

Lauren Davidson

From: Robert Johansen <robert.j.johansen@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2016 6:48 AM
To: Planning
Subject: Fwd: Planning Committee Letter
Attachments: Planning Committee.doc; ATT00001.htm

Please read. Thank you for your consideration

Robert "Cool Cat" Johansen; PA-C, CACP

Samaritan Riders of Washington Founder

www.SamaritanRiders.org

April 1, 2016
(This is not an April Fools joke)

Okanogan County Planning Commission
Regarding the marijuana moratorium

Robert J. Johansen
Property owner of
18 Rolling Hills Dr.
Tonasket, WA. 98855

Dear committee members,

Thank you for your tireless efforts while addressing the community concerns, both pro and against marijuana production in our county. I was present at the March 27 meeting and commend you for your service and mind numbing patience.

From that meeting I understand there are multiple regulations in regards to marijuana production. It was also clear that despite those multiple regulations that there clearly is no enforcement and I commend you for the moratorium on this produce so that these things can be addressed. I myself, would like to shear from the Liquor and Marijuana Control Board Enforcement Officers in regards to whether or not they believe their manpower is sufficient to address the 50-60+ marijuana operations and citizens complaints. My wife has complained that there is a marijuana grow operation on the property where we have to school district buses stop to pick up children. Her response from that office was that these school district bus stops changed locations year-to-year based upon the ages of the children they are picking up. I myself have a 7-year-old and a 1-year-old and anticipate using that bus stop for several years.

I heard multiple members from the Okanogan Community Coalition express concerns for the inability of the Liquor and Marijuana Control Board to enforce regulations. I did not hear the marijuana growers provide solutions to this lack of County manpower despite their statements of how many millions of dollars their product turns out.

I heard a member of an agricultural community board state the official opinion of that organization was that marijuana was not "agriculture" and another that reported that "agriculture" did not require 8 foot fence is with visual blockade and security cameras on each corner with limited acreage and plans number to facilitate production. I heard her say that agriculture is not heavily taxed and segregated by who can produce it, who can cultivate it and/or who can sell it. I am not taking away from the folks that do grow this product as my understanding per they're very own statements is that it is a complicated grow process that many persons have received extensive education and degrees in.

I believe the chairman of the marijuana and grow association, I apologize I do not know his name or specific title, did a great job had organizing the marijuana grow operation owners and there numerous employees to attend, overwhelm and drown out the concerns of regular citizens. I do not believe their pro marijuana numbers were an accurate reflection of our community. I experienced great heartburn when persons who reside outside Okanogan County had the ability to take the floor and completed their case for the marijuana industry. I would like to know from those Corporation owners with vested interest in Okanogan County, how old they pay and screen their employees.

I did hear local business owners, irrigation shops and fence builders, etc, state how dare businesses have prospered by these marijuana producers. That is good for them, they pay taxes on their income, that includes ventral taxes and Social Security and later in life they will not be a leach on the system benefiting from my tax dollars. I am concerned for the marijuana production employees and their inability to pay into federal tax or Social Security because marijuana is not recognized by the federal government as a legal cash crop. Their focus is on the now, what feels good now with no force it into their future. I am concerned that they're dedicated careers to marijuana will leave those employees without long term nonsubsidized

healthcare when elderly. This places the burden of care on the law abiding taxpayers and our children and children his children who will be responsible for that.

I share this same concern as a property owner for property taxes and irrigation etc.. It is me and property owners like me that have to have to bear the burden of those marijuana grow operations. Although every Okanogan County resident has an equal right for free speech and to express their opinion, I believe as a property owner affected by these marijuana grows between myself and my line a site neighbors, that it is us property owners that are burdened with the weight of these marijuana grows. Specifically suffering decreased resale property value, decreased water table/well water availability for those families next to a year-round marijuana grow operation, and in mine he irrigation district - increased irrigation costs per the increased demand for seasonal irrigation water and subsequent strain on the system/equipment by my marijuana producing neighbors.

To be clear, I have no specific problem with marijuana production. I have a grow operation a stones throw away from it front porch. I would prefer that it not be there because I am currently raising two children and do not agree with this operation being between myself and my line of sight neighbor. I would like to see a greater barrier between these grow operations in our out lying country residents. I am a near 5 miles outside of Tonasket and pass one large and one small marijuana grow operation. I will say that the small marijuana grow operation is not so much of an eye sore. The large operation, Enterprise Experience occupied a once sprawling alfalfa field, erected multiple fenced lots with each containing a Rail Road shipping container and mobile trailer. It feel for the local residence who live above these operations and that there scenic views of the Valley disrupted by their trailer park appearance.

I in a previous letter I questioned the employer's ability to screen their employees. I fear that there is a risk to the security and safety of my home and/or my children. As a medical provider in this community, having attended the March 27 meeting, I saw patients that I am familiar with that I know to be unemployed or otherwise "disabled and on state assistance" that I suspect work under the table for cash given the statements I overheard them say. This enterprise may be legal but it draws a less than savory crowd and that alone carries a great stigma that I do not want in my residential space.

In closing, I support your decision for moratorium. I believe this is a good decision to allow the Liquor and Marijuana Board Enforcement Officers the opportunity to catch off and conduct enforcement of regulations, to include investigating the "dual bus stop proximity to a marijuana grow regulation" as an example.

I believe the marijuana production facilities should operate under a conditional use permit (CUP). I think he should do this because if they are found to be in violation of any regulation in fraction, that their CUP can easily be provoked or denied renewal if they do not correct day or deficiencies in the allotted time given them. In my case, considering the "dual bus stop proximity to a marijuana grow regulation" I would think that operation would not have been approved, or at least a loud to continue operating once this information was brought to the attention of the Liquor and Marijuana Control Board.

Again, I thank you for entertaining this letter. Please consider giving extra weight to be opinions of property owners versus the cash employed employees with no vested interest in the land or neighboring resident's outside of the 8 foot fence that they work within.

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