

Robles, Sandra

Subject: FW: Marijuana

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On May 27, 2021, at 9:42 AM, Joseph Paggi [REDACTED] wrote:

Admittedly I'm an old man, but I chose to believe that age fosters wisdom.

I'm convinced that marijuana is a threshold drug. Particularly to the young and inquisitive and absolutely to those with addictive personalities.

Referring to as it cannabis to obscure its deserved destructive history and adding the words "recreational" and/or "medical" is a sham. The supposed medical benefits should be regulated by the FDA to be sold in legitimate pharmacies and drugstores.

Mass retailing of marijuana is a threat to the moral fiber of our Pasadena community.

Not the proclaimed increase of City sales tax revenue, from the "millions of future dollars (?) in a red hot cannabis market for local groups(?) banking on dispensaries hiring from communities of color and and social programs that could(?) benefit from cannabis revenues" as proclaimed on the front page of today's Star-News. Marijuana (cannabis) is a dangerous substance with tragic results. Strict regulation is absolutely a moral obligation Pasadena must enforce!

Joe Paggi Jr
[REDACTED]



May 27, 2021

Good Evening Chair Hampton and Committee members Wilson, Madison and Rivas.

Here we are again! Who is looking out for us? The Black and Brown communities most affected by the drug wars. For us the questions and answers are simple here:

We need a path to social equity licensing that will allow African Americans & others most affected by the drug wars the opportunity to participate in the cannabis industry. This is a primary focus of our communities.

As we look at amending the ordinance to make this happen we must also be aware of where we are right now.

A major flaw in the ordinance was a lack of any mechanism to monitor and enforce the very limited social equity requirements of those that are licensed in Pasadena. None of the current licensees have met even the minimum requirements including jobs, paths to ownership, supply line partnerships and more. The city's response to this lack of compliance has been lackluster at best. These entities must be held accountable and the ordinance must be changed to allow for robust enforcement and penalties for non-compliance with social equity mandates.

In the meantime at least two (seems other may follow) retail cannabis outlets have had a major focus on selling their controlling interest in their business for personal profit. For all intents and purposes this is a fundamental change in ownership which is not in line with the intent of the ordinance. In fact, it appears that a potential licensee was disqualified from licensure due to a substantial change in ownership. It appears that the same thing has happened after the licenses were granted by two current licensees. It surely must follow that these entries must also be disqualified from licensure or have their licenses revoked. The current owners are not who received the license. It's the old bait and switch! The City must openly and transparently address this issue. And in the interim (as other jurisdictions are doing), amend the ordinance to clearly outlaw this practice.

Furthermore, the city has a licensee candidate in a district involved in a bait and switch of the license apparently with no intent to open the retail store but, under the current ordinance preventing any other store from opening. Changes in the ordinance must address this issue. The city loses thousands in revenue as the entity sells the Pasadena license to the highest bidder.

Recommendation (amend the ordinance to):

1. Allow the remaining candidates for licensure to open bringing the total to 5.
2. Clearly prevent the sale of licenses by substantially selling controlling interest to a new entity.
3. Create social equity compliance/accountability rules with corresponding penalties for non-compliance including revocation of license.
4. Create a path for social equity licenses for AA and minorities most affected by the drug wars.
5. Create a cannabis oversight Committee, Commission or Dept. to monitor and update policies, procedures and compliance on a regular basis and make recommendations for changes to the Council/City Manager.

Pasadena Community Coalition.