

May 17, 2023

A special meeting of the Wood River City Council was called to order by Mayor Tom Stalcup at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 17, 2023, in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 111 N. Wood River Avenue, with the recital of the Pledge of Allegiance. The Clerk called the roll and reported that the following members were:

PRESENT: David Ayres – late – arrived at 5:07 p.m.
Bill Dettmers
Jeremy Plank
Scott Tweedy
Tom Stalcup

and that a quorum was present and in attendance.

CITIZEN/OFFICIAL COMMENTS:

Lauren Friese commended the Mayor on the progress of Downtown Wood River. She stated that she was diagnosed with a chronic illness in her mid-twenties. While she does not currently use cannabis for her illness, it has been something that her doctor has discussed with her. She feels stopping the cannabis dispensary in Wood River is close minded thinking.

Sonya Hagaman stated this meeting was not called in the genuine best interest of the City's future. She stated numerous studies have been conducted regarding the relationship between retail cannabis facilities and increased criminality in communities and the studies have found no positivity between the two. She asked the council to put the best interest of the City before their own and to allow the dispensary.

Jeni Timmins stated she has a few concerns. She does not understand why she, as an employee's spouse and citizen, cannot sit on a board, like the Appearance Committee that she's currently on, to make Wood River better. She also stated she would rather see a dispensary downtown than another bar or gaming establishment.

Jason Thompson feels it is important for council members to act in the best interest of the community rather than pursuing personal agendas. Wood River residents deserve and demand better from the council. Vendettas need to be set aside to build a better tomorrow.

Maggie Dillinger is proud to call Wood River her home. She stated she is not a cannabis user herself, but she wonders if dispensaries are not going to be allowed in the city, then are bars not going to be allowed next. What other revenues are going to be taken away. If the dispensary is not allowed will the City have a lawsuit. She also feels that anyone who wants to volunteer their time should be allowed to be on the various boards that the City has. The new Recreation Center at this point is basically built. Solutions and programs need to be discussed to make it work.

Kristen Burns stated that at a previous meeting it was discussed that 25% of the tax revenue from the dispensary would be used to fund the police and fire pensions. She explained that she supports the dispensary because it brings in tax dollars, foot traffic to downtown, added revenue, and grows the community.

Keelan Gillian spoke in support of the dispensary. He stated it would provide income for the City and foot traffic for the businesses. Individuals that use cannabis will purchase items from other businesses in town.

Jeff Cooper questioned the legality of the meeting. He stated there was no mention of this special meeting taking place at the last regular council meeting. He feels the City should follow through with what it promises businesses.

Amy Davis explained she is in favor of the dispensary. She drives to Collinsville to purchase cannabis and while there she purchases items from other businesses as well. She feels the volunteers on the boards are being targeted. Everyone should be treated equally and with respect.

Mary Roberts stated there will be a Memorial Day service on May 29th at 4:00 p.m.

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Councilman Tweedy questioned the urgency of the meeting since there was just a regular council meeting on Monday. He stated he has spoken to several of the new business owners in town and they informed him that they have yet to see some of the council members visiting their businesses. He also explained that a local investor has already put thousands of dollars into the dispensary. He asked Rene, the City Attorney, what the ramifications for the City would be if the dispensary was put on hold.

Rene explained she could not speculate to all the ramifications but there would be many legal remedies that a business could use in the court of law.

Councilman Plank stated he is in support of downtown businesses. He feels the rules for business should be simple and productive. He explained he has been to several of the new businesses and has taken tours of the new businesses. He is for progress.

Councilman Dettmers stated the reason for the special meeting will be discussed in the closed session. He explained that he is in support of new businesses coming to town. One of the items on tonight's agenda will allow the citizens to voice their opinions on the dispensary.

Councilman Ayres stated in his past he was a sport's physician and that he is not against legal marijuana. He explained that he took a survey of registered voters via phone call. He made 80 to 100 calls but was not able to reach everyone that he called. His question on the survey was regarding the dispensary. Thirty-six were against the dispensary, thirty-six were in favor of the dispensary, and four stated it did not matter one way or the other.

Mayor Stalcup stated the City receives approximately \$16,000 per year from the state of Illinois with no sales of cannabis. When the state legalized cannabis the City was asked and said it would support a dispensary. A 3% excise tax on the sale of cannabis at a new dispensary planned for downtown would bring new revenue to Wood River. Twenty-five percent of the excise tax from the sale of cannabis would go towards the police and fire pension funds which are only paid up between 55% and 58%. Property tax relief could come to the citizens of Wood River from the excise tax received from the cannabis dispensary. Tax relief should be at the top of the list of every council person.

APPROVED - RESCIND ORDINANCE NO. 23-1, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF WOOD RIVER'S ZONING CODE 96-14, ARTICLE 4, SECTION 4-9, DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT – BD AND SECTION 4-13, WOOD RIVER BUSINESS PARK – WRBP LIMITING THE NUMBER OF OPERATING CANNABIS DISPENSARIES WITHIN THE CITY TO ONE.

Councilman Plank moved to approve rescinding Ordinance No. 23-1, an ordinance amending the City of Wood River's Zoning Code 96-14, Article 4, Section 4-9, Downtown Business District – BD and Section 4-13, Wood River Business Park – WRBP limiting the number of operating cannabis dispensaries within the City to one, seconded by Councilman Dettmers, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank (3)

NAYS: Tweedy, Stalcup (2)

APPROVED - REQUEST TO PLACE A BINDING REFERENDUM ON THE BALLOT OF THE NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED ELECTION ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER A CANNABIS DISPENSARY SHALL BE LOCATED WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS OF WOOD RIVER. TWO BINDING QUESTIONS:

1. Shall cannabis dispensaries be allowed to operate within the city limits of the City of Wood River, Illinois?
2. Shall cannabis dispensaries be allowed to operate in the Downtown Business District of the City of Wood River, Illinois as defined by the City of Wood River's Zoning Code 96-14, Article 4, Section 4-9 Downtown Business District - BD and Section 4-13 Wood River Business Park - WRBP?

Councilman Plank moved to approve a request to place a binding referendum on the ballot of the next regularly scheduled election on the question of whether a cannabis dispensary shall be located within the city limits of Wood River. Two binding questions: 1. Shall cannabis dispensaries be allowed to operate

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within the city limits of the City of Wood River, Illinois? 2. Shall cannabis dispensaries be allowed to operate in the Downtown Business District of the City of Wood River, Illinois as defined by the City of Wood River's Zoning Code 96-14, Article 4, Section 4-9 Downtown Business District - BD and Section 4-13 Wood River Business Park - WRBP, seconded by Councilman Ayres.

Councilman Plank stated this referendum is intended to be on the spring 2024 primary election. He feels this is a great opportunity to see where citizens stand on the dispensary. The repairs on the building will take several months now. The idea would be to wait until the election.

Mayor Stalcup stated the six-month timeline is ridiculous. The revenue stream is secondary compared to how the business partners are being treated.

Councilman Ayres requested to make the following amendment to the 2nd binding referendum question:

Shall cannabis dispensaries be allowed to operate in the Downtown Business District of the City of Wood River, Illinois as defined by the City of Wood River's Zoning Code 96-14, Article 4, Section 4-9 Downtown Business District – BD?

Said amendment was seconded by Councilman Plank, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Plank, Tweedy, Stalcup (4)
NAYS: Dettmers (1)

Discussion ensued on what is being amended.

Rene Bassett-Butler explained it is only being amended on the referendum question. Nothing would be changed with the ordinance.

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Request approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank (3)
NAYS: Tweedy, Stalcup (2)

CLOSED SESSION:

Councilman Plank moved for approval of a recess to hold a closed session to discuss matter of Personnel (5 ILCS 120/2 (C) (1)) for the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employee, seconded by Councilman Ayres, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank (3)
NAYS: Tweedy, Stalcup (2)

The Council recessed at 5:46 and reconvened at 6:36.

OLD BUSINESS: None

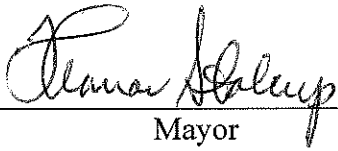
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NEW BUSINESS:

Councilman Dettmers requested that all Board & Commission Members take the Open Meetings Act Training annually.

Councilman Dettmers requested an ordinance amending City Code 90-7, Title III: Administration, Chapter 32: City Council, Section 32.22 Manner of Addressing Council; Time Limit, increasing the time limit for citizen comments from three minutes to five minutes to be on the June 5, 2023, agenda.

ADJOURNMENT: Councilman Ayres moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Plank. There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.



Mayor

City Clerk