Will Montcalm Township Adopt or Reject Local Sale of Marijuana?

By Joe Tilton

The information-gathering meeting to hear the will of citizens in Montcalm Township opened for discussion at 7:15 Wednesday evening, July 26th. With a capacity of 85 seats, the room was full of people intending to convince the Township Planning Commission to adopt or reject an ordinance authorizing local sale of “medical” marijuana. Every word of the proposed ordinance was read aloud and copies distributed among some attendees.

The opening statement of the proposed ordinance reads, “The Township finds that it is in the public interest to allow the permitting of state-licensed medical marijuana facilities within its boundaries pursuant to PA 281 of 2016, the Medical Marijuana Facilities Licensing Act, MCLA 333.27101, et seq.

It was obvious from the moment the doors were opened that the balance of opinion leaned toward the pro-marijuana sales attitude, and likely because Montcalm Township is the only one in the county considering adopting the state-approved plan to sell the federally illegal substance.

Before the meeting began, a casual online check of procedures required to obtain a “medical card” showed one can be obtained in Grand Rapids. A “bring-a-friend special” indicated a $125 fee if you have “no medical records” to support your need, but with records the price is $90.

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Montclalm Township’s meeting seeking public input on establishing legal marijuana distribution triggered passionate discussion from the attendees—should or shouldn’t the community allow it. The majority of the attendees announced they were against it, while others were not.

Additional wording in reference to online applications.

The meeting’s chair, Rick Kurland, announced he would not allow shouting or arguing and that he expected all to be respectful, plus there would be no vote at the conclusion. The five-minute comment period was looking at current and possible future votes. We need to take a look at everything coming down the tubes. We are neutral on this,” he said. “Money could be coming back to the township from [it]. It’s only about the licensing Act that could raise money for public services, and at the moment, we don’t know what that will be.”

Additional information included that the state has not written the rules, yet the township could either allow or do nothing, which would have sales activities to remain illegal “while the state is making the rules.” He added, “We could not vote on the quality of the product. We know marijuana is here to stay.

Due to the volatility of discussions and statements, we are not using every name in this report. Immediately before the floor was opened for presentations, Public Act 281 was cited in the authority of the meeting and that residents are encouraged to look it up on the internet.

State Police Trooper, Steve Rau, was invited to give a presentation on the results of Colorado making pot legal for recreational use. He explained, “I want the best law for the people.”

In Rau’s Powerpoint presentation, he said, when medical marijuana became legal for recreational use in Colorado, “it did not create the problem we thought it would create.”

“Colorado did not educate their customers to the dosage and potency of their tinctures, the active ingredient, is up 1,000% from the 1960’s, it’s not FDA approved.”

The process of making THC concentrate has resulted in 32 cases in Colorado resulting because of process is used in the extraction process. The THC compound sells for $10,000 to $50,000 per pound and may have a bad smell and taste. Rau also noted that marijuana use is addictive and that marijuana is a schedule I drug. For every $1 in taxes collected, $5 to $12 is spent on law enforcement to recover the product.

“Other facts about marijuana use in Colorado included one person out of five users is addicted to it and emergency rooms visit because of are up 49% over two years. While disposed of by hospitalization, about 12% of Colorado’s population has been positively tested for marijuana. And enough is grown in Colorado for every medical patient between 13 and 33 to have 38 joints (cigarettes) every day. His point seemed to be that the marijuana claim was not a member of the users, but users are the ones that the DEA trade confusing chemistry in developing trims.”

Marcus Cheekum, a County Health Officer, warned the ordinance is to be much more specific, which was a common theme during the two-hour-pla meeting.

A local attorney representing two medical marijuana dispensary in Greenville, indicated that her clients would benefit from regulations that make the product safer with testing and inspections. “This would be a boost to the economy,” she stated.

Previously an attorney suggested that Greenville would become known for drug distribution.

A following argument was that Colorado has realized the first billion-dollar, real-estate market creation with the product and has killed nobody.”

“Grand Rapids is shutting everybody down and they come to Greenville for medicalization,” another person said. He said to his constituents that they are unique in the state as a representative, that 49% fewer deaths from opioid use when marijuana was used for pain relief, and that the price of $1500 would be between $30,000 and $50,000 annually. The financial benefit of allowing legal sales of pot in parts of the state mentioned several times. He also claimed that passing such a proposed ordinance would increase property values.

Perhaps the most convincing argument in favor of medical marijuana came from Kathleen Cartman, a hospice nurse. She said there are benefits of using the drug in the care and comfort of people with only a few days left. She cited personal experiences and added that more research needs to be done on canabidiol.

When points were made in favor of marijuana sale in Montclalm Township, attendance was low, and some were forced in expressing support for the ordinance. The drug was credited for shrinking cancer tumors, stopping epileptic seizures, and improving pain relief and resulting in “no bad parties.”

The chairman is their issue: this is not going away. The next thing is watching what the planners recommend for Montclalm Township.

Many people attended last Wednesday’s (July 6) meeting

Marijuana Considerations

By Joe Tilton

Montclalm Township’s meeting seeking public input on establishing legal marijuana distribution triggered passionate discussion from the reasons it should or shouldn’t the community allow it. The majority of the attendees announced they were against it, while others were not.

Some sources were identified, such as injuries from car crashes or other physical injury. It is amazing that one substance solves all physical pain, and proponents claim it is not addictive.

Others not in physical agony still claim “pain” as the reason to get a card to show a distributor that they can use it legally. This most means there is another pain to be relieved.

To understand why the non-VA’s approved drug is so popular, the answer was sought on Google. “Why do people use marijuana?” was typed in and the results are;

1. Marijuana is medicinal
2. For the effect of THC, the main active chemical in marijuana
3. To relieve stress, anxiety, pain or anger related to personal, psychological or family issues
4. Popular culture endorses marijuana use
5. Low perception of harm
6. The opportunity to try marijuana presents itself

7. Peer, family or media model influence
8. People use marijuana because or determine certain personality dimensions or circumstances, or simply the marijuana use norms
9. Curiosity
10. To relax.

Such is the result of national survey. Study the list carefully and most likely you too will focus on number three since “pain” is listed only in this reason, and it’s not even limited that physical pain is the reason. If the real reason is psychological pain, and the majority of the nation wants relief, then we have some serious issues to solve rather than suppress.

The purpose of pain is to warn us that something is wrong. This is true for physical or psychological issues, and regardless of the source, something needs to change or be rectified. Marijuana, without prescription, can affect many or all issues before the problem gets worse. But, those issues are not going away, even if you smoked all the pot in the world, unless they are all identified and dealt with.

Of course, we all have been exposed to marijuana, whether introduced to others or seen on television or on the radio. The exception is through a family member or friend who is unquestionably hooked. Although proponents claim it’s not addictive, and in this case, marijuana has cost him several jobs and opportunities that in turn, caused him to avoid the pain of not getting the employment by smoking pot. His financial wellbeing and future are unquestionably damaged by his choices to feel good and escape, even for a while. He would rather use marijuana than face the issues that cause his psychological pain.

As members of society we are programmed to be productive and contributing. That is not who we go to school as. Yet too often marijuana users are “washed out” over issues heightened by pot use, and thus the cycle of using to ease the pain of what “G” caused. Now, it’s society feeling and dealing with the pain, and pushed to give in and legalize the right “to be comfortably numb. Do we really want to take that position?”

Pain relief seems to be the reason or excuse for getting overly things with marijuana. It very well may be the miracle drug they claim, yet total psychological or medical intervention suppresses anxiety we should be afraid of not doing or bringing what we should do, for our family and our communities. Let’s fit the real source of our collective pain and heal our consciences. Restitution violence against a cause by heightening the demand to continue self-destruction. We have A.A’s most need of the alcohol. How are we to correct issues that cause pain now solved by marijuana? This does not solve something that threatens our society or simple legitimate issue, our responsibility or accountability? Unlimited pain relief is succumbing our states and greatly ly liabilities or being the person we know is the “be a job well done.”