

Minutes of the Youth Advisory Council (YAC) meeting

Meeting date: March 2, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.

YAC members present: Dr. Malcolm Astley; Detective Tyler Castagno; Ms. Marlene Dodyk; Ms. Corrie Dretler; Ms. Sarah Greenaway; Dr. Dossie Kahn; Ms. Jane Purser; Mr. Jason Verhoosky.

The meeting was called to order at 9:36 by Ms. Sarah Greenaway.

Because there was not a quorum of members, the approval of the minutes of the previous meeting was tabled until more members arrived.

The first item on the agenda was the Dear Future Me campaign, which will be rolled out this spring. The idea, which was introduced by Ms. Jane Purser, will be a follow-up to WaylandCare's Above the Influence campaign. Wayland elementary, middle school or high school students will create communications aimed at their "future selves," for the purpose of motivating themselves to make positive decisions and meet their goals – in short, be the person they want to be in five years. These communications could be in the form of a written letter, a podcast, a video or a tweet; they could be shared on a Facebook page, posted on the middle school bulletin board, viewed on WayCam, uploaded to the WaylandCares website or submitted to the Wayland Town Crier. There was a discussion of whether Dear Future Me could also be geared to current self-understanding as much as future academic achievement and avoiding substance abuse.

Mr. Jason Verhoosky said that once all the entries were compiled, WaylandCares and YAC will build a campaign around the data. By participating, students are giving permission for their thoughts and messages to be shared.

Marijuana policy update

The next item on the agenda was a progress report on the YAC's campaign to have Wayland opt out of having marijuana retail establishments. The YAC has been waiting for the state's Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) to release its final draft regulations, and Mr. Verhoosky said that now that the CCC has completed its public hearing sessions it will release its final draft regulations on March 15.

It was agreed that, once the regulations are released, the next move should be drafting an update article that will explain to the community what the YAC and WaylandCares have been doing since the vote last November for a moratorium on marijuana retail establishments, where things stand on an opt-out vote, and what opportunity Wayland residents will have to share their views on the subject. YAC members will also start engaging in meetings with the town's planning board, Board of Health, Board of Selectmen and zoning departments.

Ms. Sarah Greenaway proposed that once the regulations are released on Thursday, March 15, that she and Ms. Corrie Dretler can create the update articles on Friday March 16, with the aim of getting articles/letters into the daily newspapers the following week and in the Thursday, March 22 edition of the Wayland Town Crier.

The opt-out vote would take place at the election polls on Tuesday Sept. 4.

Continuing his overview, Mr. Verhoosky said that the CCC has decided to delay its decisions on onsite consumption of marijuana (i.e., pot cafes) and delivery services until January 2019. He explained that many questions cannot be answered, because marijuana is currently an unregulated industry operating under a loose set of guidelines. If the CCC does allow delivery licenses, could such a delivery service, based in a town that allows pot retail establishments, deliver it to someone in a community that has chosen to opt out? Would a delivery license count against the number of pot retail licenses allowed in a community?

Another issue pertains to marijuana-related medical research. With marijuana legalized, there will be much more medical research on the subject. Does someone conducting the research need to be 21, the legal age for using marijuana in the state? Does a volunteer in such a study need to be 21? According to Mr. Verhoosky, it is not unheard of to do medical-based testing on legal drugs, but the opportunity to do regulated testing on marijuana never existed because it was classified as a Class 1 substance at the federal level. The opportunity to perform such tests in a laboratory, rather than going through an FDA process, raises a number of concerns pertaining to the way such experiments are conducted. For instance, there is good reason to do research on serious diseases affecting children, but we also know from addiction science that we don't want to introduce substances to young children.

Other questions relating to medical marijuana are:

Can someone with a medical marijuana card purchase marijuana and then, as their guardian, give it to their child? If a medical dispensary wants to branch out into recreational marijuana, what type of divider or build-out will it require, so that someone there to purchase medical marijuana won't feel like they're walking into a bar or drug den? This, Mr. Verhoosky said, will be a state regulation rather than a community zoning issue.

Next came a discussion as to which group is best for spearheading the opt-out campaign. While the various town departments say that the YAC is the best option for leading the opt-out, Dr. Malcom Astley proposed that the opt-out should be spearheaded by the Board of Health in conjunction with the YAC. This proposal was met with agreement by all in attendance. Mr. Verhoosky agreed that a unified front between the YAC and Board of Health would likely increase the likelihood that the opt-out would pass, he said that the reason the town departments were looking to the YAC in this matter was because the town's Youth and Family Services group might have the best combination of information and expertise. He also pointed out that the state had taken the task of regulating medical marijuana out of the hands of the Department of Public Health and given it to the CCC.

Dr. Dossie Kahn said the Youth and Family Services department had deployed its new scheduling and tracking software, and that at the next meeting, scheduled for April 6, she would use it to provide a look at the period of July 1, 2017 to February 2018.

Ms. Greenaway brought up the subject to the new library, but after a brief discussion, it was decided that the YAC would not weigh in publicly on the matter, due to the timing of the vote, which will take place at the next town meeting on Monday, April 2, prior to the next meeting of the YAC.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:28 a.m.