

Recreational Marijuana Sales in Medway

On November 8, 2016, voters in Massachusetts voted to legalize the recreational use of marijuana. This means that recreational marijuana use is now legal in eight states. The Massachusetts state legislature has delayed several deadlines in the voter-approved law that will likely push back the start of retail sales to the middle of 2018.

A state Cannabis Control Commission will write and enforce regulations controlling the retail sale of recreational marijuana. However, the new recreational marijuana law also provides communities with the ability to exercise some level of local control. The Medway Board of Selectmen would like to share with residents what the law says we can do locally.

Possible Actions to Address New Recreational Marijuana Law at the Local Level

The Planning and Economic Development Board has placed a zoning **moratorium** article on the warrant for the May 8, 2017 Annual Town Meeting. If approved at Town Meeting it will require further approval from the Massachusetts Attorney General. It is expected that the moratorium will be for 12 months.

A **bylaw** may be submitted for consideration regulating the time, place, and manner of marijuana establishment operations. The bylaw(s) may not be “unreasonably impracticable” or conflict with the state law. This may be done for the November 2017 Fall Town Meeting. If approved at Town Meeting it will require further approval from the Massachusetts Attorney General.

A **ballot question** introducing a bylaw regulating the **type or number** of marijuana establishment operations may be submitted for the May 16, 2017 or May 2018 Election.

The citizens of the Town of Medway may submit a **ballot question** to allow or prohibit **marijuana consumption on** marijuana establishment operations **premises** via a petition of not fewer than 10% of the number of voters who voted in the state election preceding the filed petition. It is anticipated that this could occur for the November 2018 Election.

The Board of Selectmen has also voted to submit a non-binding ballot question to voters regarding marijuana establishment operations for the May 16, 2017 Election. This question will be: Should the town prohibit all non-medical (“recreational”) marijuana retail sales in the town?

Please share your questions and concerns with Selectmen and be sure to attend Town Meeting on May 8th to vote on this important issue.