

Local

City Council: dispensaries

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Although both recreational and medical marijuana use is legal in Oregon, it has not been legalized at the Federal level however; according to Rod Shaw of Oregon Green Free, in December 2014 the Federal Government did decriminalize medical marijuana. It was concluded when it comes to medical marijuana issues the Federal Government would defer to the states. “So in other words, as long as someone is obeying the state laws then the Federal Government won’t get involved,” said Shaw.

As the meeting with all councilors present commenced, City Manager Mike Kee addressed Council on the revamping of the city ordinance regarding business licenses.

He advised that there was wording in the unrevised ordinance that he felt was good and did not feel needed to be changed such as defining a business. “Our current business license isn’t much, and I really think it has to do more with special business licenses, but I took that made some changes and emailed that to council,” he said.

Kee also addressed the Transient Merchant License regarding people who instead of conducting business from a permanent location are mobile, for example a food cart, and the currently nonfunctioning Historic District Business Licenses.

With the new license there is a suggestion of either very low or no cost. The suggestion is that the form be on the internet and very easy to complete.

“A business license can be as simple as defining what a business is and stating that if you do business in Baker City you have to have a license and in order to have a license and do business in Baker City you have to comply with the law,” Kee said.

As the discussion turned to the council, first to speak was Councilman Thomas. He said, “After reading through this and talking with a lot of people, who reminded me that I fight for various things that I consider freedom, I think a business license is a great idea. I’m a little bit hesitant with Federal Law statement, knowing what those in Washington do. I’m hesitant that we will have them suddenly decide something else is illegal and on the marijuana issue itself, I’m beginning to wonder if just having the ability to regulate and know who buys, that might actually be a better thing

than the hundreds of unknown sellers of a product that has not been tested, hasn’t been regulated. We don’t know if it has been sprayed with anything, if anything has been added. But I do think on the issue of city licenses of businesses, I’m very much in favor of it but like I said I’m hesitant to throw in that Federal Part.”

Councilor Downing also weighed in saying, “The folks I’ve talked to about the business license they seem fine with it as long as were not going to use it now or down the road as a revenue source. A couple businesses were concerned about how often they would have to apply, every year every five years, if they are a well-established business that has been here 20 or more years, maybe every 10 years. But it seemed everyone I talked to, they liked the idea of a business license as long as it doesn’t become a revenue source.”

Kee responded. “My vision was a yearly license only because the information that we collect has to do with address, emergency information, people associated with the business. That is the only reason that I had envisioned a yearly license. Other than that I see no need to have a business license that expires.”

Mayor Mosier pointed out that in a meeting several months prior Debi Bainter, Executive Director of the Baker County Chamber of Commerce thought having current information on businesses would be a great way to market our City.

“As far as what future Councils will choose to do regarding business licenses and fees I don’t know.

All we can do is what’s in front of us,” said Mosier.

Holly Kerns from the Planning Department addressed the council regarding special permits issued by cities that can limit land use and place restrictions on businesses issued these permits such as the time, place and manner in which business is conducted.

Mosier was interested in learning more about the land use permits and suggested council consider this alternative as well.

City attorney Brent Smith advised that he had drawn up a plan before the last City Council meeting addressing this very thing but maybe did not express it well to the council.

County Commissioner Bill Harvey also addressed the council stating that businesses within the county, outside city limits, were required to have special use permits and as far as anyone wanting to have

a dispensary.

“We simply aren’t going to allow it,” he stated firmly.

Again, citizens spoke both for and against allowing dispensaries.

Testimony was given by Joni Miner who said, “I wasn’t one to really use marijuana. Occasionally, just to fit in. Until the day that my life went down the tubes. I was on OxyContin and other narcotics for 10 years. I started on 10 milligrams and by the end of 8 years I was up to 480 milligrams because there is no turning back once they put you on it, you just die eventually. I stopped breathing 15 times every hour. I didn’t know what was happening to me.

“I was not taken care of by the system, I was forgotten. Take your pill and be forgotten. Then someone offered me medical marijuana, and even under the influence of all those narcotics, I felt better. It pulled me out of the stupor. At first I was scared to ask my doctor, I thought it would make me a bad person. I was raised in the DARE program to stay off drugs. Guess where I ended up? Under the care of doctors and on drugs. The medical marijuana helped me get off of those drugs. Everybody can go home and drink their wine at night. People have liquor cabinets that their children see every day. Anything can be abused including sugar, alcohol, food.

“Marijuana is not a drug otherwise it would be regulated and in the pharmacy; it’s an herb. It’s natural and has been on the planet forever. Times are changing it’s a new scared straight program and you know what? I’ve been scared straight by the FDA who regulated the drug that almost killed me.”

Scott Knox also addressed the council on the other side. “The question has been raised here: Why not? We can cite a lot of statistics but let me give you one number, One. One child, your child, your grandchild do you want them exposed to marijuana?

“You’ve heard from a lot of people, but you haven’t heard from a single child. They can’t drive or move away they are stuck here and they are dependent upon you to protect them. Are you afraid or are you courageous? Even if it costs a little money, time or even a lawsuit are you willing to look that one child in the eye, years from now and say ‘it was too tough, it was too hard I didn’t want to risk it.’ I’ve not heard one person in favor of this actually speak

up for children. Stand up, speak up for them. Their voice is not being heard.”

With that Mayor Mosier stated, “I think for the next council session we’ll need to talk about a cleaned up version of the business license, maybe vote on it. And I’d also like to see a development moratorium and what the time lines actually are and how far out that would put us. What that would look like. Start talking with a planner.”

Councilman Merrill stated, “I would personally like to see the shorter version of the business license completed and prepared for consideration and potential vote.”

Mayor Mosier, before closing the meeting, reminded everyone that comments made became part of the public record.

Then the meeting was adjourned.

Protest.

Monday and Tuesday, before the City Council meeting a peaceful protest was held in front of City Hall in favor of medical marijuana dispensaries.

In an interview, protest organizer, Rodney Shaw an advocate with Oregon Green Free, said that his reason for becoming an advocate of this issue is that he genuinely wants to see those that truly need medicine have access to a product that is free from pesticides, mold and mildew.

He said, “A lot of people have the misconception that we are just a bunch of stoners, it’s not like that at all. We literally use our marijuana for medicine. We have a lot of cases where people have gotten off of OxyContin or other narcotics and used medical marijuana instead for pain management.”

Shaw said, “One of our biggest arguments for the dispensaries is about the people that have gotten away from OxyContin and other narcotics. Now those are not sitting in their medicine cabinets where maybe a grandchild gets a hold of it. The medical community takes its medicine very seriously. If they have youth around most of them will lock it up in some way to ensure the safety.

“We have been prescribed this by a physician, not a PA not a Nurse Practitioner but a medical doctor. Why put so much effort on trying to derail us from our right to have safe tested product free from pesticides and mold or mildew, medicine as prescribed by our physician. Having a dispensary opens the door for that product to be tested.

“When a patient doesn’t have a grower they can’t get medicine or are forced to turn to the black market, If forced to go to the black market we don’t know if that’s being supplied by drug cartels in Mexico, we don’t know if pesticides were used on it, we don’t know how it was taken care of.”

Oregon Green Free meets monthly and offers raffle items such as paraphernalia at its meetings so no one under 18 is allowed. “We also serve a meal to our people because we don’t know, it might be the only hot meal they have for the day ... After the meeting we congregate at my house and we give away medicine.”

Oath Keepers:

INLAND CAFE OWNER OFFERS MEMBERS SUPPLIES AT COST

PTSD SERVICES SPOTLIGHTED

COUNTY PREPAREDNESS FAIR SET FOR MAY 16

By Todd Arriola

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Around 30 people met in the Council Chambers of City Hall on Tuesday evening for the monthly Baker County Chapter of Oath Keepers meeting.

In attendance were Kody Justus, Chapter Coordinator, Jim Iler and Jake Brown, Chapter Assistant Coordinators, Bob Nelson, Chapter Neighborhood Watch, and Rosemary Dayhoff, Chapter Administrator.

Also in attendance were Bill Harvey, Baker County Commission Chair, Jason Yencopal, Baker County Emergency Manager, Chuck Chase, Eastern Oregon Mining Association (EOMA) Executive Director, Kristi Hensley, owner of the Inland Café, Kevin Dyke of Northeast Oregon Compassion Center, Dean Spence, and Keith Jones with GOP Chair Suzan Jones, among several others.

Justus welcomed the group to the meeting, which began at 6 p.m., and then handed the floor over to Harvey, who recited the Invocation. Immediately afterward, Justus led the group with the Pledge of Allegiance, while Iler displayed non-fringed colors.

Justus said, “We asked Jason (Yencopal) to come give us an update on emergency preparedness.”

Yencopal said, “Mainly, for the Preparedness Fair, we have a date set. It’s May 16.”

He said it will be a day-long event, and there will be presentations about building emergency kits, and vendors will also be present. The theme for the event will be “Making A Plan, Building A Kit.” Yencopal said.

He also mentioned kit building presentations which will be specifically tailored for students in the 3rd to 5th grade range. Iler asked Yencopal where the event will be held, and Yencopal responded that he hasn’t determined that yet.

Justus introduced Harvey, who discussed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Baker County and the United States Forest Service (USFS) about roles according to the Blue Mountain Forest Plan, which Baker County Commissioners declined to sign earlier this month.

He said, “We have an ordinance in place in Baker County that states that we will do coordination. Coordination means that you’re on equal footing—federal government, county government—and you work on a plan, which is already in place, the Baker County Natural Resources Plan. So, we have a plan.” He said the MOU would give the USFS absolute authority as currently written, and that wouldn’t work for Baker County, because the County would be in a “cooperative” role.

He spoke about the needs of Baker County, saying that at the top of the list is jobs, and proper forest management and access could provide many of those.

Brown said, “We’re all behind you, and we appreciate you taking action.”

Justus commented that, “The agencies keep trying to interchange the words collaboration, cooperation, and coordination,” and gave some scenarios concerning those terms. He explained that the County needs more control of its natural resources.

Brown and Iler discussed briefly the absence of nationally-known Oath Keeper Leo Castillo, who was unable to attend the meeting, and mentioned his radio show, “World Gone Crazy,” which airs on Sunday nights at 9 p.m. on KLBM AM 1450.

Iler introduced Kevin Dyke, an Oath Keepers supporter whose first words were, “How much does anybody know about PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome)?” He discussed the different types of PTSD, caused by experiences in military combat, and high stress situations, not strictly because of combat, like nursing or firefighting, to name a couple.

Dyke said there’s a new program hosted by the Compassion Center, at 6 p.m. on Thursdays, called the “Safe Zone,” where veterans can discuss their experiences with others, and he emphasized that the discussions would be confidential. Initially, the meetings would be with veterans, but would most likely include others later on.

Iler talked briefly about the Oath Keepers logo and gear, stating that Elkhorn Embroidery and Oregon Sign Company are able to provide products and services incorporating the Oath Keepers logo at better prices than the Oath Keepers’ national store.

Iler introduced Kristi Hensley, owner of the Inland Café, who said, “I want to offer our services. I have a lot of sources, as far as bulk food and cleaning supplies.”

She said she would offer use of her company account, and she orders from several suppliers, so she can choose which one(s) have the best available prices.

Brown introduced Dayhoff, who gave a presentation about building a 72-hour survival pack, displaying her own backpack she filled with emergency items for this purpose. Included in the pack were items like water, medications, fire starters (like dryer lint), battery-powered lights, line (rope), cutting tools, a compass, a medical kit, and a blanket.

Justus said he has a fundraiser idea, which is to sell 100-round boxes of .22 caliber ammunition, for \$12, with \$3.50 from each one benefiting the Chapter.

The monthly Chapter meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month, at 6 p.m., in the Council Chambers of Baker City Hall.

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