



## Westport Municipal Advisory Council

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Draft

### Summary Minutes— August 1, 2017

#### 1) ROLL CALL

The WMAC Board of Directors convened for a meeting on August 1, 2017 at 7:00 PM at the Westport Community Church in Westport. Roll call was conducted with following directors present Grigg, Knapp, Scott, and Van Bueren.

#### 2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES of the July 11, 2017 meeting

No discussion of minutes or public comment. Motion by Director Scott and second by Director Grigg. Motion passed unanimously.

3) **Public Expression – (Discussion Only)** – None, all 13 guests present were at the meeting for agenda items.

#### 4) New Business – Discussion and Possible Action

##### a) Camping Issue:

- Members of the Public cited several instances of roadside camping along Hwy 1, mostly centered around Seaside Beach, the bluff edge north of Abalobadia, and Chadbourne Gulch and Blues Beach area.
- Many of the vehicles stay for days and some for weeks. In a few cases, people appear to be living in their vehicle.
- Sanitation and trash issues are obvious to passers by. This was the primary concern, not camping per se.
- One suggestion was to have Cal-Trans put up trash receptacles and collect trash as needed.
- Community members stated that in the past they had observed CHP patrolling the area, but no recent observations of patrolling have been noticed. Also expressed were concerns related to crime, with the campers being either targets or sources.

Action: WMAC will find and contact appropriate County personnel and bring the issue to their attention.

##### b) Pacific Avenue Traffic Calming:

- Residents on Pacific Ave. in Westport reported of traffic using their residential street to by-pass traffic on Hwy 1. To accomplish this, drivers are running stop signs and speeding in the presence of pedestrians and pets in the yards and along the street.
- Pacific Ave. is a County street. When approached by residents, the County would not take action or allow residents to take action to create traffic calming, such as signage or speed bumps.
- Residents have photos and video footage of reckless driving on their street. The problems occur in both the North and South direction. They believe they face a high probability of property damage and/or injury if the situation is allowed to continue.

Action: WMAC will contact CA-DOT and Mendocino DOT to bring the issue to their attention and seek remedial action on their part.

**5) Old Business – Discussion and Possible Action**

**a) Permitting and Code Enforcement for Marijuana Operations:**

- This issue created significant discussion with the owner, P Buchanon, owner's supporters, immediate neighbors, and other local residents participating. These notes will attempt to capture the various points and positions expressed with attribution to the group expressing them. O = owner, OS = owner supporter, N = neighbor, R = local resident, WMAC. Order is as the discussion progressed.

WMAC – As a result of discussion on this topic at the July 11 WMAC meeting, information on the marijuana permitting process in general and O's project, specifically, was requested from Trent Taylor, Dept Planning & Building Code Enforcement, and Diane Curry, Ag Commissioner. Both parties indicated that the process was in a state of flux, being refined as permits were being requested. Neither agency had a specific plan for sharing permit status or details beyond the published County statutes. At the time of this meeting it was verified that O had applied for permits, which were in the review process, and that 9 complaints had been filed related to the project.

N – No record of well or septic system permits being issued. Various industrial operation vs. residential neighborhood issues. Specific CC&R violations were cited. Concerns about size of construction crew, who were reported to be camping on the site, with no water source or sanitation facilities.

O – Was using neighbor's water for about 2 years. Small medical marijuana grow on site from 2015. Well permit in progress, expected completion in Aug. Reducing scale of operation down to 2 greenhouses from 5. House will be built by Dec. Currently living on the property full time in a trailer.

N – Water was provided for living & small grow from 2015 to help a neighbor get started. Scale of current project a breaking point for many. Water access has been cut off. Wants to know specific requirements / definition of prior grow to allow application for current permit. Visual screening is also a big issue, “project is in your face”.

OS – Scale was pushed by County rules. It will take time get landscaping in place to properly screen the operation. The result will be good.

R – Concerns expressed about possible sale of grow operation to “outside” party that would have no consideration of neighborhood or the Westport community surrounding the neighborhood. Could change the character of the local community.

O – Permits issued by current rules expressly prohibit sale of business to non family member. When current cycle closes, sometime in 2018, there will be a moratorium on new permits until after a review and refinement of the process is done. The moratorium period may last a year. The new permit requirements are expected to be much more stringent.

R – Community needs to see and understand the requirements, restrictions and process that can lead to a legally permitted operation. Would like to see WMAC as the conduit between involved county agencies and the greater Westport Community. This is a county issue, not a personal issue with O's project.

WMAC – County has indicated a willingness to share evolving implementation with WMAC. WMAC intends to help funnel community feedback and input back to the county and any appropriate government agencies.

R – What are O's goals?

O – Wants project to be a community asset, not a liability. Very stressed by current situation. Plan is to use berms with Willows and wetlands to screen operation from road and neighbors residences. Will cut down operation size. In future will only employ locals, no out of town people, no campers on property. Working with county to resolve issues as they arise. Finished greenhouses will have blackout lighting control. Other nuisance issues will be addressed. Finished project will be in compliance with all county requirements. Wants family to live and make their livelihood on site, as part of neighborhood.

N – Expressed concern that O would not or could not deliver on stated goals.

WMAC Director discussion, public present but not included in discussion – WMAC role will be to try to get clarity on policy and rules from county. WMAC will gather input at meetings and report to County Supervisors and post on WMAC website for community access.

Through state law and county ordinances, legal marijuana is the future. No arguments were presented against growing, but where and how are clear issues with strong opinions on both sides. WMAC hopes to help constructively approach the problems as they evolve. One specific question to pursue is what are the limits of an operation's size and scope in a residential neighborhood? Should the county consider subdivision CC&Rs in the permitting process? A motion was made by Thad, seconded by Rob, to write a letter to the appropriate responsible parties in the county cc'd to Dan Gjerde and the BoS. The purpose of the letter is to deal with broader policy issues related to permitting, with an attempt to make sure multiple points of view are covered. Finally, it was pointed out that individuals do have personal access to the county.

**b) Westport Transfer Station**

- The Transfer station opened last Saturday. It will be open on Saturdays going forward.

**6) Announcements/Correspondence (Discussion Only)** – We expect an announcement from the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors on Director appointments prior to next months meeting.

**7) Set preliminary agenda for next meeting (Sept 5, 2017)**

- Camping Issue status
- Pacific Ave. Traffic Calming status
- Permitting and Code Enforcement for Marijuana Operations updates

**Adjournment** – Meeting was adjourned at 8:54

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Thad Van Bueren, Chair

ATTEST:  Bill Knapp, Secretary