

Council takes second look at dispensaries

Certain residents allege discrimination against medical marijuana patients

By Katherine Lacaze
Seaside Signal

Several community members implored Seaside City Council to help end the discrimination of medical marijuana patients during a second public hearing on the proposal to amend Seaside's Code in order to allow and regulate medical marijuana dispensaries in the city.

The board members demonstrated a change of heart during council's meeting Monday by voting 6-1 to remove restrictions applying to parks and arcades that were added last meeting. Mayor Don Larson was the dissenting vote.

The city is in the process of amending the Code of Seaside, which currently prohibits any business that is unlawful, illegal or prohibited by state and federal laws. The proposed amendment changes the business license ordinance to include the sentence: "Notwithstanding the aforementioned provisions, a license can be issued for medical marijuana dispensaries that comply with the additional licensing requirements in Chapter 118."

In addition, a new chapter regulating dispensaries will be added to the code. The chapter, as proposed, requires all medical marijuana dispensaries to be registered in accordance with the Oregon Revised Statutes and Oregon Administrative Rule.

During the April 13 meeting, Larson proposed adding two more restrictions that would not allow a dispensary to operate within 1,000 feet from any local or state park, unless it is physically separated by a river, nor within 1,000 from any property with an arcade that has more than 10 arcade machines accessible to minors that are in operation at the time the ordinance goes into effect.

At the April meeting, the board approved in a 5-2 vote to include Larson's revision for public comment and ahead of a second reading. Councilors Jay Barber and Seth Morrisey voted against the amendment.

After Monday night's public hearing, the board again held a vote in which the four other councilors agreed to remove the amendment before approving a second reading of the ordinance by title only. Larson also cast the sole dissenting vote against the second reading.

Seaside resident and activist Angela Fairless, Highway 420 owner Steve Geiger and other speakers drew a comparison between medical marijuana dispensaries and the sale and consumption of alcohol present in Seaside. They questioned

what they see as hypocrisy that people can consume alcohol at multiple restaurants and locations, even those attended by children, but patients who need cannabis for medicinal reasons are denied the ability to even obtain it within city limits and Seaside's Urban Growth Boundary.

The restrictions proposed by Larson seem unnecessary, discriminatory and stemmed from fear, they said.

"I think those fears you have are based on old mentalities that are going to the wayside," Fairless said.

Since the Seaside Planning Commission did a majority of the work on the ordinance and did not see a need to add restrictions outside of what the state has addressed, Geiger said, he did not know why City Council would then ignore the commission's recommendation and add "unreasonable and unfair" restrictions.

Mark Tolan, owner of Seaside Vacation Homes, was the only resident who asked the council to be conservative about allowing anything that makes people not be "in their right mind." He said doing so was in the interest of public safety and keeping Seaside a "family friendly" town.

Dawn Greenfield, who used to own a licensed dispensary, responded "all medical marijuana patients have family. To me, that's one more discrimination we need to end."

The restrictions already placed by the state are "so intense," Greenfield said, with every transaction being tracked, recorded and caught on camera 24/7. Proponents of medical marijuana are not asking for Seaside to take on "a crazy, Venice Beach atmosphere," she said. "We're talking about legitimate sick people that need this medicine."

Eric Saucedo, who grows medical cannabis, requested City Council also be lenient on placing more restrictions for growers in the city. The Council responded they're not addressing that aspect of medical marijuana at this time.

Barber, who also voted "no" last meeting, said he's thought a lot about this issue and believes the Planning Commission "did a great job of crafting an ordinance for exploring a new area for Seaside." The city can amend its code at any time, he added, to deal with unforeseen problems that might arise.

Councilor Dana Phillips changed her vote to approve removal of the amendment, but she is against a medical marijuana dispensary being established in Seaside's downtown core. She will vote against allowing a marijuana business, medical or recreational, from operating there, she said.

The council will bring

back the legislation for a third reading and possible adoption at its May 11 meeting.

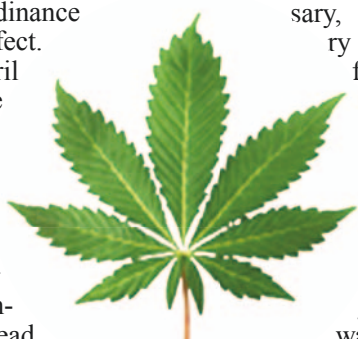
In other news:
• The council held a public hearing on an ordinance extending the term of the Downtown Maintenance District and maintaining the rate of approximately \$8.84 per linear front foot. The council held a first and second reading of the ordinance by title only and will readdress the topic at its next meeting.

• The council unanimously approved to accept a bid of \$51,150.99 from Kinney & Sons Excavating, of Astoria, for the Quatat Park restroom renovation project. The project includes adding and replacing light fixtures, replacing broken and missing tiles, repairing walls, removing old siding and replacing it and other items. The rejected bid of \$77,756 was from Helligso Construction, of Astoria.

• The council unanimously approved to give publishing rights of the Seaside Visitor Guide to MEDIA-America, of Portland, for a three-year period beginning 2016. The project should be self-sustaining and require no cost to the city, except for polybagging copies to mail out. The other finalists for the project were EO Media Group, of Astoria, and NW Travel & Life, of Gig Harbor, Wash.

• The council unanimously approved a bid of \$32,984 from Jason Kraushaar Contracting, of Warrenton, to remodel the Seaside Fire & Rescue facility. The rejected bid of \$47,967 was from Helligso Construction.

• The council unanimously agreed to retain the services of Oregon Fine Foods to provide food and beverage services at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center for an additional three-year period commencing Nov. 21, 2015.



Necanicum Village sold to Avamere

By Mike Williams
EO Media Group

Necanicum Village has a new name and a new administrator after the sale of the facility to Avamere of Wilsonville.

K. C. Clark took over administrator responsibilities on April 1 when the sale closed and the name changed to Avamere At Seaside, said Nicolette Merino, regional director of operations for Avamere.

The company has had its eye on the facility for a while, she said.

"We want to be able to offer a fuller range of services in the markets we serve," Merino said.

Avamere also operates the Suzanne Elise assisted living community in Seaside. Necanicum's secure memory care unit adds another service for the company to offer.



Avamere at Seaside

"We're excited to be able to put that in our portfolio," said Merino.

Avamere At Seaside has 41 apartments in the assisted living community and 26 in the memory care. While most apartments have just one person in them, the facility is licensed for 104 people.

It currently has 68 residents. Merino said Avamere will likely be adding five full-time staff in the coming months, including clinicians and support staff. Current staffing is 51.

In addition, the company will be repainting, replacing carpet and making other up-

grades to the physical plant.

Merino praised the staff at Necanicum Village during the transition to the new ownership.

"We were very blessed with the staff in building when we acquired it," she said. "They were great. It makes the transition a lot easier."

Seaside High students to perform in music recital

Three students from Seaside High School were recipients of Friday Musical Club scholarships and will be featured, along with five students from other schools, in a music recital May 3.

The event, which is open to the public, will start at 2:30 p.m. at the First Lutheran Church in Astoria. Sophomore Adam Morse, a baritone; freshman Ryanne Sunnell, a French horn player; and freshman Fiona Bonn, a clarinetist, will participate in the recital. The other musicians are from Astoria High School, Astoria Middle School and Ilwaco High School. A reception for the musicians, hosted by

Friday Musical Club members, will be held immediately following the recital.

The Friday Musical Club scholarship program consists of teacher recommendations, student applications, instructor assignment and private music instruction from January to May, according to a news release. The program culminates in a public recital. There is no admission cost but donations are accepted.

The Friday Musical Club is affiliated with Astoria High School Scholarships Inc. Donations to the fund are tax deductible. For more information, contact Dr. Susan Buehler at (503) 436-0378.

Correction

Due to a reporter's error, it was implied in the April 17 edition of the Seaside Signal that Courtney Cram's shop, Timeless Treasures and Furnishings, no longer

is in business. However, she moved her shop to a new location on Roosevelt Drive near Seaside's STUFF and business is going well, she said. The paper regrets this error.

Mothers Day Brunch

Sunday, May 10th • 10am - 4pm

- Honey Glazed Ham
- Chicken Marsala
- Lemon Pepered Salmon
- Garlic Mashed Potatoes & Rice Pilaf
- Broccoli with Cheese Sauce
- Scrambled Eggs & Home Fried Potatoes
- Bacon & Sausage Links
- Waffles with Strawberries
- Biscuits and Gravy
- Fresh Fruit
- Assorted Salads
- Homemade Desserts

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