

Town of Yates Public Hearing and
Workshop Meeting
8 South Main Street, Lyndonville, NY 14098
October 12, 2021, 5:30PM

Present: Jim Simon, Supervisor, via Zoom
John Riggi, Councilman
Susan Hrovat, Councilman
Jim Whipple, Councilman, via Zoom
Harold Suhr, Councilman
Michele Harling, Town Clerk

Excused:

Others: Larry Wolfe Russ Martino Joanna Follman Paul Lauricella

Supervisor Simon called the Public Hearing to order for the discussion to opt in or out of the dispensary provisions of the new Marijuana Law at 5:35PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC HEARING

Notice of said Public Hearing was duly published in the Batavia Daily News on September 28, 2021 and posted at the Yates Town Hall and on the Town of Yates website.

The purpose of such Public Hearing is to seek public input to help weigh the pros and cons of the Marijuana Law opt in or out decision.

Supervisor Simon read some information from the New York State website on the marijuana opt-out decision so that those in attendance could be familiar with what the Town was considering.

Councilman Chaffee added that the Village of Lyndonville has already opted out. He also said that if the Town wants to opt out, they have to do so by the end of the year and if the Town decides to opt out, they can opt back in at a later date.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Paul Lauricella, Town of Yates, said marijuana is a dangerous drug that attacks the immune system in chronic users making them susceptible to assorted viral infections. He said there has been a significant rise in marijuana use in children as young as 12 years old and students from 8th to 12th grade attributing to psychosocial consequences like dropping out of school, poor school performance or antisocial behavior. He said it affects almost all of the physiological and biochemical systems of the body. There could be an uptick in COVID cases because of the way the drug attacks the immune system but added that there will probably never be a study to validate this because “big pot/marijuana is big business” worth billions of dollars. He said it’s a gateway drug that in many cases leads to heroin use especially today where it is cheap and abundant over our open borders. It also can lead to an addiction to tobacco and cause financial and domestic burdens on families and children. He is completely opposed to the government becoming the trafficker or pusher for profit from the sale of marijuana. He said this will not end well and he does

not want dispensaries in the Town. He feels that it should be put on a ballot for the town residents to decide, not five board members deciding on behalf of the whole community.

Russ Martino, Town of Yates, asked if there was any information available on other Orleans County Towns and Villages that have passed Local Laws opting out of marijuana dispensaries. He said that he disagreed with Paul Lauricella- he feels that the Town Board can and should make a decision on whether or not they will allow marijuana dispensaries on behalf of the Town of Yates and if in fact the public doesn't like it, they can request a referendum to have it placed on a ballot.

Supervisor Simon responded that Councilman Chaffee did some research on what other Towns and Villages were doing but it was too early in the process to tell because many of the municipalities had not decided yet. He thought that a lot of them were leaning on opting out because of the option of opting back in if they so decide at a later date.

Joanna Follman, Town Bookkeeper, said that she is not a smoker so she prefers not to see dispensaries in the Town.

Larry Wolfe, Town of Yates, said that he doesn't want to see people get into trouble and is against marijuana dispensaries

RESOLUTION NO. 84-10/21

RESOLUTION TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING ON TOWN OF YATES MARIJUANA OPT-OUT

RESOLVED, to close the Public Hearing at 5:50PM.

Offered by Councilman Riggi, who moved its adoption
Seconded by Councilman Chaffee

5 Ayes 0 Nays

Motion: Carried

Respectfully Submitted,
Michele L. Harling
Yates Town Clerk