

Economic Development Committee Minutes

Honorable Council
City of Newark, Ohio
December 19, 2023

The Economic Development Committee met in Council Chambers on December 18, 2023 with these members in attendance:

Spencer Barker, Chair
Michael Houser – Vice Chair
Colton Rine
Beth Bline
Dustin Neely

We wish to report:

- 1. Ordinance No. 23-61 AN ORDINANCE EXEMPTING CURRENTLY LICENSED MEDICAL MARIJUANA DISPENSARIES WITHIN THE CITY OF NEWARK FROM THE RESTRICTIONS OF THE MORATORIUM IMPOSED BY ORDINANCE 23-59 REGARDING ADULT USE MARIJUANA AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

Tricia Moore, Law Director - This legislation is in anticipation of what I believe will be occurring tonight at Council during Caucus. I believe that the moratorium that was dealt with at the last Council meeting will actually be put into effect and adopted. So, with that in mind I know there was a lot of back and forth about the moratorium and its effect on the current medical dispensaries located in the City. So, I also spoke with Councilman Lang about this issue and this legislation is a response to that conversation in which we are asking that the medical marijuana dispensaries be exempted from the moratorium. Based on what I've seen with the attempts at coming forth with what will be the final law on adult use marijuana, it does appear that the State is going to allow medical dispensaries to be able to distribute adult use marijuana. It doesn't look like there's going to be a lot the Cities are going to be able to do in reference to that, if they desire such. SO, with that we are asking that they be exempted because there was a portion of that legislation that restricted current businesses from using any of their floor space to sell adult use marijuana and so this would allow those dispensaries that are licensed and in compliance with the State to be able to begin that process in preparation of being able to dispense adult use marijuana.

Councilman Jonathan Lang - I appreciate Trisha's partnership on this, I think it's a good compromise for where we are today, it's very narrowly tailored to

the three dispensaries we've got and we did attach the emergency clause because it's anticipated that the moratorium will be that first week of January, so if we move forward tonight then this would go for our first meeting in January and if passed that first meeting in January it basically coincides with the effective date of the moratorium. So, I really appreciate again Trisha's partnership on this and would urge you to move this on to full Council.

Mr. Houser - In your opinion Law Director, does any part of the legislation effect the Medical facilities in terms of the moratorium.

Law Director Moore - There was a section and I put that into this legislation that prohibited businesses or business owners from expanding any of their structures, so in theory if a medical dispensary wanted to make a lane for adult use that would include building out their building and would have to seek a permit and that would be possibly stopped by the moratorium, so that would be an example of how it could affect them.

Mr. Barker - Have we had any formal communications from any of these medical dispensaries regarding the moratorium?

Mr. Lang - I have not heard anything.

Mr. Barker - So, there's not been any communication from any of the three that we have being exempted here, regarding the moratorium.

Mr. Lang - I would say I think there was someone here at our last meeting when we announced that it failed, so I think there may be some confusion out there about what's going on.

Law Director Moore - I have not had any questions from any of them.

Motion to send to full Council by Mr. Neely, Second by Mr. Rine, Motion passed 5-0

Economic Development Committee stands adjourned

Spencer Barker, Chair