

Landlords

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landlords rent out their properties to tenants in the city.

"Those that were there were very surprised about the things they can do as landlords, since not many of them were clear on what their roles were and what the police's role is in maintaining their properties," said Nicklus.

"They do have a responsibility to keep their properties safe. They also have a responsibility to people living around the neighborhood so real estate values do not plummet there."

Nicklus added city regulations allowing renters to obtain police reports involving their properties were an "eye opener" for many in attendance.

Both Nicklus and Finch acknowledged the 34 landlords that showed up for the session could be said to be "the good landlords" who are already engaged with the city.

Nicklus stated Weed and Seed and the City of Millville are looking into ways to reach out to the other 2,466 who did not turn out.

"You're always going to have people who just don't care," said Nicklus. "But it's important to have that link between the city and the landlords, which is why we're going to be setting up a landlord-city board with that purpose in mind."

Finch, who is heading a push to strengthen and promote strict enforcement of the city's code regulations, stated his inspections department will hit negligent landlords "in the pocketbooks."

"We want to send a message that we mean business," he said. "We can cite them, fine them, and, if they aren't responsive, we can revoke their permit to rent in the city."

"Eventually, they'll learn it's much easier to follow the rules."

Finch commended Nicklus for organizing the meeting, which he hailed as the first time the city had offered information to its renters reviewing ordinances, including Millville's new crime-free lease laws.

"We have a lot of good landlords and a lot of bad," he said. "Rentals are an important part of the city; not everyone can afford to buy their own house. These people should be able to live without fear of poor or dangerous living conditions."

According to Nicklus, the next landlord training session is being planned for the spring.