

City of Cle Elum  
Study Session - July 12, 2016

CaU to Order - RoU CaU of Membership

The Study Session was called to order by Mayor Jay McGowan at 6:10 p.m. Members present were Arthur Scott, Lindsey Ozbolt, Ron Spears, Steven Harper, Mickey Holz and Christine Simpson. Other members present included City Administrator Rob Omans, City Attorney Alexandra Kenyon and City Clerk Kathi Swanson.

Purpose of the Special Study Session

The City Council is continuing to meet for ongoing discussion of the goals of the Council for the coming year. The meeting notice was duly published in the July 7, 2016 edition of the Northern Kittitas County Tribune.

The following items were discussed:

Cannabis Ordinance:

Mayor McGowan: Opened the Study Session for discussion

Kenyon Disend provided the Council with Ordinances in place at Shelton, Bellevue, North Bend and Ellensburg.

Steven Harper: Commented cannabis is federally controlled and illegal; he recommended strengthening the existing moratorium. Harper questioned the council if they are comfortable with a buffer zone of 500 feet. Harper also suggested legalized sales of cannabis may be a liability to the City, allowing people to break federal law and questioned the long term affects of cannabis use. Harper stated the legalization of cannabis could change the character of the City from good to bad and suggested limitations, including buffer zones. Harper is concerned that retail sales of cannabis is a cash only business; retailers transporting money to banks become a target by carrying large amounts of cash.

Christine Simpson: Suggested getting the opinions of the people of the community before making any decisions to write an ordinance allowing the sale of marijuana. *Members of the council explained the study session is to assist staff in drafting an ordinance, which will be presented for the Public Hearing process, at which time comments and input will be accepted from members of the community. Simpson suggested **notifying** everyone within a specific radius of a pending application for a storefront, especially when the commercial area directly abuts the residential area.*

Arthur Scott: Commented that Cities are setting up business to meet the demand; legalization helps alleviate the illegal problem and lets the City take control. Scott suggested reviewing the examples provided; revise and draft an ordinance that will suit the needs of the City and the people within the City; conduct the Public Hearing process and present the results in the form of an ordinance to be voted on. If notification within a

certain distance is what the council agrees should happen; it can be addressed in the ordinance. Businesses should also be responsible in the way they handle their cash.

Mayor McGowan: Commented the use and sale of cannabis is legal in the State of **Washington**. Revenues from the sales could go to the Police Department and would go far in getting another police officer.

Mickey Holz: Commented he has talked with at least 25 people, 24 of which were in favor of legalizing the sale of cannabis in Cle Elum. The 1 person against it thought sales should be done through pharmacies. Holz stated the original moratoriums on the sales of retail and medical marijuana were put in place to alleviate the problems that could occur in association with those sales. The argument did not materialize; marijuana does not kill, but illegal sales can kill.

Ron Spears: Commented that no deaths have been caused from the use of marijuana and the classification should be changed. Spears stated the notification process can be addressed during the Planning Process.

Lindsey Ozbolt: Stated, in regards to the draft regulations in front of council, that the sale of cannabis is permitted outright and the planning process is not required. Ozbolt further stated that codes change and reasonable assumptions should be made when homes abutting commercial areas are purchased. The need to re-address the issue of marijuana sales is based on the State acting to combine retail and medical; **which** is why the motion is being made; not because someone wants to open a store. The council is not looking to benefit one person specifically

Robert Omans: Spoke with the City Manager of Ellensburg, who said Ellensburg Police have had no trouble with the legalized sales **which** have proven to be a good income. Roslyn has considered marijuana a retail business and allows its sale. Also, the City has is within their rights to reduce the buffer zone (currently 1,000 feet) to 100 feet from anything other than schools and playgrounds.

The Study Session adjourned at 6:47.