

MINUTES BOOKTOWN OF COEYMANS**

June 24, 2021 – Public Hearing – 6:30pm

A Public Hearing was held Thursday, June 24th, 2021 at 6:30pm at Town Hall, 18 Russell Avenue, Ravena, New York

PRESENT: George D. McHugh, Supervisor
Daniel D. Baker, Council member
Zachary S. Collins, Council member
Brandon L. LeFevre, Council member

ABSENT: Linda S. Bruno, Council member

ALSO PRESENT: Cindy L. Rowzee, Town Clerk
James Peluso, Attorney to the Town
Tyler Searles, WWTP Operator
Sante DeBacco, Code Enforcement Officer
Nicole Ambrosio, Grant Writer

Supervisor McHugh opened the meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance. He stated that all Board members were present except Linda Bruno. He then asked Town Clerk Rowzee to read the Notice of Public Hearing.

**NOTICE
OF
PUBLIC HEARING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the Town Board of the Town of Coeymans will hold a Public Hearing concerning local marijuana regulation on June 24, 2021 beginning at 6:30pm, during the regularly scheduled Board Meeting. The hearing will be held at Town Hall, 18 Russell Avenue, Ravena, NY.

The Town Board is holding this informational public hearing in order to receive feedback from residents on the option for local opt-out in regards to allowing retail dispensaries and/or on-site consumption in the Town of Coeymans.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that at the above date, time and place all interested persons are welcome to attend and will be heard. Due to limited space you may also submit your comments on this matter beforehand by submitting a letter, email or telephone call to the Town Clerk's Office at townclerk@coeymans.org or 518-756-6006, Ext. 3 until 4:00pm the date of the meeting.

**By Order of the Town Board
Of the Town of Coeymans
Cindy L. Rowzee
Town Clerk**

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Supervisor McHugh gave an overview of the cannabis regulations, stating that the Town could opt out of allowing retail dispensaries or consumption within Town limits, outside the Village, subject to permissive referendum. He stated that he has not made up his mind regarding this. He said there would be some pros in the form of taxes. He stated that it was a matter of looking at the pros and cons but that ideally they would like to give it to the voters to decide. He stated that the State Legislature was considering the option to allow Town Boards to put this on the ballot. He stated that they should have a couple of hearings on this.

Councilmember Baker asked that Supervisor McHugh speak to the amount of taxes and stated that it was not a lot of taxes. Supervisor McHugh stated that there would be a 9% tax on retail sales to the state, 1% to the county and 3% for the City, Town and Village. If the dispensary is in a Village, the 3% is split between the Town and Village, absent an agreement it is split evenly at 1.5% each. Councilmember Baker stated that it was hard to gauge 1.5% and how much it would be. Supervisor McHugh stated that it was more important to see what the community wants.

Public Comment

Carol McDonald of Coeymans stood and questioned if there would be additional expenses that other communities, such as Pittsfield, have experienced, such as additional traffic control. She also asked if this would affect any agricultural property with growing or just dispensaries. Ms. McDonald wondered if it would be lucrative for farmers to grow it.

The Town Board stated that this would not be for growing, just dispensaries and depended on zoning. Supervisor McHugh stated that Curaleaf was expanding to growing recreationally as well.

Barbara Tanner of Ravena stood and stated that she was against allowing this. She stated that no amount of money should be used for this and she feels that now we will be driving down the road with someone who is high plus alcohol. She stated that it has been proven that marijuana disrupts brain development in teenagers. She stated that we don't need this kind of money and that we can make money other ways.

Jessica Roy, a local employee, stated that she has studied criminal justice research. She stated that she feels that this would put our area on the map for something besides heavy industry. She stated that in her research there is a decrease in crime near dispensaries. She stated that this is a decision that should be based on research, not fear.

Marlene McTigue of Coeymans, stood and stated that this fits in with the Business Association's economic development initiatives. She stated that the Town of Great Barrington in Massachusetts was an early adopter and they made \$1 million in the first 7 months between a community host plan and taxes. She stated that NYS is expecting to raise \$180 million in the first year and over \$400 million in 4 years. Ms. McTigue stated that she believes this will bring prosperity and growth for our community. She stated that people are going to buy it and this is one more opportunity to gain some tax revenue to fund programs we need, like collaborating

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with the RCSCBA for branding and marketing, a façade program for Main St. where community would match 50%, and transportation money for rail trails. She encouraged the board to be open to this opportunity.

Matt McCormick, a local business owner, stood and asked if the Village was dissolved would Village law fall back to the Town. Supervisor McHugh stated that it would, just as the justice court did.

Mr. McCormick stated that he is considering opening a facility and is looking at this strictly as a business opportunity. He stated that he would rather have control over who is selling it than have it out there on the streets. He stated that he is currently working to draw up a business plan.

Adam Roy stood and stated that the use of cannabis while driving is going to be prohibited, just as it is with alcohol. He stated that the people are already buying and using it and this way we would get the tax revenue and it would open doors for employment. He stated that there would be more police training and that other municipalities have been able to figure it out and so will New York.

Councilmember LeFevre stated that he sees the Roy’s points about the people who are already using will be the ones buying it and to have them buy it here.

Councilmember Collins stated that a lot of people buy alcohol and don’t drink and drive, a lot of people will buy marijuana and not use and drive. He recommended having Curaleaf come out to one of these hearings.

Councilmember Baker stated that he doesn’t have a side and that he is going to respect the views and concerns that are shared. He stated that he would like to hear from neighboring Towns and maybe Pittsfield to see how they are dealing with this.

Supervisor McHugh stated that the Village can put this on the ballot without a permissive referendum and that by doing nothing they would opt-in. He stated that those with drug histories will not get a license to have a dispensary or grow this. He stated that there would be more hearings and they would dive in and do more research.

Motion to Close Public Hearing

On motion of Councilmember Collins, seconded by Councilmember Baker, the Public Hearing regarding cannabis regulation was closed.

APPROVED – VOTE – AYES 4 – NAYS 0 – ABSENT 1 – SO MOVED

Time – 7:00pm

Respectfully Submitted,



Cindy L. Rowzee, Town Clerk