



AGENDA NO: I

MEETING DATE: March 1, 2017
4pm Special Meeting
Marijuana Law Workshop

**THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE
WAS RECEIVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL
FOLLOWING POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

FEB 27 2017

Reservations about Marijuana Dispensaries in Morro Bay

I understand that the city of Morro Bay is considering allowing the sale of medical marijuana in order to increase tax revenues. I have detailed my questions and reservations about this issue below:

1. Marijuana, banned by federal law, has been approved for medical use in 29 states, whereas Prop. 64 in California legalized the "adult use of marijuana," not limited to medical use. If Morro Bay were to begin the sale of marijuana for medical use, how would it properly control and monitor its distribution? (See Sample Medical marijuana policy posted by Washington Health Care Association at its website*). Will its sale be limited to specific illnesses or diseases and will the marijuana dispensed be limited to oral use only (see NY Times article*)?
2. Would purchasers require a prescription from a licensed medical professional? Would the staff at the dispensing facility be licensed in some way? How can the city assure that people are not buying marijuana for recreational purposes.
3. What are the liability issues for the city? Example: auto accident last year in Cayucos where driver had just left a pot dispensary and crashed, killing a child passenger. How can the city monitor the various side effects that different individuals might experience? Will individuals be required to take their medical marijuana at home (as per policy mentioned above) and if so, who will enforce this. Will we need enhanced police presence (more money needed for our already costly police staff?).
4. Will the city be hiring individuals to staff and run these facilities? What does the city know about doing this? Will it require a new staff member in the government to oversee? Has a cost study been undertaken to see the cost vs. possible income of this undertaking?
5. Personally, I am not against the use of medical marijuana...it obviously has helped a lot of people in chronic pain. But after doing some research, it is clear that there are many questions and reservations that a small town like Morro Bay would have to answer and deal with. The legalization of medical marijuana has been authorized by 29 states, which have larger bureaucracies to deal with the many dispensing issues. I don't think a small town like Morro Bay should be in the dispensing business just to gain additional income from the regulatory taxes. If Grover Beach has already decided to do this, then perhaps watch and see how it goes down there first.
6. In checking out the city of MB website, there are three different options for citizens to provide input about future goals for the city. While I agree that citizen feedback is important, it does become confusing when so many surveys are presented simultaneously. And it would be useful if some polling took place with regard to the feedback, to make sure that the majority

voice is heard. An example is when the city wanted to do a study last year regarding transferring police and fire services to the county and a vocal minority put a stop to what I see as the city's responsibility to investigate all possibilities to get the budget in check and perform the duties that are expected, such as street maintenance.

- **Plan Morro Bay Survey:** where do you see the city in the next 20 years. Your responses will be used to guide development of our updated land use documents. This survey was sent with the water bill last month and is supposed to be posted at the website but is not.
- **Goal Setting Process:** the document handed out at the first meeting needed serious editing. Unfortunately the discussion only repeated the contents of the document and did not debate the options.
- **Plan Morro Bay:** input needed to update City's General Plan and Local Coastal Plan and create a downtown/waterfront Strategic Plan. There is no survey here; it is just listed but not clear if public input was solicited or provided.

7. In all of the above surveys, there is no mention of the possibility of Morro Bay considering a plan to allow the sale of medical marijuana within the city. If all these surveys are done for citizen input, why was there no advance research and presentation to the public? For the city to take a vote on this issue without sharing how the plan was adopted, what research was done, what the various details, requirements, controls, liability, etc., is asking for another public backlash, similar to what happened with the police and fire department last year.

*"When Retirement Comes With a Daily Dose of Cannabis" The New York Times, 2-19-17

The article refers the readers to various websites providing additional information.

*"Sample Medical Marijuana Policy" Posted at the website: www.whca.org/files/2013/04/sample-medical-marijuana-policy.pdf

Respectfully submitted, Audrey C. Gendron