

**COUNCIL OF THE WHOLE MEETING**  
**Topic: Marijuana Consumption and Dispensaries**  
April 22, 2024

Council President Thad Eikenbary called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m. and noted the topic was marijuana consumption and dispensaries.

Ringwald, Kallas, Bowers, Agler, Dettrow, Moore and Marshall were present.

Dettrow stated that language needs to be clarified in the ordinance as to what city properties are banned for marijuana consumption. He suggested to start small and add additional areas if needed once the state legislation is in place.

The Law Director stated that marijuana legislation is still pending and not all guidelines have been set and pointed out that the state legislature could still set a law that would override any local law.

Agler stated that the ban should be on all city owned parks, buildings and parking lots. Kallas agreed.

Randy Yahn, 404 W. Skinner, Ohio City, suggested posting times when marijuana consumption would not be allowed at parks such as during ball games.

Lauren Leatherman, 1274 Madison Blvd, stated any ordinance should clarify what is considered consumption.

On the discussion of a dispensary, Judy Bowers has received feedback from several in the community who state it is safer for people to purchase marijuana from a dispensary.

The majority of the public in attendance stated they were in favor of allowing a dispensary within the city limits. Many people are driving to Wapakoneta or even to Michigan to purchase medical marijuana and having one closer would be a benefit.

Robert Wilson, manager Vape and Smoke in Van Wert believes marijuana dispensaries will succeed in Van Wert. He represents two men that are wanting to put a dispensary in Van Wert. They are already established in Michigan, Illinois and New York and know the laws.

Dennis Pearson, 208 E. Main St. and owner of The Hemp Continuum is in favor of bringing a dispensary to Van Wert. He indicated he can smoke on his premises and can give 12 plants away to somebody freely and indicated that he believes if DORA says you can have an open container on the street that marijuana consumption should be similar to DORA.

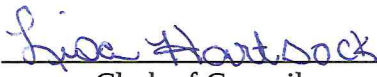
Christina Fowler, 910 E. Crawford, indicated the money the city would make from a dispensary. City Auditor Erika Blackmore noted that as of now it is unknown how much the city might

receive as there is no legislation that says what the revenue can be used for. She stated it will be regulated and believes the State of Ohio will disperse the money, if any.

It was noted that the state will likely issue 2000 licenses for recreational marijuana dispensaries statewide, including ones already licensed as medical marijuana providers.

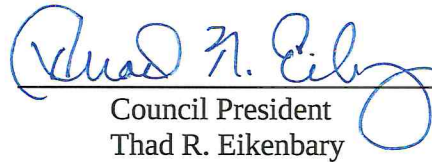
Kallas stated he wants to wait to see what Ohio law says before making a final decision on dispensaries.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:28 p.m.



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Clerk of Council  
Lisa K. Hartsock



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Council President  
Thad R. Eikenbary

May 13, 2024  
DATE