



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

City Council Work Session

July 11, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Supple called the work session to order at 5:45 p.m. in the Bartholomew Room.

Council Members Present: Mary Supple, Mayor; Simon Trautmann; Sean Hayford Oleary; and Sharon Christensen

Council Members Absent: Ben Whalen

Staff Present: Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Dustin Leslie, City Clerk; Sack Thongvanh, Assistant City Manager; Jay Henthorne, Police Chief; Chris Fierst, Liquor Store Manager; Jennifer Anderson, Health Administrator; Samantha Crosby, Planner; Mary Tietjen, City Attorney

ITEM #1	PRESENTATION, POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS, AND DISCUSSION OF THE NEW ADULT USE CANNABIS LAW, AND EDIBLE CANNABINOID PRODUCTS (ECPS)/LOW-POTENCY EDIBLES AS IT RELATES TO CITY REGULATION
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City Manager Rodriguez introduced the topic and spoke about the Edible Cannabinoid Product (ECP) moratorium as well as new legislation.

Health Administrator Anderson began the presentation by covering how cities would be able to regulate the cannabis business. Mayor Supple asked staff to define cannabis business. City Attorney Tietjen stated a cannabis business was any operation that sells cannabis products.

Health Administrator Anderson continued the presentation by covering the business registration process for the city and the state.

Chief Henthorne spoke about ECPs and considerations with the new law passed by the legislature.

Liquor Store Manager Fierst gave an update on liquor store operations and revenues. He noted that the ability to sell ECPs may be able to offset the loss of tobacco products in stores. Council Members discussed selling low-potency THC products in Richfield liquor stores and came to a consensus in supporting ECP sales. City Attorney Tietjen stated liquor stores could not sell high potency cannabis products but cities could operate a municipal cannabis business.

Health Administrator Anderson and Chief Henthorne discussed hemp products vs. cannabis products as well as its future regulation. He also spoke of considerations for the police department including staff training, violations, and enforcement. He then spoke about law changes regarding ECPs that have gone into effect since the moratorium was put into place.

Health Administrator Anderson showed Council an example of a Cannabis Buffer Map that would be the most restrictive possible. Council Member Hayford O'Leary asked if new zoning was to be approved for adult-use cannabis if it would replace zoning for medical cannabis. Director Poehlman confirmed it would.

Council Member Hayford O'Leary asked staff if buffers worked. Chief Henthorne stated they helped with appearance and could lessen the number of complaints. Council Member Hayford O'Leary stated he preferred no buffers for ECPs but would be more open to them for adult-use cannabis.

Council Member Christensen noted parks currently prohibit smoking and alcohol use and asked if THC would be prohibited as well. Director Poehlman stated staff was looking for guidance from Council on what restrictions should be put in place.

Mayor Supple spoke about making decisions about zoning and asked if changes were made later if that could cause THC businesses to become non-conforming to the law in the future. Director Poehlman confirmed that would be a risk.

Mayor Supple asked what the purpose of buffers was. City Attorney Tietjen stated they would be to limit access in certain areas. Mayor Supple stated she did not think there should be buffers for ECPs but did support an ordinance prohibiting consumption in parks.

Council Member Hayford O'Leary spoke about the possibility of allowing consumption of low abv alcohol in parks in the future and did not think the city should prevent residents from consuming ECPs in parks.

Council Member Hayford O'Leary asked Council Members if they were supportive of capping the amount of cannabis shops in Richfield. Council Member Trautmann and Mayor Supple agreed that there should be a limit on dispensaries in the city.

Health Administrator Anderson spoke about options in capping the amount of adult-use cannabis licenses in the city. She said four could be distributed across the city. Council Member Trautmann noted that he was comfortable with a limit of two shops if that was the most restrictive cap per population – one could be in east Richfield and one could be in West Richfield. Council Member Christensen noted the limit could be raised in the future. Mayor Supple stated she was comfortable with three or four in the city.

Director Poehlman asked if cities were allowed to require geographical distributions across the city. City Tietjen replied that it was unclear if that was allowed.

Health Administrator Anderson spoke about next steps in the process and asked Council to decide on what they wanted to do in regard to the ECP moratorium and if they wanted to put an adult-use cannabis moratorium in place.

Council agreed with lifting the ECP moratorium and doing nothing to restrict where could it be sold.

Health Administrator Anderson spoke about having a moratorium for adult-use cannabis until January 1, 2025. She said it would give the city some teeth in enforcing violations against illegal cannabis operations prior to the availability of licensing. Council came to consensus in having a moratorium on adult-use cannabis.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Supple adjourned the work session at 6:57 pm

Date Approved: July 25, 2023



Dustin Leslie
City Clerk



Mary B. Supple
Council Member



Katie Rodriguez
City Manager