

GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY

February 14, 2022

Meeting Convened: 5:31 p.m. The meeting was held in person at the City Hall Auditorium, 250 North Street, and live streamed via GoToWebinar.

City Councilmembers present: Councilmembers Phil Pe'a, Randall Reitz, Dennis Simpson, Rick Taggart, Abe Herman, Anna Stout, and Mayor Chuck McDaniel.

Staff present: City Manager Greg Caton, City Attorney John Shaver, Community Development Director Tamra Allen, Interim City Clerk Laura Bauer, and Deputy City Clerk Janet Harrell

Agenda Topic 1. Discussion Topics

a. Cannabis Regulations

Mayor McDaniel began the discussion by providing a recap of the numerous internal and external meetings that have occurred both before and after cannabis licensing appeared on the April 2021 municipal ballot. These meetings included many interactions with staff and the public as well as a few course changes regarding implementation of a licensing process. Early on in the discussion, Council indicated their desire to place a cap on the number of licenses to be issued throughout the City, and tonight, Council was presented with a draft ordinance that provided two licensing scenarios: merit based and a randomized selection of qualified applicants. Mayor McDaniel stated his support of implementing a randomized selection of qualified applicants for the following reasons: less subjectivity than a merit-based system, an equal chance for applicants to obtain a license, and a simpler licensing method with less likelihood of errors.

Most Councilmembers indicated their support of the randomized selection of qualified applicants after reviewing best practices from other municipalities, considering the opportunity for equity and diversity among applicants, and reviewing the draft ordinance before them.

Community Director Tamra Allen reviewed the process and varied iterations that brought staff and Council to this point in the process.

City Manager Greg Caton stated that drafting this ordinance has been a process involving the hard work of many staff members and an outside consultant who worked with staff and is now serving as the Interim City Clerk.

Upon Council's request, Interim City Clerk Laura Bauer provided a summary of her background as it relates to cannabis licensing.

Community Development Director Tamra Allen gave a presentation regarding the three ordinances before Council: licensing, use standards and sales and use tax. A high-level example of licensing steps included opening up an application acceptance period, a completeness review, hearing officer review

and referral to the randomized selection process, state application, a second public hearing and license issuance. The second ordinance addressed use standards, buffering and signage. The signage, as proposed, is consistent with how other commercial uses are regulated. The tax ordinance is reflective of a six percent tax rate.

Council questions included the makeup of the licensing authority, the required elements of an operating plan, distance restrictions to parks and schools and how the sales tax would be applied.

Council took a break from 7:06 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.

Council had additional questions and discussions regarding fees and what, if any, would be refundable, and signage. In response to Council questions, Community Development Director Tamra Allen provided visual examples of current commercial signs. She confirmed that signage and billboard advertising would be treated differently. The business improvement districts requested further limitations and specific regulations. Council asked for additional information regarding cannabis sign codes in other jurisdictions.

Agenda Topic 2. City Council Communication

Councilmember Herman reported on his participation at the last Urban Trails Committee. Two of the members: Regional Transportation Office and Mesa County Public Health requested to be moved from voting members to ex-officio members.

There being no further matters to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:28 pm