commission meeting). All that is needed is to demonstrate these rentals cause “irreparable harm” to the community.

Do I understand this correctly? The city has to “consider” whether or not to fine a large construction company that has repeatedly failed to meet its obligations to build an important community resource. At the same time, the city could fine a citizen immediately, at five times the rate that may possibly be imposed on APM, for hosting a tourist in his home.

The only irreparable harm being done here is to the hard-working, tax-paying citizens who are exercising their constitutionally protected property rights.

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