

Board of Health

Excerpt of Minutes from September 9, 2019 Meeting

Adult-Use Cannabis

Dr. Meservey reported that he and Ms. VanLandeghem went to the August 13 Committee-of-the-Whole meeting regarding adult-use cannabis. Dr. Meservey stated there was discussion both for and against the sale of recreational cannabis in Arlington Heights. He said the current medical dispensary in the Village presented about how well they are performing. Dr. Meservey stated that Mayor Hayes spoke, saying he is against the sale of recreational adult-use cannabis with the type of town we have. Ms. VanLandeghem stated that she attended part of the meeting and reports that discussion took place regarding the pros and cons.

Dr. Meservey said the discussion seemed to focus on the tax money but there was not a vote. Ms. VanLandeghem reported that the discussion questioned how much tax money would really come into the Village. Dr. Meservey reported that the money is the bigger issue for the majority and he shared with the Village Board that the Board of Health sees this as a health issue.

Jorie Ouimet, Prevention Specialist, Project Lead, Link Together Coalition, reviewed various handouts and articles regarding cannabis. She stated that the cannabis industry is targeting youth, and that normalizing the use of cannabis is of great concern for her organization. For example, a phone app that finds the closest location to purchase cannabis was discovered in a local high school. Ms. Ouimet stated that most concerning is when she reviewed the website of the medical cannabis dispensary in Arlington Heights. She identified that they are selling recreational cannabis in other states. She said there are current issues with vaping, and the effects from the amount of THC concentrations are unknown for both adults and teens. Ms. Ouimet stated this would be the type of product sold in Arlington Heights without any regulation of local government regarding the concentration of THC and vaping products. Ms. Ouimet stated if someone gets sick or dies, there is no ability to recall a product since there is no control over what is sold, and there are not enough studies done about the products.

Ms. Ouimet stated that at Buffalo Grove Days, a medical cannabis dispensary passed around marketing materials to adults and teens mentioning recreational cannabis. She shared information created by multiple coalition groups in the Chicagoland area highlighting some effects of cannabis and the cost factor involved. She stated another concern is the increase in emergency department visits once recreational cannabis becomes legal. Ms. Ouimet stated that there is no limit on the amount of THC in products sold, and this is a new generation of marijuana. She said millions of dollars of cannabis would have to be sold in order to generate a financial cost benefit in Arlington Heights.

Ms. Ouimet stated that her organization put together a summary of the key points to the cannabis law, in addition to providing the Board with a copy of the U. S. Surgeon General's Advisory regarding cannabis use and the developing brain.

Dr. Meservey reported that there were three choices that were discussed at the Committee-of-the-Whole meeting. The first choice was not to allow any recreational cannabis dispensaries in Arlington Heights. The second option discussed was that a medical cannabis dispensary would

be allowed to sell recreational cannabis to adults over age 21, or the third option is that anyone can open a store to sell recreational cannabis in Arlington Heights.

Ms. VanLandeghem stated that the information and news articles reviewed prior to today's meeting said the medical cannabis dispensary in Arlington Heights provided detailed background and research, but none was peer-reviewed, scientific journal articles.

Ms. Quimet stated that if Arlington Heights does not opt out of the law, then recreational cannabis dispensaries would be able to sell cannabis in Arlington Heights.

Dr. Meservey asked if the Village Board states that Arlington Heights can have recreational cannabis dispensaries, does that mean that the medical cannabis dispensaries can automatically sell recreational cannabis? Ms. Quimet stated medical cannabis dispensaries get the first opportunity to apply. Dr. Barnett stated since the medical cannabis dispensary is already established, they would likely be first to begin the sale of recreational cannabis. Dr. Meservey questioned why the medical cannabis dispensary automatically moved towards selling recreational cannabis? Chair Laurie speculates that medical dispensaries already have a business model, security methods and a vault in place. Dr. Meservey said medical cannabis is monitored by a prescription, but recreational cannabis is not monitored.

Ms. VanLandeghem questioned if the Board of Health is being asked for a recommendation to vote on allowing recreational cannabis to be sold in Arlington Heights. Mr. McCalister stated that the Village Board is requesting recommendations from the Board of Health on the topic of whether or not the Village should permit the sale of adult-use recreational cannabis. Therefore, the only advice the Board is seeking is whether or not to permit the retail sale of adult-use cannabis to adults over age 21 within the Village. State law already allows the sale of medical cannabis and there is currently one medical dispensary in the Village. The sale of medical cannabis is not a part of this discussion.

Ms. VanLandeghem stated research shows that the increase in access to cannabis affects both children and adolescents. Chair Laurie said they could comment on the impact to youth but make a motion not to sell recreational cannabis to adults. Chair Laurie discussed the economic impact to allowing recreational cannabis to be sold in Arlington Heights. Dr. Meservey stated the focus of the Board is not only on the economic impact, but also on the health concerns caused by selling recreational cannabis within the community. Chair Laurie stated the Board could vote no to selling recreational cannabis in Arlington Heights and further define supporting reasons why the Board of Health moved not to allow local, recreational cannabis dispensaries. Ms. VanLandeghem stated the Board should not wait a year to make a decision due to the current evidence supporting the health impacts from cannabis use. Dr. Barnett agreed, and stated the Board of Health can recommend no to selling recreational cannabis and offer the Board's reasons for not allowing recreational cannabis dispensaries in Arlington Heights.

Dr. Meservey asked why Naperville did not allow the sale of recreational cannabis? Ms. Quimet stated she did not have the opportunity to review all articles, but she is aware that Naperville had about 175 residents speak out saying no to allowing the sale of recreational cannabis in Naperville. Ms. VanLandeghem said Naperville is putting the decision into a vote by the citizens. Dr. Barnett stated that Naperville put off making the decision for one year, but the issue is that selling recreational cannabis to adults will already be legal by that time. Ms.

VanLandeghem reported that the Surgeon General stated on record for the first time about cannabis and that in itself is significant. She said cannabis is federally illegal, and the research is not available.

Mr. McCalister stated the Board could make a motion today or have another meeting before the end of the month. Dr. Barnett stated the Board is prepared to make a motion, but they need to have information organized to support the motion. Dr. Meservey asked if anyone needs more information to make a motion. The Board agreed they were prepared to make a final motion with supporting information.

Ms. VanLandeghem stated there is a health impact on both adults and adolescence from increased access to cannabis in the community. She said there is a cost to having more Police and Public Service officials involved. Deputy Chief Hayes stated there is also an impact on the Fire Department. Ms. VanLandeghem stated the proposed or projected economic benefits are not aligned with the negative impact on Police, Fire and Public Safety. Ms. Quimet stated the proposed economic benefits were to go back to Police, Fire and Public Safety, but not to tax payers. Chair Laurie stated crime could be increased, and then the economic benefit would just go to covering the increased Police support for crime. Dr. Barnett stated there is a medical cost with increased depression and psychosis, emergency room visits, car accidents and deaths. He said the closer cannabis dispensaries are to people, the more people are going to use it. Dr. Barnett stated this sends a message to the community. Chair Laurie stated there are no safeguards in place on how to monitor the sale of recreational cannabis. There are no regulations, codes or ways to monitor dispensaries. Dr. Barnett stated THC concentrations are not regulated and there are no reliable testing methods. Deputy Chief Hayes stated the Police do not have a method to quantify THC usage. He said that the Police do not have a method to test drivers at a traffic stop and the only way to know is through a blood test. Dr. Barnett stated we would expect to see the same impact on youth as seen from the tobacco and alcohol industries.

After discussing the language to include in the motion, the Board finalized both the motion and reasons supporting the motion.

DR. MESERVEY MADE A MOTION TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO THE VILLAGE BOARD THAT WE SHOULD NOT PERMIT THE SALE OF RECREATIONAL ADULT-USE CANNABIS DUE TO THE FOLLOWING REASONS, SECONDED BY DR. BARNETT AND APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

The Board of Health in partnership with the Village Board puts the health of the community first. Therefore, the Board of Health recommends the Village not permit the sale of recreational cannabis for numerous reasons, including the following:

1. The negative health impact of increased access for recreational cannabis on adults, and the subsequent negative impact on youth as a result of greater access in the community.
2. The health and social cost burden may outweigh the economic benefits, taking into account increases in emergency room visits, motor vehicle accidents, and disease associated illnesses including both psychiatric and physical impairment.
3. Increased burden on public safety, health and social services.

4. Lack of safeguards and regulations regarding concentrations of THC. In addition, there is a lack of long term, quality, peer-reviewed scientific data regarding cannabis effects.
5. The sale of recreational cannabis does not align with our commitment to the health and well-being of the residents of Arlington Heights.