

Parsonsfield Planning Board Meeting
634 North Rd Parsonsfield, ME
Thursday August 13th, 2020

Public Hearing for Recreational Marijuana Warrant Articles

Minutes

In Attendance: Nate Stacey (Vice Chair), Rick Sullivan (Chair), Brendan Adelman, Thelma Lavoie, Tom Winter (Alternate)

Absent: Clifford Krolick (Alternate), Andy Yale

Also, In Attendance: Lindsay Gagne, Harvey Macomber, Edward Griggs, Chris Gadomsky, Trevor Sanborn,

Mr. Sullivan Opens the public hearing at 6:00pm

Mr. Winter Explains there are four warrant articles. One for each recreational marijuana facility. This includes Marijuana stores, cultivation, product manufacturing and testing facilities.

Public member States he is concerned there is a lack of information on each of these facilities, however, when offered an explanation, he then states he knows what they are.

Mr. Stacey Explains these warrant articles are only to see if the town wants to opt in to these facilities or not opt in. If the town votes no to any or all articles, then the planning board will take no further action and that facility will be prohibited. If the town votes yes to any or all of them, then the planning board will have one year to craft zoning ordinances. If no ordinances are passed within that time frame, then the default regulations will be the state regulations.

Mr. Griggs States article 3 should be effective January 1st because otherwise, a different date may put the crop off till longer depending on the growing season.

Public Member States one year to craft zoning ordinances would be a reasonable time frame and allows the town to determine zoning.

Mr. Gadomski States he would like the town to align with the state regulations with no further restrictions added. He would also like the wording to change from “Marijuana” to “Cannabis”. He believes one year is too long. And there is already zoning in place for farming, stores, manufacturing type uses.

Public member States when the law was passed, the state government gave the responsibility to the municipalities to decide how they would handle it. When the planning board initiated an opt in for the medical marijuana, he believes the board did not have enough time to craft the zoning ordinances, which could have been why it was voted down.

Mr. Gadomski States in 2016 when the state voted to legalize marijuana, the town voted by a majority vote for legalization.

Mr. Stacey Explains the process, After the public hearing, if there are no major changes to be made, the board will vote at its next meeting on these warrant articles and will pass them to the Select Board to schedule a special town meeting.

Public member Asks if there are any examples of ordinances that may be considered.

Mr. Adelman States there are none. If the town votes yes to opt in then there will be a process for crafting ordinances and having public input/participation. The board would anticipate having several workshops while developing any ordinances.

Public member Asks if the town would benefit from any tax revenue

Ms. Gagne States Maine is the only state that has not adopted revenue sharing for marijuana facilities. Revenue sharing is what other states have done, and it means what ever a store or facility generates in sales tax the state would share a percentage of that revenue with the municipality it was generated from. Currently MMA (Maine municipal association) has been working on a bill to allow for revenue sharing within the state of Maine.

Mr. Griggs Asks if these articles are voted no

Mr. Sullivan Then the town would not opt in and these facilities would not be authorized.

Public member Asks if voting yes to these articles would there be any consequences or disadvantages to the medical marijuana industry and those already invested in it.

Mr. Sullivan States caregivers are allowed, as well as, personal use. But otherwise, could not speculate on that.

Public member Asks if when crafting ordinances, can the town be less restrictive than state regulations

Mr. Sullivan Explains the town can be more restrictive but not less than the state regulations. He asks if there are any more comments or questions. There are none. He makes a motion to close the public hearing.

Mr. Adelman Seconds the motion

Motion passes. Vote: 4-0

The public hearing is closed at 6:35pm.

Draft completed by: Lindsay Gagne

Approved by board, Date: _____

Planning Board Chair or acting Chair
Name & Signature