

CIRCLEVILLE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES 9/2/2025

Circleville Committee of The Whole convened in City Council Chambers, 127 South Court St., Circleville, OH 43113, on Tuesday, September 2, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. Present at Roll Call: President Barry Keller and Council Members Katie Logan Hedges, Sheri Theis, Tom Klitzka, Jeff Hallinin, John Moats, Audrey Lukasak, Tom Duvall, and Clerks Melissa Burns and Sarah Kolesar. Invited Guests present: Planner Hannah Wynne, King City Garden's managing partner Steven Anevski, Sheriff Hafey, Chief Deputy James Brown, Captain Johnathan Strawser, Pickaway Addiction Action Coalition Administrator Susan Metzger, Engagement Coordinator for Pickaway Addiction Action Coalition Amy Rhymer, Executive Director for Pickaway Area Recovery Services Leah Raymer, and Kim Trip with Pickaway Area Recovery Services.

Keller called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with Roll Call.

Duvall motioned to approve the November 26, 2024, minutes. Seconded by Hallinin. Motion carried.

New Business:

1. Marijuana Dispensary Discussion

Discussion: Planner Hannah Wynne noted that a Moratorium is currently in place prohibiting medical and recreational marijuana dispensaries which has been extended through February 2026. Wynne explained that the purpose of this meeting is to gather information and educate, allowing Council to move forward in making an informed decision. Wynne stated that if Council votes to approve dispensaries, the City will then amend the zoning code accordingly.

Steven Anevski highlighted that his team began their business in the cannabis industry four years ago, based in Cincinnati, Ohio, now a level one cultivator. Aneveski spoke about the Company's interest in opening a dispensary in the City of Circleville, stating Circleville could receive tens of thousands in direct tax revenue annually. Additionally, Aneveski stated the direct impact of opening a dispensary would result in 30-45 full-time jobs with benefits, with local hiring preferences for Circleville residents, as well as increased foot traffic to surrounding businesses. Aneveski emphasized that community benefits would include: A safe, regulated environment for adult consumers, quality tested products that meet Ohio's standards, local charitable contributions, partnerships with local organizations, 24/7 security monitoring, background checks on all employees, and coordination with local law enforcement. Aneveski also expressed that his organization strongly advocates to combat illicit cannabis that typically comes from states that are poorly regulated.

Pickaway Addiction Action Coalition administrator Susan Metzger expressed that she and the PAAC organization are against having a marijuana dispensary in Circleville. Metzger noted concerns of having a dispensary as easy access to the youth and the risk of marijuana use leading to further cannabis use disorders, based on research data conducted since 2019. Metzger emphasized that they are trying to rebuild Pickaway County especially in regards to the youth.

Amy Rhymer expressed disagreement of having a dispensary in Circleville and concerns of increasing cannabis use disorders, the highest being among young adults ages 18-25.

Sheriff Hafey noted an issue seen is black market products being promoted to try to undercut the legal marijuana dispensaries, therefore creating a greater illegal trafficking concern. Hafey also highlighted that the high-level marijuana being sold currently has a much higher concentration of THC.

Chief Deputy Brown noted an ongoing issue they've encountered is youth getting access to vapes with THC, stating that schools now have a sensor in restrooms that will detect, and alert vape use.

Kim Trip with Pickaway Area Recovery Services stated she has worked with children for 30+ years, with the last 10 years working specifically in the school-based prevention and noted they treat kids daily who struggle with substance use disorders. Trip expressed risks of addiction amongst youth including starting any type of drug use prior to the age of 25, a family history of addiction or mental health concerns, socializing with others who use drugs, and their environment. Trip expressed that the community should be a protective factor for and help youth to be successful in life. Trip noted that nicotine, alcohol, and cannabis use increases their risk of using other substances.

Leah Raymer with Pickaway Area Recovery Services stated that they urine screen all of their clients and since marijuana became legal, positive marijuana screens have increased more than 30%. Raymer had questions for Council, asking if they've researched the data in other counties regarding OVI's where a dispensary is present, criminal activity, and an increase in complaints from citizens and local businesses. Raymer also expressed concerns with zoning and where dispensaries would be located in regard to schools, parks, the YMCA, and other areas in which youth frequent.

Hedges motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 p.m., Seconded by Theis. Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by: Sarah Kolesar, Assistant Clerk.