

August 16 2021
Workshop Meeting

Workshop meeting of the Town Board on the above date at 7:00 pm. All Board members were present except Councilman Zick. There were 6 members of the public present also.

Supervisor Cloud called the meeting for Marijuana Law to discuss dispensaries and lounges opening in the Town.

Cloud read information on dispensaries and lounges in the Town of Pine plains (On file). New York State regulatory framework created is analogous to the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law and the New York State Liquor Authority. Cloud also went on to explain that the State prohibited retail and on-site consumption within 500 feet of a school and 200 feet of a place of worship. Counties that opt into retail and on-site consumption are subject to a 4% local sales tax, which would be distributed to the county where the sales take place. New York State has put a deadline for opting in or opting out with a local law by December 31 2021. Supervisor Cloud went on to read about 30 emails from members of the community. With concerns being mainly for the lounges. New York State is going to award 700-750 licenses for cultivation, retail and microbusiness. Councilwoman Jones stated she has not found any overview of problems or successes from states where it has been legal for years. Jones is also worried about teen usage, and the studies put out by what happens to teens who smoke marijuana. Jones also stated that a positive would be the tax revenue, and the product itself is consistent with the Towns agriculture. Councilman Bartles and Councilwoman Jones are also concerned with the lounges, and the vehicle and traffic violations. Supervisor Cloud feels that if there is a dispensary that it would take away from the illegal market in Town of distribution of marijuana. Cloud feels that if lounges were permitted, they would have to be regulated extensively. Councilman Chase felt that lounges might be better if they were outside of town, somewhere outside with a lot of room. Chase also wanted to let the Board know his inclination is not to be terrified of the changes that are going to happen. Chase feels that moving forward with retail dispensaries is positive. Cloud is going to reach out to a mayor or town supervisor of a state where marijuana has been legal for a few years. There were a few public comments from citizens, clarifying dispensaries selling medical marijuana, and concerning an after-hours lounge in town. Bartles, Chase and Jones all agreed they were in favor of dispensaries but not lounges. Bartles explained if the Board decides to pass a Local Law opting out, the Town could move forward with a referendum and be put to a ballot vote.

Supervisor Cloud moved to adjourn, second by Bartles. 4-0 Passed.