

December 2021

www.vtstra.org



**VTSTRA**

VERMONT SHORT TERM RENTAL ALLIANCE

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Advancing a responsible  
vacation rental and homestay  
industry in Vermont.

Prepared by:

**Julie Marks**, Founder & Director  
director@vtstra.org



# CONTENTS



Photo Courtesy of VTSTRA Member, Cyndy Phillips

- Words From Our Founder
- 2021 Board of Directors
- Mission, Vision, Values
- 2021 Goals & Objectives
- Organization Development
- Advocacy Achievements
- Education Achievements
- Community Achievements
- Financial Reports

# WORDS FROM OUR FOUNDER

## **Julie Marks**

Founder & Director

director@vtstra.org



## Thank you for braving this challenge!

**In its inaugural year, the Vermont Short-Term Rental Alliance (VTSTRA) is already changing the conversation on short-term rentals in Vermont.**

Dear VTSTRA members, sponsors & supporters:

Less than a year ago, vacation rental owners and short-term rental hosts were completely unrepresented in the policy discussions that were being had around the state. As an STR host myself who has created a self-sustaining business through Vermont's vibrant vacation rental industry, I knew this had to change.

This year, VTSTRA united over 600 STR owners and managers across the state to stand together as supporters of a newly recognized community with a shared goal: to protect vacation home rentals and home-sharing businesses in Vermont. And protecting our right to rent means working with regulators to create a regulatory environment where we can achieve long-term, mutually beneficial outcomes.

Vermont should be a place where we all can live peacefully, earn a comfortable living, and enjoy feeling safe and respected in our communities. STRs make this dream a reality for so many Vermonters and Vermont homeowners--myself included!

My goal is to have VTSTRA become more than an advocacy group. It should be an active business association for STR owners and managers as well. As business owners, we all have an interest in advancing Vermont's vacation rental industry in ways that prove its long-term worth, to not just the state, but to our most skeptical neighbors too.

Our biggest challenge ahead will be correcting the misconceptions around short-term rentals. It won't be easy, but we have already started making an impact. Thank you to everyone who immediately stepped up to this challenge with passion and professionalism. Being a part of the vacation rental industry in Vermont is something to be proud of. Let's continue to protect it.

~With gratitude, Julie M.



# 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Julie Marks, Chair**  
Burlington housing provider  
& owner of [Homestead Hospitality](#) vacation rentals  
in Jericho, Vermont

All VTSTRA Board of Directors are Host Members of the organization and committed to the mission, vision, and values of VTSTRA. Read full bios at [www.vtstra.org/about](http://www.vtstra.org/about).

Host Members vote to elect Board of Directors at the VTSTRA Annual Meeting. Up to 13 Host Members may serve at one time.

To apply, email: [director@vtstra.org](mailto:director@vtstra.org)



**Lucas Jenson, Treasurer**  
Burlington housing provider  
& STR host in Burlington &  
South Hero, Vermont



**Sibylle Kim, Secretary**  
Owner of [Villa Ausblick](#)  
[vacation rental](#) in  
Waterbury, Vermont



**Matt Latham, Member**  
Owner of [Storied Stay](#)  
vacation rentals in  
Manchester, Vermont



**Carin McCarthy, Member**  
Owner of [Vermont Bed & Breakfast at Russel Young Farm](#) in Bristol, Vermont



# MISSION, VISION & VALUES

## VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to be the voice for the vacation home and short-term rental industry in Vermont.



Photo Courtesy of VTSTRA Member,  
[Stone City Treehouse](#)

## MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to represent and advance the interests of short-term rental operators and vacation rental owners in Vermont; while providing members with the educational, networking, and other resources they need to run responsible and profitable businesses.

## VALUES STATEMENT

We value a thriving vacation home and short-term rental industry that:

- Strengthens the Vermont economy
- Prioritizes guest safety
- Offers exceptional hospitality
- Promotes the best of Vermont
- Respects the well-being of neighbors
- Cares for our communities & natural environment

# 2021 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Vermont Short-Term Rental Alliance, Inc. ("VTSTRA") was registered on February 26, 2021 with the Vermont Secretary of State as a member-based nonprofit corporation.

At the time of its founding, there was one immediate objective: give short-term rental operators representation during state policy-making decisions.

As the organization developed, three central themes emerged: advocacy, education, and community -- and within each, the focus this year hinged on creation.

As the only business association for Vermont's vacation rental owners and homestay hosts, VTSTRA modeled its structure off similar advocacy groups with demonstrated success in other parts of the United States.

## ADVOCACY GOAL:



Create a collective voice of short-term rental operators in Vermont

## EDUCATION GOAL:



Create resources so people can learn about STRs and governments can regulate them wisely

## COMMUNITY GOAL:



Create a supportive network just for Vermont's vacation rental owners and managers





# ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

## MEMBER-DRIVEN & VOLUNTEER-RUN

In 2021, the Vermont Short Term Rental Alliance was fully run and managed by volunteers. Initially guided by a team of 12 Advisors (all short-term rental hosts) and a hired legal firm, (Gravel & Shea) VTSTRA began taking form as a structured organization.

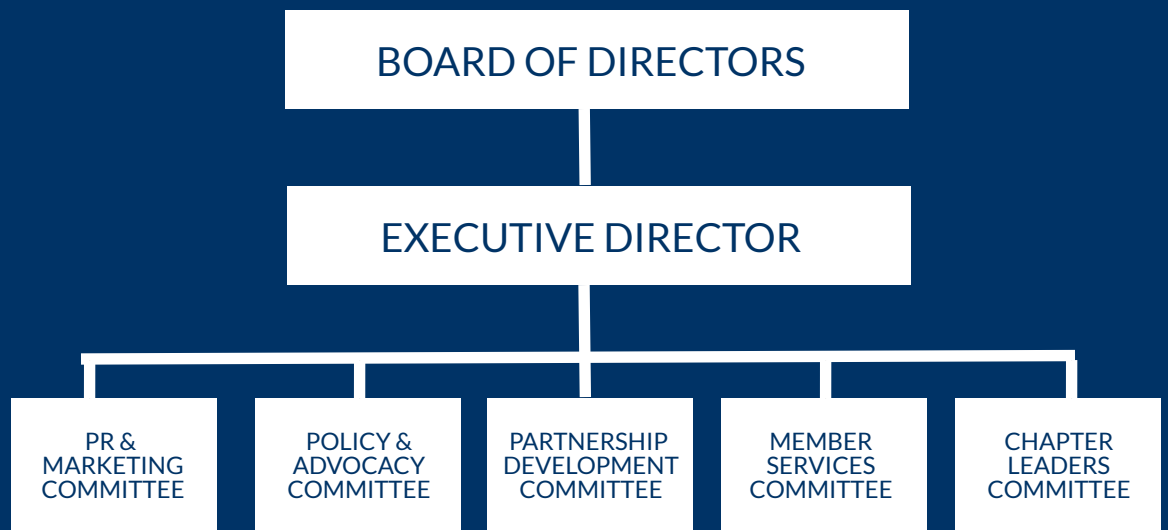
Within a month, a Board of Directors was appointed and organizational by-laws were adopted. More volunteers were recruited and multiple committees began taking shape to support VTSTRA initiatives.



Photo Courtesy of VTSTRA Member, [Homestead Hospitality](#)

**All members of VTSTRA are eligible to volunteer and participate in our monthly committee meetings.**

## ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE



# ADVOCACY ACHIEVEMENTS

## LOBBYING & POLITICAL STRATEGY

In March 2021, VTSTRA contracted the professional services of [MMR, LLC](#) to provide legislative monitoring, strategic advice, and policy development. MMR has extensive experience representing clients before the Vermont General Assembly and has assisted VTSTRA in presenting verbal testimony before House Legislative Committees and other written communications and publications that aim to advance the representation of VTSTRA members' interests in policy development at state and municipal levels. Learn more at [www.mmrvt.com](http://www.mmrvt.com).

## TALKS & TESTIMONY

In 2021, VTSTRA engaged in a number of speaking events and advocacy opportunities, including:

- Testifying before the VT State House Committee on General, Housing & Military Affairs on bill S.79
- Presenting to the Legislative Tourism Caucus
- Presenting to the Policy Committee of the Women Business Owners Network of Vermont

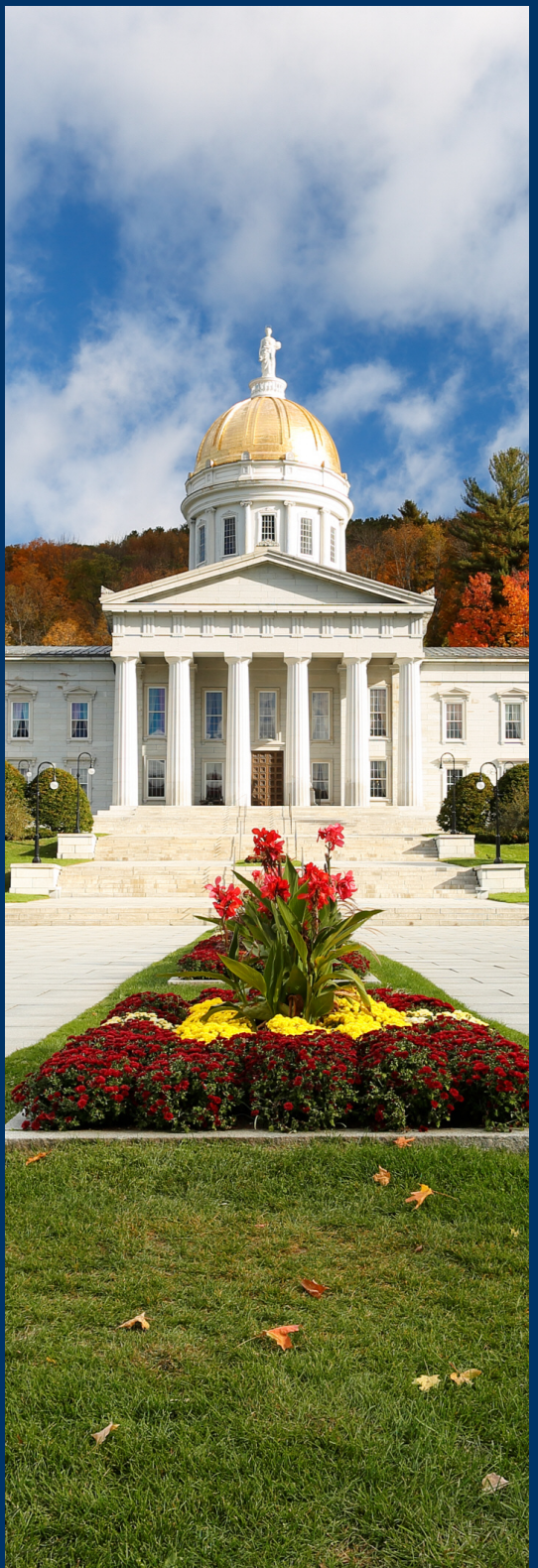
## PETITIONS

Over 6,000 signatures were collected on our petition to stop bill H.200 and oppose residency requirements. The petition will remain active through the 2022 Legislative Session. [www.change.org/shorttermrentals](http://www.change.org/shorttermrentals)

In December 2021, a second petition was launched opposing a residency requirement for all STRs proposed by the City of Burlington. [www.change.org/burlingtonstr](http://www.change.org/burlingtonstr)

## LOCAL ENGAGEMENT

To engage new and prospective members, VTSTRA launched volunteer [Chapter Leader](#) positions to assist communities in managing public participation in municipal STR regulation processes. In 2021, VTSTRA filled 8 Chapter Leader positions, covering the towns and regions of Burlington, Bondville, Champlain Islands, Jericho, Killington, Mad River Valley, Waterbury, Wilmington, and Winhall.





# EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENTS

## ONLINE PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES

In partnership with Rent Responsibly, VTSTRA published two key resources for Vermont's state and local governments in July of 2021: 1) a [research review](#) on Best Practices in Regulating Short-Term Rentals, and 2) a [stepwise approach](#) Guide to Regulating Short-Term Rentals for Cities and Towns. Additionally, the VTSTRA website offers informational content to the public on STR safety standards and frequently asked questions, as well as a compilation of STR research, facts, and news media coverage. (View the "Learn" tab on [www.vtstra.org](http://www.vtstra.org))

## WEBINAR SERIES

In September 2021, VTSTRA hosted the first of its monthly webinar series, aimed at connecting Vermont hosts to the products, services, and information they need to run more responsible and profitable businesses.

Guest speakers in 2021 included representatives from: Proper Insurance; Evolution Financial Coaching; and MMR, LLC.

## NEWSLETTERS

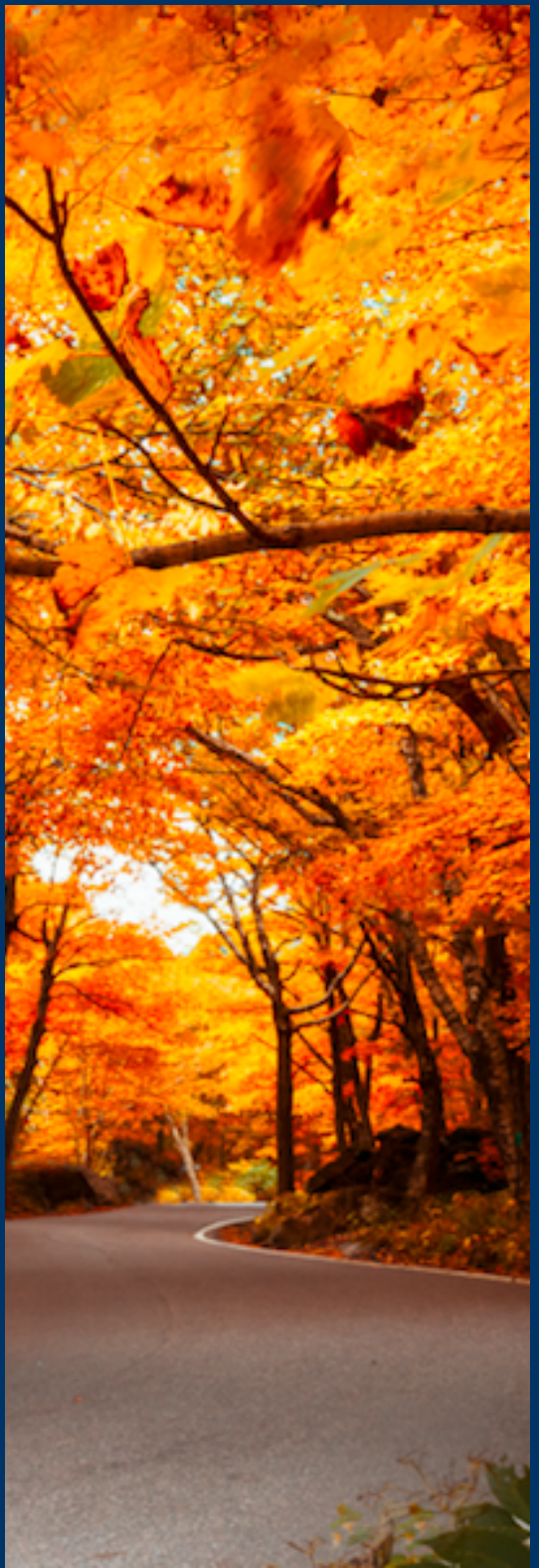
In 2021, VTSTRA published 36 e-newsletters to an audience that reached 1,000+ in December 2021.

We've benefited from high reader engagement. Our average newsletter open rate is 57.2%, compared to the industry average of 39%.

## PRESS & MEDIA

In 2021, VTSTRA received notable press coverage throughout the year in both print and television media. Select appearances in Vermont's most popular news media sources are linked below:

- [Burlington Free Press \(subscribers only\)](#)
- [VT Digger](#)
- [Seven Days](#)
- [WCAX Channel 3 News](#)
- [Compass Vermont News](#)



# COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENTS

## ALLIANCE MEMBERS

In the first 5 months after our launch, over 500 people added their names to the VTSTRA website to demonstrate support for the protection of short-term rentals. During that time, VTSTRA received donations from 165 unique donors and collected hundreds of testimonials from public supporters which can be viewed online: [vtstra.org/voices](https://vtstra.org/voices)

On July 22, 2021, VTSTRA transitioned its model to become a member-based organization. Since then, membership has grown steadily month over month. As of December 30, 2021, VTSTRA represents 63 Host Members and 22 Affiliate Members.

## NETWORKING EVENTS

In 2021, VTSTRA attended and hosted several events to start bringing the community of Vermont STR hosts and vacation rental operators together. A few of VTSTRA's 2021 networking activities included:

- Sponsoring the Vermont Tourism Summit, hosted by the VT Department of Tourism & Marketing in Killington, VT
- Attending the VRMA New England Connect conference, hosted by the VRMA in Portland, ME
- Attending the 2021 Northwest Vacation Rental Professionals Conference in Seaside, OR
- Hosting regular "Sip n' STR" community social events supported by local businesses

## FRIENDS & SPONSORS

Paramount to this inaugural year has been the development of new relationships with businesses and organizations that have supported VTSTRA in some way or another. They include, but are not limited to:

- [Breezeway](#), Sustaining Sponsor
- [Vermont Virtual Tours](#), Advancing Sponsor
- [The Killington Group](#), Contributing Sponsor
- [Chantal Pilon, Realtor](#), Contributing Sponsor
- [Evolution Financial Coaching](#), Donor
- [Vermont Flannel Company](#), Donor
- [Vermont Magazine](#), Donor
- [Rent Responsibly](#), Friend
- [Vermont Association of Realtors](#), Friend
- [VRPOME](#), Friend
- [Mt. Washington Valley Association](#), Friend
- [Vermont Collaborative Circle](#), Friend
- [VRMA](#), Friend
- [Airbnb](#), Friend
- [Vrbo/Expedia Group](#), Friend
- [Proper Insurance](#), Friend
- [ASTRHO](#), Friend
- and so many more!





# 2021 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

## GROSS REVENUE

**63** HOST MEMBERS

ANNUAL HOST MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

▲ \$ 16,000

**22** AFFILIATE MEMBERS

ANNUAL AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

▲ \$ 2,200

**4** BUSINESS SPONSORS

ANNUAL BUSINESS SPONSOR CONTRIBUTIONS

▲ \$ 2,000

**165** UNIQUE DONORS

DONATIONS

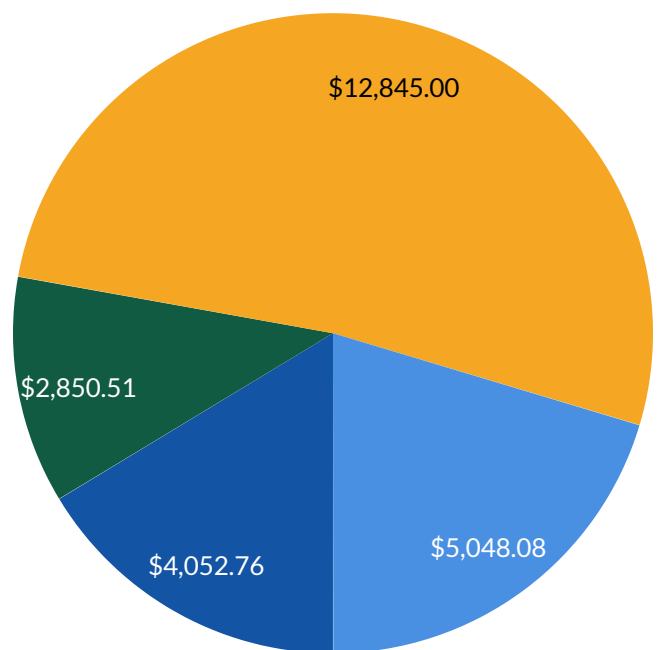
▲ \$ 16,805

## SPEND ANALYSIS

The majority of the VTSTRA 2021 budget was directed toward retaining our professional lobbyists and funding as-needed attorney counsel.

VTSTRA submitted its application for tax-exempt status under the 501(c)(6) section of the IRS tax code in November 2021 and is awaiting further notice.

No salaries or stipends were paid in 2021 to any member of VTSTRA or the Board of Directors.



- Administration (16.34%)   ■ Marketing & Outreach (11.5%)
- Advocacy (Lobbying & Legal) (51.8%)
- Community Building & Education (20.36%)

# 2021 FINANCIAL DETAIL

## MONTHLY REVENUE

Gross Revenue by Source	2021 Tax Year												Totals
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	
Donations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,725.00	\$ 5,590.00	\$ 1,290.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 275.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,600.00	\$ 25.00	\$ -	\$ 16,805.00
Membership - Host (\$250)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 16,000.00
Membership - Affiliate (\$100)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 800.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 2,200.00
Sponsorship - Contributing (\$250)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
Sponsorship - Advancing (\$500)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500.00
Sponsorship - Sustaining (\$1000)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00
Other (Eventbrite)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 60.00
Other	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 5,725.00</b>	<b>\$ 5,590.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,790.00</b>	<b>\$ 300.00</b>	<b>\$ 3,775.00</b>	<b>\$ 4,550.00</b>	<b>\$ 3,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 7,330.00</b>	<b>\$ 2,935.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,570.00</b>	<b>\$ 37,065.00</b>

## MONTHLY EXPENSES

Expenses paid by Vermont Short Term Rental Alliance, Inc.	2021 Tax Year												Totals
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	
<b>Administration Budget</b>													
Website (Squarespace domain & add-ons)	\$ 216.00	Est. 2/26/21	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 54.00	\$ 54.00	\$ 54.00	\$ 54.00	\$ 54.00	\$ 54.00	\$ 540.00
Cloud Recording of Communication (Zoom) - Monthly	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 42.40	\$ 42.40	\$ 84.80
Email Communication (Google Workspace via Squarespace)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	\$ 240.00
Phone Communication (Google Fi)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 119.64	\$ 18.39	\$ 18.35	\$ 18.58	\$ 20.47	\$ 18.62	\$ 18.30	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 292.55
Mail Communication (Richmond US Post Office) - Annual	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 130.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 130.00
Banking Services (VSECU)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 145.41	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 145.41
Legal Expenses (Gravel & Shea PC)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,570.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 220.00	\$ 55.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,845.00
Registration - Nonprofit Corporation (Secretary of State)	\$ -	\$ 125.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 125.00
Registration - Assumed Business Name (Secretary of State)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50.00
Registration - IRS Tax Exempt Status	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
<b>Marketing &amp; Development Budget</b>													
Advertising (Print & Digital)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 832.50	\$ -	\$ 544.00	\$ 57.69	\$ 54.26	\$ 149.99	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,638.44
Collateral (Brochures, Flyers, Business Cards, Stickers)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 24.00	\$ 156.00	\$ -	\$ 313.24	\$ 84.00	\$ 240.98	\$ 188.00	\$ -	\$ 1,036.22
Subscription (Canva) - Annual	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 119.99	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 119.99
Material Assets (Durable)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 85.86	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 85.86
<b>Member Services: Lobbying &amp; Legal Counsel</b>													
Lobbying (MMR, LLC)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,370.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 11,370.00
Legal Fees (MSK Attorneys & John Franco Esq.)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,235.00	\$ 240.00	\$ 1,475.00
<b>Member Services: Community Building &amp; Education</b>													
Meeting Communication (Zoom) - Annual	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 158.89	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 158.89
Webinar Communication (Zoom) - Monthly	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 42.40	\$ 42.40	\$ 42.40	\$ 83.42	\$ 83.74	\$ 83.74	\$ 83.74	\$ 83.74	\$ 545.58
Sponsorships & Networking Events	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,115.00	\$ 299.00	\$ 489.00	\$ 1,883.00
News/Media Subscriptions	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 58.85	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 58.85
Subscription (Piktochart) - Annual	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 39.99	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 39.99
Payment Processing Fee - Squarespace (3%)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 175.50	\$ 189.75	\$ 10.80	\$ 9.00	\$ 44.75	\$ 43.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 159.50	\$ 27.25	\$ 15.50	\$ 710.05
Payment Processing Fees - Stripe	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 106.50	\$ 185.24	\$ 9.04	\$ 9.61	\$ 114.88	\$ 131.30	\$ 106.60	\$ 209.96	\$ 80.75	\$ 47.35	\$ 1,081.23
Payment Processing Fees - PayPal	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10.93	\$ 45.09	\$ 3.50	\$ -	\$ 1.75	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3.98	\$ 1.36	\$ -	\$ 66.61
Subscription (SurveyMonkey) - Annual	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 384.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 384.00
Subscription (QR Code Generator) - Annual	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 119.88	\$ -	\$ 119.88
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>\$216.00</b>	<b>\$125.00</b>	<b>\$791.98</b>	<b>\$4,354.96</b>	<b>\$1,590.98</b>	<b>\$2,053.59</b>	<b>\$2,033.83</b>	<b>\$2,192.04</b>	<b>\$1,860.63</b>	<b>\$3,305.87</b>	<b>\$3,425.38</b>	<b>\$2,845.99</b>	<b>\$24,796.33</b>

## REGISTERED INFORMATION

BUSINESS NAME: VERMONT SHORT TERM RENTAL ALLIANCE, INC. ("VTSTRA")

ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 282, RICHMOND, VT 05477 USA

PHONE: 802-829-4024

EMAIL: DIRECTOR@VTSTRA.ORG

WEBSITE: WWW.VTSTRA.ORG

FEDERAL TAX EIN: 87-3212594

