

Medical Marijuana Moratorium Petition

Eight or ten people attend at least one Board of Selectmen meeting each month. If you are one of those, you will see and hear first hand how the issues before the Board develop and are addressed. If you only attend a meeting occasionally, or not at all, you might hear something has been decided one way, wait for the next logical step, only to discover later that the original decision by the Board has been reversed. The Board tries to carefully consider each issue before a vote after having had conversations with voters, legal counsel, and amongst the Board and with citizens at the meetings. On June 28th, the Board voted (2-1) in favor of calling a special town meeting to consider a moratorium on medical marijuana facilities in Baldwin. At the subsequent 5 July meeting, the Board reconsidered that action and voted (3-0) against calling the special town meeting. The selectmen who had voted in favor of the special town meeting in the first vote had expressed their desire to let the town voters have a voice in the question. During the discussion before the subsequent vote, they stated their reason for reconsideration was the realization that enforcement of a moratorium would require the selectmen to direct the CEO to deny permits to applicants for medical marijuana facilities, which the Board has been advised is illegal under Maine statutes. Hence the Board did not want to vote in favor of directing the CEO to break the law. We apologize for any confusion that we have caused but feel our last vote is the correct one. To summarize where the town now stands: At the public hearing on the subject and in subsequent discussions, the Planning Board has stated that a Conditional Use Permit is not currently required by those who wish to establish a medical marijuana grow facility within those areas of Baldwin that allow agriculture. The town does have the ability to establish ordinances on the subject if public safety is an issue but they can't block related activities prior to implementing an ordinance. The subject will be tracked and a decision made after the November vote on recreational marijuana legalization, if and what ordinances need to be developed.

The Board of Selectmen did vote at the 5 July meeting to hold a special town meeting in July. It was tentatively scheduled for Saturday 23th, at 0900. It will be to seek approval from the voters on several budget related questions including funding for road paving, repairs to fire equipment, and an increase to the office compensation budget. We will provide more details in the next few days.

Sincerely
Baldwin Board of Selectmen