

Jefferson County Marijuana Task Force

September 8, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Ramey Johnson called the meeting to order. Self-introductions were made.

After a motion by Lin Browning and a second by Jim McCormick, the minutes of the August 4, 2014 task force meeting were approved.

Ramey made some introductory comments and thanked the task force for its service over the past several months.

Ramey then invited the subcommittees to each make a 10 minute presentation on their recommendations. She reminded the group that this was not the time to critique the content of the reports.

The group then moved on to a discussion about voting for on a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners. Mike Elliot asked Ramey about a statement she made in a July 30, 2014 message from the chair – “An executive decision has been made that we will not be voting on the narratives. This is non-negotiable.” Ramey explained that she did not mean to say that we would not be voting on a recommendation to the BCC, but that we would not allow the task force to vote to alter the content of a subcommittee report.

Tom Gorman made a motion to forward the recommendation made by the opt-out subcommittee. Jim seconded the motion. The motion passed with seven in favor, two against, and one abstention.

Tom then asked Mike why the names of the opt-in subcommittee were included on the cover of the report. Mike agreed to delete the names.

There was a discussion about whether or not emails or phone calls among members of the opt-in committee were properly posted. Eric Butler advised that he did not see a legal problem with the events that occurred in preparing the opt-in report.

Jeanie Rossillon explained the scheduling and logistics of briefing the BCC. A briefing paper is due at least one week in advance of a briefing in order to have time to post the agenda and to give the commissioners time to review the report. A tentative date of September 23, 2014 has been scheduled, but the timing depends on when the final report is ready. All task force members are welcome and encouraged to attend. Jeanie will make the presentation and it will be up to the commissioners to ask the task force to participate in the discussion.

Ramey then asked each task force member for any closing comments before opening the meeting up to public comment:

- Brian Richardson did not feel the process was fair but was glad to be a part of the task force. He was sorry that some of the members did not participate as much as they could have and thought that this may have been because they sensed it was an exercise in futility.
- Jim McCormick thanked the chair and appreciated that he was able to represent Colorado Christian University as it is important to include the impacts on adolescents. He also appreciated the opportunity to work with the opt-out subcommittee.
- Charles Tingle noted that it was nice to be able to discuss the issue with people on all sides of the issue and that he thinks that more than ever the task force recommendation is correct. He thanked the task force for their commitment.
- Nathan Emswiler noted that the task force produced two good reports for consideration by the commissioners.
- Pat Woodin noted that her involvement in the past has been on the illegal side of marijuana and that she learned a lot. She knows that the County will feel the impacts regardless of the decision made by the commissioners. She appreciated the professionalism of the group.
- Eric Butler said that the commissioners will appreciate all of the hard work by the task force.
- John Wolforth said that he was pleased to be part of the task force and that he had learned a lot. He knows he is in for a big job, should the commissioners decide to opt in.
- Lin Browning approached the task force with the intent of determining benefits for the Evergreen community. She would have liked to spend more time on the issue of testing. She enjoyed her time on the task force and hopes that the commissioners will make a good choice.
- Dr. Johnson said that he assumed that everyone on the task force was coming in with good judgment and with the intent of an outcome that is in the best interests of the community. He tried to keep an open mind and in the end, had to consider the long history of mind altering substances in the area of public health. He feels that the AMA was the last to move ahead with taking a position on not legalizing marijuana and it would have been better for the AMA to take a position much earlier. Dr. Johnson also wanted to thank Erin Phillips for arranging the tours.
- Tom Gorman thanked Ramey for her leadership and was pleased to meet the members of the task force. He was also very complimentary of staff and their attitude as well as support. Bob Cantwell said that he entered into the task force with an open mind and perhaps something had changed since his law enforcement days. He noted that the opt-in report was very well written.
- Donna Viverette noted that she has lots of background with tobacco and substance abuse and that some old notions have been dispelled. At the end of the day, she feels good about the task force's recommendation.

Public Comment:

Barbara Berry – noted that although there has not been a lot of public attending the meetings perhaps because of the schedule, there are many people that are very interested in the topic.

Jim Otton wanted to make sure that people needed to be aware of Lakewood ballot issue 2A. He commended the task force for its recommendation to the commissioners.

Sally Korff was disappointed in the makeup of the task force. She feels it was highly skewed towards the opt-out position. She also felt that city and County employees should not have been on the task force and that eventually marijuana will be legal throughout the US.

Laura Altobelu worked in law enforcement for ten years and has been working against prohibition. Citizens are forced to operate in the gray market. She also felt that the task force needed more diversity.

Mike Donahue discussed the four establishments mentioned in Amendment 64. He would like to see MIOP's. He thinks the County is leaving tax revenue on the table, especially for non-retail establishments.

Upon Mike Donahue's comments, Mike Elliott made a motion to recommend to the BCC to allow just testing facilities. Brain seconded. After discussion, the motion failed with two in favor, six in opposition and two abstentions.

Jeanie and Ramey again thanked the group for their participation and Ramey noted that her takeaway is that decent honest people see marijuana differently.

The meeting was adjourned.

Attendees: Patricia Woodin, Charles Tingle (by phone), Dr. Mark Johnson, Donna Viverette, John Wolforth, Eric Butler, Nate Emswiller, Lin Browning, Robert Cantwell, Ramey Johnson, Mike Elliott, Tom Gorman, James McCormick, Brian Richardson, and Jeanie Rossillon.