

**ALLEGAN TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
JANUARY 9, 2017, 7:30 P.M.**

- I. Call to Order
 - A. Vice Chair Laree Waanders called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.
 - B. Those present were Jim Connell, Laree Waanders, Ted Heckman, Marty Ruiter, Keith Behm, Mike Buese, Al Lemaire, Chad Kruithoff, Jeremy Dutkiewicz. Also present were Clerk Linda Evans, Supervisor Schulz. Mr. Mike Larsen, Under Sheriff for Allegan County, Sgt. Brett Ensfield and Heidi Denton, Allegan County Mental Health.

- II. Clerk Evans to Swear in New Members, Alternates and Re-Appointment
 - A. Jim Connell, Al Lemaire, Chad Kruithoff, Jeremy Dutkiewicz, and Ted Heckman
 - 1. Clerk Evans swore in the Alternates, Jeremy and Chad first and then swore in Al Lemaire, Jim Connell and Ted Heckman.

- III. Election of Officers
 - A. Connell thanked everyone who cooperated during his last term as Chairman and stated he was taking this time to nominate Vice Chair, Laree Waanders, as Chair which was seconded by Ted Heckman. Behm moved to close the nomination for Chair supported by Connell. Motion to elect Waanders passed following roll call
 - B. Connell nominated Keith Behm for Vice Chair, supported by Buese. Connell called to close the nomination. Motion to elect Behm passed following roll call.
 - C. Secretary, Connie Rushmore, asked Chair Waanders if there was someone else who would like to be the secretary. Waanders asked Rushmore if she didn't want to continue with Rushmore stating she would like to continue but wants to put it out if someone would like to be secretary. Heckman made motion to have Rushmore be Secretary, supported by Waanders. Motion passed with aye votes.

- IV. Approve Minutes of the November 14, 2016 meeting.
 - A. Connell made motion to accept minutes as typed, supported by Behm. Motion passed with aye votes.

- V. Old Business
 - A. Marihuana Discussion
 - 1. Chair Waanders turned the meeting over to Under Sheriff, Mike Larsen, Heidi Denton from Allegan County Mental Health, and Sgt Brett Ensfield.
 - 2. Connell stated that he had contacted Mr. Larsen and asked if he would give a presentation on marihuana.
 - 3. The presentation came from Colorado. Colorado thought it would never happen in their state but it did and they under estimated the use of recreational marihuana and overestimated the public's knowledge of the product and how it is used..

4. Sgt. Ensfield stated he had been in WEMET for 9 ½ years and had done a couple thousand drug cases in that time. Also stated that the marihuana lobby (lobbyist) out spent the state 44 to 1.
5. Waanders asked is it right the people on marihuana are not aggressive? Mr. Larsen stated there is lots of negativity in the community.
6. Sgt. Ensfield stated the Butane gas that is used to process marihuana for products is very highly explosive. He also stated that the organic essence of this product is legal.
7. Behm asked if someone has medical marihuana can they do some processing is this referring to processing into medibles with Sgt. Ensfield stating yes.
8. Mr. Larsen stated the only way this will be legal in the Township is if the Township has an ordinance.
9. Heidi Denton had a very informative presentation. She stated they talk to youth and that 1 in 6 youth who try marihuana will become addicted and 1 in 10 adults will become addicted. In Colorado and Washington the usage among 12 year olds and up has increased. Ms. Denton remarked that in the presentation the persistent marihuana users show significant IQ drop.
10. Connell directed the question to Mr. Larsen, the promise of money to County Sheriff's Dept. seems 5% levy. Mr. Larsen stated it doesn't break down and money goes to state. State doesn't have a break down yet.
11. Mr. Larsen stated they would have to pay experienced officers on over time to keep up with people to make sure they are doing as they should. A very hard investigation.
12. Mr. Larsen told the Planning Commission to slow down.
13. Behm asked if there are random checks on growers with Sgt. Ensfield stating they don't know of any growers unless someone lets them know. Mr. Larsen stated the State doesn't give any information to law enforcement.
14. Kruihoff asked Ms. Denton what is the comparison of alcohol to marihuana. Ms. Denton stated that it looks like the youth are more likely to use marihuana than alcohol.
15. Mr. Larsen stated that on March 9th each Township in the County will be invited to listen to Ken Stecker on medical marihuana.
16. Buese was one of the members who attended the seminar that our attorney had and he said the Township Attorney said no, tell Township to stay away with Ted Heckman and Keith Behm agreeing as they also attended the seminar.
17. Supervisor Schulz stated it seems the Sheriff's officers have enough to do without piling marihuana on top of it.
18. Waanders stated "We as the Planning Commission can make a suggestion to the Township Board whether or not to allow dispensaries."
19. Much more discussion followed.
20. Connell thank Mr. Larsen, Heidi Denton and Sgt. Ensfield for coming and sharing with the Planning Commission and that he is ready to tell the Township Board to not act on this.

21. Chair Waanders thanked them for coming and sharing. She also stated that the information was very informative.
22. Connell made motion that the Planning Commission recommend to the Township Board to not take action on PA 281 of 2016, Marihuana Facility Licensing Act at this time, supported by Heckman. Motion passed following roll call.

VI. New Business

- A. Fence Ordinance (See Attachment from Supervisor Schulz)
 1. Supervisor Schulz stated the Planning Commission also needs to look at the Sign Ordinance and Blight Ordinance.
 2. Schulz also stated that a 6' fence in the backyard is fine but does the Planning Commission want a 6' fence in the front yard rather than a 4' fence as a 6' fence is not very appealing.
 3. Chair Waanders feels the Planning Commission should look at the fence, sign and blight ordinances. She asked Supervisor Schulz to get the information to the Planning Commission members.
 4. Connell stated that when they do the Stand Alone Ordinances he would like the Planning Commission to use Williams & Works to clean up like they did with the Zoning Ordinances.

VII. Adjourn

- A. Behm/Heckman made motion to adjourn with meeting closing at 9:10 P.M.