

Highway 420 goes from 0 to 60 with ruling from city

Seaside medical dispensary gets green light on recreational pot

By R.J. Marx
Seaside Signal

What a difference 12 hours makes. Steve Geiger, proprietor of Highway 420 in Seaside, saw angst turned into a happy ending. After a four-year quest, he received approval from the city of Seaside to sell recreational marijuana under terms regulated by the Oregon Liquor Control Commission.

Twelve hours before, his business future seemed anything but clear. Seaside still

hadn't weighed in on a state bill allowing medical dispensaries to sell recreational cannabis, and with an Oct. 1 date looming, the clock was ticking. He feared a new moratorium, a second vote or further delay.

"I've made several attempts to get information, to find out what's going on," Geiger said Monday morning. "I will just say this to you — I'm in a very tenuous position right now."

Everything changed with a letter from Seaside Planning Director Kevin Cupples granting "the temporary sale of limited marijuana retail products from licensed medical marijuana facilities."

"I feel elated and great — like we might be able to

make it after all," Geiger said. "They concluded what I asserted, that this early sales program works with the city's ordinance."

Geiger, 55, moved to the area in 2012 with his wife, Eevee. Their South Roosevelt Drive location met medical marijuana dispensary criteria and the couple applied for that status in 2013.

When the city issued a moratorium on licensing medical marijuana dispensaries, the Geigers plans were stalled. The moratorium expired in June 2015 and in July, Gov. Kate Brown signed a bill into law allowing existing dispensaries to sell marijuana to all adults beginning Oct. 1.

Without word from the city, he feared further delay, a new moratorium or a second referendum.

For the Geigers, the letter from Cupples changed everything. "We have concluded that unless Seaside adopts an ordinance prohibiting the activity, a licensed dispensary can operate in accordance within the provisions established by the state," the planner wrote.

State rules haven't been put in place, Cupples added, and won't be completed until later this week. "None of us know what those rules are until they are put out by the state."

As far as future recreational sales, "the City Coun-



Evee Geiger is the co-owner of Highway 420, Seaside's first legally operational dispensary since the local moratorium on such facilities was lifted.

KATHERINE LACAZE
SEASIDE SIGNAL

cil has not taken a formal position at this point in time."

Cupples wrote that "any direction from the council" will be after an opportunity to review the OLCC rules.

Geiger will now file paperwork with the Oregon Health Authority. Then, on Oct. 1, he

can open his doors. "It's been an extremely long process," he said.

"It's been very gratifying though. I can't tell you what it's like, man, it's so great to come so far. It's nice to finally after these few years to get some respect, some acceptance and a little bit of gratitude."

Council won't oversee sale of rec pot

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In granting the licenses, Cupples asked for "any direction from the council" in the city's regulatory policy.

Councilors, several of whom had recently returned from the League of Oregon Cities in Bend, showed little appetite for revisiting the issue.

"In Bend and other cities they are not doing any other action," City Councilor Randy Frank said. "It would actually take us effort to say 'no.'"

Currently, Seaside prohibits the sale of medical marijuana in the city's downtown core. Cannabis dispensaries are subject to state rules.

City Councilor Dana Phillips, who also attended the League of Cities event, said she was concerned that the city needed to take action to prohibit dispensary zoning restrictions.

"I want to make sure medical and recreational are not available in the downtown city core," Phillips said. "The medical is but we haven't talked about the recreational part."

City Councilor Tita Montero said she was distressed by the state's rule changes, lack of organization and staff, and the potential for future rule changes that could limit local rule-making. "I want us to enact something that says we will not have recreational cannabis in our town until everything is pulled together in January 2017," she said.

Facing 'the inevitable'

Councilors Jay Barber, Don Johnson and Seth Morrissey were inclined to let the law take its course.

"It appears to me that we've been preempted by the state in terms of their

action," Barber said. "I'm thinking we use the next 15 months as a period of work to determine what we want to do in terms of where we want recreational marijuana to be sold, what we can do to limit that. Until then I wonder if we really have the right or privilege to say 'no.'"

"I look at the inevitable," Johnson said. "It's time for us to let the marijuana issue go and see how it develops. If it becomes an issue, we can look again at it at a later date. The sale of recreational marijuana is coming. It's starting Oct. 1."

While councilors acknowledged they "didn't like the process," they agreed that the law had passed overwhelmingly at the city and state level.

"There's not a consensus, so let's move on to the next item," Mayor Don Larson said.

Seaside, Gearhart fire companies respond to shop fire in Hamlet

Three squatters were displaced by a structure fire in Hamlet on Sunday, Sept. 20.

At about 7:24 p.m., the Hamlet Fire Department responded to a fire at a large shop building at 82927 U.S. Highway 53.

The call was dispatched as automatic aid. Personnel from the Seaside Fire Department, the Elsie-Vine-maple Rural Fire Protection District, the Clatsop County Sheriff's Office, Oregon State Police and Medix responded as well. Gearhart Fire Department sent a water tanker.

"At the point of arrival, the roof had already collapsed and approximately a third of the building," Hamlet Fire Chief Bill Boone said. There was a flame column rising about 80 feet, he added.

Of the three adults affected by the fire, one suffered a minor injury. They resided



SUBMITTED PHOTO/SEASIDE SIGNAL

for several years at the building. The Red Cross provided lodging, food, clothing, shoes, comfort kits and recovery information to the victims.

The owner of the property is deceased, Boone said, and the structure is not insured to his knowledge. The crews repressed the fire, but "the building was totally destroyed," Boone said. A few vehicles and motorhomes located in the building also were destroyed.

The last unit cleared the scene about 1:30 a.m. Monday. The cause of the fire still is under investigation, Boone said.

In February, a large house on the same property was destroyed in another fire, which started when an individual accidentally ignited gasoline in a generator on the deck. The squatters were residing in the house at the time, and then moved to the shop building after the February fire, Boone said.

SEASIDE POLICE LOG

Aug. 26
12 a.m., Avenue A: Officers responded to report of loud whip sounds. Officers found whip and took as found property as no one around claimed it.
7:28 a.m., 400 block of South Roosevelt Drive: Report of an unwanted

person. Safeway chose to trespass said person. Person stormed off and refused to sign the trespass paperwork.
11:02 a.m., 300 block of Broadway: Subject reported finding a missing child. Officer made contact with the child, father called

911 to report missing child, they were reunited.
2:43 p.m., 400 block of South Roosevelt Drive: Reporting party reports vehicle rollover in Seaside in front of Safeway.
Aug. 27
7:31 a.m., North Holladay Drive: Report of trespassing. Male subject has been seen entering hotel and eating from the breakfast bar.
1:48 p.m., Seaside Skate Park: Caller reporting person smoking marijuana in the public bathrooms. Officer was unable to locate anyone in the bathrooms.
8:31 p.m., 300 block of Broadway: 911 caller reporting a disturbance between male and female. Officer responded and advised subjects warned for disorderly conduct.
10:45 p.m., 400 block of North Holladay Drive: Officer responded to assist with locating suicidal subject and gave subject courtesy ride up to Providence Seaside Hospital. Subject went voluntarily.
Aug. 28
4:54 p.m., Seaside: Officer assisted

Washington County with locating suicidal subject and gave him a courtesy ride to hospital.
9:08 p.m., 300 block of South Roosevelt Drive: Caller reporting subject intoxicated and passed out in the area. Officer on priority call and unable to respond at this time. Gearhart officer contacted subject and advised no medical needed and subject would be moving along.
9:37 p.m., Seaside Factory Outlet: Subject warned for unlawful lodging and noise complaint.
Aug. 29
12:21 a.m., Broadway: 911 caller reported man going through his vehicle. Officers responded. Nothing was taken and no charges filed.
6:02 p.m., Spruce Drive: Caller reported buses going fast on Spruce. Officer advised. Buses parked at the elementary school. No infraction.
11:50 p.m., 1200 block Sixth Avenue: 911 caller reported disturbance. Officers responded. Couple agreed to separate for the night.
Aug. 30
3:52 p.m., 1000 block of South

Columbia Street: Caller reported verbal dispute. Officer responded and advised it was a civil dispute over a surf board.
7:40 p.m., Columbia Street and Avenue A: Anonymous person reporting her friend accidentally called her and advised her boyfriend beat her up; unknown if that is the address.
10:32 p.m., 300 block of South Columbia Street: Officers responded to 911 call reporting a disturbance. Upon officer arrival, person was yelling at neighborhood animals.
Aug. 31
2:56 a.m., North Seaside: Officers

responded to sounds of loud bangs. Hood to Coast security confirmed fireworks on beach.
Sept. 1
4:12 p.m., 2100 block of Lewis and Clark Road: 911 caller reported disturbance in parking lot. Officer responded both parties departed before arrival, no answer at apartment indicated.
10:47 p.m., Seaside: Officers responded report of suicidal female who called the hotline, Officers located known female and advised all was fine; subject was upset regarding earlier arrest.

SEASIDE Signal

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