



MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF NEW PORT RICHEY

NEW PORT RICHEY CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

5919 MAIN STREET, NEW PORT RICHEY, FLORIDA

April 25, 2017

5:00 PM

ORDER OF
BUSINESS

1 Call to Order - Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Rob Marlowe at 5:00 pm. Those in attendance were, Deputy Mayor Jeff Starkey, Councilman Bill Phillips, Councilwoman Judy DeBella Thomas and Councilman Chopper Davis.

Also in attendance were City Manager Debbie Manns, City Clerk Judy Meyers, Chief of Police Kim Bogart, Development Director Lisa Fierce, Technology Solutions Director Bryan Weed and Senior Planner Chris Mettler.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2 Discussion on Medical Marijuana- Page 2

City Manager Manns made the introduction to City Council. She stated that Amendment 2 was approved in November 2016 and went into effect on January 3, 2017. Required the Department of Health (DOH) to set regulations for issuance of cards, rules and caregivers. She stated the purpose of the discussion this evening is to establish framework by which future decisions are made regarding ordinances and medical cannabis dispensaries as well as the sale. Staff has prepared a power point presentation which will bring Council up to date on what staff has done and ordinance issues as well as what need to be done to comply with moratorium. She then introduced Lisa Fierce who made a presentation to Council.

Ms. Fierce began her presentation with a power point and stated that the Charlotte's Web law has been in effect since 2014. The law created a compassionate use registry. In 2015, Right-to-try Act was enacted for terminally ill patients. In 2016 the Act was expanded for full strength marijuana. The DOH is to implement regulations by July 3, 2017. There are two Bills currently in legislative session, Senate Bill 406 which gives local government the right to regulate land use for dispensaries. Pre-empt cultivate to the state. House Bill 1397 prohibits smoking and edibles and allows a city to charge permit fees. Ms. Fierce then discussed some of the terminology associated with marijuana. THC provides a psychoactive high and CBD provides an

anti-seizure effect. She then discussed the process to obtain medical marijuana. The products available include capsules, oral solution, topical lotion and vapor. There are seven approved dispensing organizations throughout Florida. DOH tracks from seed to sale. She stated that she and Chris Mettler toured two dispensaries, Trulieve and Surterra. She then showed photos from the tours. Prices of the products range from \$30-\$300 for 45 day supply.

Ms. Fierce stated that current City zoning is provided in HC District and C-2 District with a 500 foot separation between dispensary and other restricted personal use places and other places such as schools, etc. Ms. Fierce then discussed what other municipalities and counties are doing or have done regarding regulations. Ms. Fierce then discussed the City's code amendment issues including allowing grow facilities, preferred locations, separation distances, limiting is to certain zoning districts, separate from churches, schools, daycare, alcohol sales, adult uses, hours of operation, require odor mitigation, delivery devices, locations for "use" and to revisit ordinance if recreational marijuana is legalized. Ms. Fierce then discussed possible safety issues including synthetic cannabinoids, illegal growing, fire regulations, employee safety. She ended her presentation by discussing another work session on May 31, 2017, LDRB review in June and presentation to Council in July.

Mayor Marlowe then invited Garyn Angel to the podium to speak. Mr. Angel stated that he travels around the world speaking on this issue. He stated that this Friday there is a symposium at USF from 8:30-12:30. He stated that cannabis has evolved far beyond the seven dispensaries that are in the state. He stated to provide the best healthcare you need to provide access. Set up right legislative and regulatory framework.

Mayor Marlowe then called Monica Rousseau from the Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention to the podium to speak. Ms. Rousseau stated their job is to provide education. They have helped craft moratorium with the PCSO. She stated their goal is to strategize and get stakeholders together for substance abuse. Created the Marijuana Task Force and reviewed policies from around the United States. Ms. Rousseau stated that they are always here as an educational resource and what the best implementation is. Christina Roberto and Kent Runyon then spoke regarding the marijuana task force. Ms. Roberto spoke about the two current bills in the Florida legislature. She stated that the Senate bill has more support from the Amendment 2 supporters. The House bill provides for law enforcement training and public service campaigns. Both want testing and regulations. The Marijuana Task Force wants to decrease chance for abuse and make sure that it is not going to be marketed to children. If medicine should be treated as such and not sold in convenience stores. Mr. Runyon then spoke. He stated he sees addiction every day with his current profession. He is concerned for youth due to the increased access. He stated to make sure it is accessible to those who are prescribed to have it. He suggested that it be given thought about positioning and marketing.

Mayor Marlowe then opened the floor for public comment. Anthony Livio came forward to speak. He stated that he agreed C-2 zoning would be appropriate.

Michelle Flood then came forward to speak. She stated that she was in Tallahassee last week for the Rally in Tally. She stated there were parents there who wished there were edibles. She stated that dispensaries should be called wellness centers. If it is medicine it should be near doctors. It should be normalized and humanized.

Emily Phillips stated that she is a patient and advocate. She wants to go to a safe location to get her medicine. Don't treat like drug addicts or criminals. Should be respected.

Jamie Howe came forward to speak. She was diagnosed with EPI which is pancreatic failure. Needed an alternative to pain killers. Started looking into alternative treatments. She did research on cannabis. Dispensaries will decrease healthcare costs. Cannabis industry will generate revenue.

Michelle Winchell came forward to speak. She has been disabled for seven years. She was

previously an RN. Trying to limit opiates. Limit the equivalent to 100 mg of morphine. Her medication is higher doses. She has lost part of her colon due to the opiates. She has qualified for compassionate use and is awaiting her card. Cannabis will help get people off of opiates. Cannot overdose on cannabis. Cannabis is medication not a drug.

Kerry Shattles-delaff came forward to speak. Need to have access to safe locations to get their medicine. Not in locations without public transportation. Sensible regulation with much support of various organizations. Why support because science provides proof. Decriminalization decades behind trend and business opportunities. Several counties and cities around Florida that have decriminalized. She asked where Council's thoughts are on decriminalization.

Denise Houston came forward to thank Council for listening. She asked Council to be forward thinking.

Tara Tedrow attorney for Knox Medical came forward and made a presentation to Council. She stated the seven dispensaries were based on the Water Management Districts. Dispensaries do not bring shame or concern. They are not a seedy establishment. Reality is medical cannabis are in capsules and drops. The extraction of oil is technical. Florida Administrative Code and State Statutes are very strict. Comprehensive testing at every stage. She then discussed Knox's security at their dispensary and delivery vehicles.

Rachel Nichol came forward to speak. She is a registered patient and displayed her card to Council. She is on medical cannabis for fibromyalgia and PTSD. Since being on medical cannabis she has gone from seven to one prescription. Would like to have access to pick up medication. Consider all of the patients and keep out of the hands of children. Personal safety for medication.

Mary Young came forward to speak. She has Crohn's Disease and has been on medication for the last twenty-five years. After medical side effects she researched cannabis oil. She is currently in the process to become a medical cannabis patient. Medical cannabis dispensary should be considered similar to a health food store.

John Kane came forward to speak. Amazed at interest in cannabis. He stated if you allow guns in schools there is no issue in Tallahassee or public meetings. Misconceptions on cannabis. No toxicity level in cannabis. List of conditions that can be treated. Not anything to be afraid of. Keep it close to doctors.

Harry Stein came forward to speak. He stated cannabis is a medicine that has been around for 4,000 years and spans across different cultures. Campaign of misinformation based on racist views. He stated that dispensaries should be along the bus lines and in a family-friendly zone. Cannabis will be disbursed as written by the physician. C-2 zoning is appropriate. Be aware of what is happening in Tallahassee.

Robert Roundtree came forward to speak on behalf of Buds for Vets. Since using medical cannabis he has been able to get off of ten other drugs. Should not be illegal to heal yourself. Same access as synthetic pharmaceuticals. 3% of veterans have PTSD. Limiting access will increase PTSD cases. Should have the same access as would to CVS, etc. Limiting access will increase delivery model and cause undue financial burden. Patients not criminals.

With no one else coming forward, Mayor Marlowe closed public comment and returned the floor to Council. Mayor Marlowe began by stating the next work session will be on May 31st and by then the legislative session will be over. He stated that his inclination that it should be treated as a medical facility and not in an industrial park. He wants to visit Trulieve in person. He has concerns over what will ultimately happen with recreational marijuana in the next two years.

Deputy Mayor Starkey referenced a USA Today article about medical cannabis and children with

autism. The Council are progressive thinkers. He prefers wellness center as opposed to dispensary. Only way to qualify for full strength marijuana is if you are terminally ill. He commended Ms. Fierce and her staff for their research and photos presented. Sky is the limit on what cannabis can do. Opioids kill people on a daily basis. He is excited about having a professional wellness center in the city. He would like to have a discussion on decriminalizing small amounts of marijuana. Mayor Marlowe agreed opioids are bad news. He stated his mother was on them after she broke her hip earlier this year. After getting her out of the hospital first thing they did was ween her off.

Councilman Phillips stated we are already being proactive by already having it in the ordinance zoned for C-2. He would like to see the areas drawn of where the dispensaries would be allowed to sit then the decision could be made of where they should be. Preconceived notions that Council does not want to embrace this but they do. Council is compassionate. City of Port Richey and Pasco County dovetails to the city. They need to decide where they want to place them. If we really want to embrace and let VA know we want them in our backyard we should have a dispensary adjacent to the VA facility. He believes that to look into us that we are compassionate and place services where they are accessible. Does not want to dovetail decriminalization with this as Amendment 2 was the only thing approved by voters. He does want to have the conversation after more facts. Want to identify zones to place dispensaries to make educated decision on where to place now and in the future. We are a city of many different individuals. Conversation is good and wants to see a location map so that we are all on the same page as we make decisions on location and availability. Mayor Marlowe added that the location map should also include the exclusion distances.

Councilwoman De Bella Thomas thanked Ms. Fierce for her presentation and asked for a copy of the issues to be sent to them. Medical marijuana is what is legal and that is what we are dealing with. Applauded FLC for their learning modules and the issues that came out of the modules were ones she shared included zoning and land use. Reviewing some of the ordinances by other cities they have created similar districts as the City has. She thanked everyone who came out and spoke.

3 Adjournment

There being no further business to consider, upon proper motion, the meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Approved: _____ (date)

_____ (signed)

Initialed: _____

Judy Meyers, City Clerk