

Ad Hoc Marijuana Committee Minutes – July 17, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm.

Roll Call

Members present were: Karen Farber, Andy Jones, Claudia King, and Amy Lamontagne.

Item 1 – Select Chair

There was general discussion about the role of the chair and how it could change based on the lifespan of the committee. Several members offered to serve in the role and Andy Jones was selected by a unanimous decision.

Item 2 – Discuss/Review Charge to Committee and Relevant Council Workshop Materials

Although the committee was established at the Town Council meeting on May 22, no official charge was created at that time. Using Executive Session materials from January 23 and March 13, the committee discussed process and strategy. After Karen suggested first steps, Claudia wrote a draft charge that states the committee's purpose is to "Evaluate and recommend general parameters – deciding which of the 5 retail marijuana uses may be permissible in Falmouth." The process will include research, making recommendations (ordinances, etc.), and implementation.

Item 3 – Discuss Approach

Claudia stated that we're not here to debate the merits of marijuana but need to decide if we want it in our town. She suggested asking that question in each of the five categories. The license classes are:

1. Cultivation
2. Product Manufacturing Facility
3. Retail Marijuana Store
4. Marijuana Social Club
5. Retail Marijuana Testing Facility

Andy agreed that the 5 questions is a good framework while a narrow framework would include operating hours of facilities, operating zones, etc.

Claudia wants to understand the benefits and risks in town. Do we need a definition of what this stuff is?

Karen is curious about the medicinal side – how many caregivers live in Falmouth? Pot is here and the committee should focus on retail, not recreational.

There was extensive discussion about the current moratorium. Clarification is needed about the 180 days – when did it start and when does it end? What is the process to extend? Amy offered to get that information.

A list of speakers was discussed. The group agreed that various stakeholders should be invited to meetings – these people can include elected officials, police, schools, land use experts, etc. A stakeholder list will be created in August. Working from a small list to get started, Amy will start scheduling for future meetings.

The committee would like to know what other communities are doing – specifically border towns but also other locations throughout the state. Amy will research the Maine Municipal Association as well as reach out to Falmouth's neighbors.

A project timeline was discussed as well as a suitable amount of time before reporting to the Council. The committee would like to have something by the end of the year and/or November. Everyone agreed that this plan can change but it is good to have a placeholder. A public forum should take place in the fall – maybe September or October. There was also talk of a survey or other outreach tools.

The role of residents on a committee was discussed. Questions included: Should residents be on a committee? Is it too soon? Do we need a structure first? What are we asking people to do? Everyone agreed that the topic needed more definition and well-articulated questions before involving additional people.

Item 4 – Create Meeting Schedule

Meetings were scheduled for July 26, August 9, and August 16 at 5:30 pm. The schedule is subject to change based on the availability of speakers. Amy will start contacting speakers and create a schedule.

Item 5 – Other Business

None at this time.

Item 6 – Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.