

October 21, 2019

A Public Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Arthur, IL, was held on Monday, October 21, 2019, in the Village Board Room. Village President Rod Randall called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Roll call was answered by Trustees Matt Bernius, Mike Hilgenberg, Justin Ray, Christy Miller, Jenni Marner, and Paul Pearce. Also present was Kenny Crossman.

#### **Public Comment**

Visitors present were Marvin Reeves, Loyd Gingerich, Jennifer Perrine, Noel Dicks, Iris Dicks, Linda Perrine, Paul Otto, Larry Sawyer, Fay Sawyer, Stephanie Wierman, Ezra Schrock, Larry Roche, Glen Rhodes, Dave Allen, Jonathan Kauffman, Lyndon Gingerich, Amy Silvanik, and Larry Miller. Noel Dicks thanked the Board for giving the public the opportunity to speak and share opinions.

#### **New Business**

1. President Randall provided handouts regarding information on the impact of the legalization and sale of cannabis in Illinois municipalities. President Randall thanked everyone for attending the meeting and noted that the Village Board always welcomes input from the public. President Randall gave a brief history of the legalization of alcohol in Illinois and stated that the issue of cannabis could be similar to this someday. President Randall appreciated the State making the sale of cannabis a well-controlled industry, giving local municipalities power to regulate it or prohibit it at their discretion. There has, however, been a shortage of communication between the State and local government. President Randall, Village Attorney Kenny Crossman, and Trustee Christy Miller attended an Illinois Municipal League workshop in Chicago on this issue. President Randall spoke with Stuart Weiss, a presenter from the conference, regarding past zoning of medical marijuana. Arthur did not establish this zoning. President Randall noted the community will feel the effects of cannabis legalization no matter what is decided locally. Also, the Douglas County Board voted to prohibit cannabis sales in unincorporated areas of the county, but did approve the maximum 3.75% tax. Moultrie County has not made a decision. President Randall opened discussion on the issue. Trustee Pearce thanked everyone for coming and looked forward to what they had to say.
2. Marvin Reeves thanked the Board for allowing the public to express their opinions. Mr. Reeves stated his stance of strong opposition to the sale of cannabis. He noted that Arthur supports and funds a DARE program for our schools, which is effective to teach children not to participate in drug use. Marvin noted that our local paper has courthouse news containing arrests and judgements pertaining to drugs in our surrounding counties. He encouraged people to talk with police officers, court officials, and medical personnel to see how they view the legislation. Marvin stated his belief that marijuana could be an introductory drug, leading to harder drugs. Marvin spoke of a personal, family experience caused by drug use and the impact it had.

President Randall stated that the revenue generated from the sale of cannabis is earmarked for law enforcement assistance and social equity programs in the State. Loyd Gingerich spoke about the prison ministry he is involved in. He has worked with many who have had drug problems and has seen the negative impact drugs brings. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak.

Noel Dicks stated his opinion that the city should not be involved in the sale of cannabis. He asked the Board if any establishment has expressed interest in selling cannabis. The Board answered no. President Randall mentioned his disappointment that the General Assembly passed this on their own, with no referendum for the people of the State to voice their opinion. Illinois is the only state that has passed this by legislation instead of a referendum.

Dave Allen spoke about the last revival in town, with many people coming to the organizers with family problems due to drugs. Mr. Allen sees this legislation as an attack on the values that small communities hold dear. He spoke of the repercussions of drug use. Mr. Allen suggested that the Board take a stand to oppose this

legislation. He stated that money from cannabis sales tax is not money we can take in with pride, and police officers he has spoken with are against this. President Randall said that Representative Brad Halbrook would agree with Mr. Allen.

Larry Rocke thanked the Board for the Public Meeting. Larry asked for clarification on the County Board's votes. President Randall explained there is no set time limit to make the decision, but most attorneys feel it is important to clarify a position soon. Larry asked about the benefits of allowing the sales. President Randall listed some benefits that the State sees, such as controlling the sale of cannabis, making sure the product is safe, reducing illicit dealers, creating revenue, allowing cultivation and craft growers to create 'signature blends', making the process secure, and using the revenue for social equity and law enforcement. Larry noted these are benefits as seen by the State, but what about benefits to Arthur. Trustee Pearce noted the only arguable benefit would be the 3% tax revenue. President Randall noted the likelihood of ever getting a dispensary in Arthur is slim due to the cost of the license and security standards for the facility. Larry closed with his concern about normalizing something that is taking lives and hurting families.

Lyndon Gingerich also thanked the Board for holding the Public Meeting. Lyndon asked the Board if there is any research being used to base decisions on. President Randall said studies were done on communities in Colorado, Nevada, California, and Washington who banned cannabis. Lyndon Gingerich suggested finding scientific studies to use for decision making.

Trustee Hilgenberg noted that cannabis is still illegal according to federal standards. Trustee Bernius thanked everyone for their comments. He added his agreement with the opinions shared. Bernius noted that a twelve-month moratorium is also an option. Dave Allen encouraged the Board to take a quick "no" stand on the issue, without the moratorium. Police Chief Mike Goodman was able to join the meeting and added his belief that marijuana is a gateway to harder drugs. Goodman added that the United States has spent billions in this country to try and kill the tobacco industry, yet is now trying to monetize cannabis. Stephanie Wierman asked the Board about money gained from cannabis tax being earmarked for anything. This had not yet been discussed by the Board.

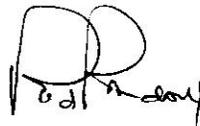
#### General Discussion

President Randall noted that the Board will be discussing when to put this decision on a meeting agenda.

#### Adjourn

P. Pearce made a motion to adjourn. J. Marnier seconded. All Trustees voted YEA. President Randall adjourned the meeting at 6:54pm.

APPROVED



Village President

ATTEST



Village Clerk

DATE

11-4-19