



- HOME
- NEWS
- SPORTS
- OPINION
- COMMUNITY
- LIFESTYLE
- CONTACT
- LEGAL

## Council moves to ban pot industry in Monroe

By: Polly Keary February 6, 2014 Monroe News News 2115 Views

Monroe City Council heard a flurry of citizen testimony in regards to marijuana-related issues during Tuesday's council meeting, as they continued the public hearing from January 14.

The issue before council was to adopt an ordinance establishing the prohibition of marijuana collective gardens, as well as establishing interim zoning regulations for state licensed marijuana businesses. The establishment of zoning regulations came as a recommendation from city attorneys who advised the city to enact zoning standards as a precautionary measure in the case that the court finds local bans to be in violation of Initiative 502.

Although Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson recently announced his opinion that cities can effectively ban marijuana businesses, his opinion is not necessarily binding in court.

The city council has held multiple discussions on the topic and thus far has been in favor of pursuing a business license ban as a method for disallowing marijuana businesses to operate in Monroe.

The precautionary zoning measures establish the following interim regulations: Marijuana producers would be allowed in general industrial zones; marijuana processors would be allowed in general industrial and light industrial zones and retail establishments would be permitted in small areas of general commercial and service commercial property.

Nearly two dozen Monroe area residents spoke in opposition of allowing marijuana-related businesses to operate in Monroe, with one resident speaking in support.

A cluster of local students from both Monroe High School and Park Place Middle School attended the meeting to express their opposition, with several students stepping up to address council. Many offered testimony of their own tribulations as they have had to navigate adolescence plus deal with addiction-related issues among their family members and friends.

Monroe High School Student Kaylee Boone addressed council. Boone also spoke out against marijuana during the public testimony on January 14.

"I spoke last time," said Boone. She turned and asked the students present in council chambers to stand. "But this time I brought friends."

Boone shared that she recently became aware of someone with whom she is friends. Much to her surprise and dismay, the friend started using marijuana.

"Things in her life are already getting messed up," said Boone. "It's really sad to see."

Many citizens who have spoken out against marijuana have expressed that, while they understand that it would not be legal for students under the age of 21 to buy marijuana, they feel that access to the drug would be, in some aspects, streamlined.

"As a high school student and a friend, I ask that Monroe does its best to not allow high school students like my friend to have easier access to this terrible drug," said Boone.

Boone's mom, Kerry Boone, also spoke in opposition. Kerry Boone is a member of the Monroe Community Coalition, a local organization that helps to fight drug and alcohol abuse in the Monroe community, particularly among the youth. Boone referenced a couple of Washington State House bills which are being discussed in Olympia during the current legislative session that are designed to encourage cities to participate in Initiative 502 by allowing marijuana businesses to operate.

### WEATHER

Monroe, WA

Today	Thursday
 Partly Cloudy 63°/38°	 Clear 65°/42°

**GRAND OPENING**  
WILDWOOD TRAILS IN SULTAN  
New one- and two-level homes from the mid \$200s

[Click for Info](#)



**RM HOMES**

WASHINGTON STATE  
**EVERGREEN RV SHOW**  
EVERGREEN STATE FAIRGROUNDS  
MONROE WA  
**APRIL 10, 11, 12**




more than just money

- RECENT
- POPULAR
- COMMENTS

Bond seeks to improve school security

April 6, 2015 496 Views

Sultan honors Elizabeth Emmons

April 6, 2015 391 Views

House Bill 2144 would allow for the establishment of a state fund, created with excise tax funds generated from marijuana businesses. A certain percentage of the fund would essentially be utilized as an incentive to cities for allowing the businesses to operate in their jurisdictions.

Monroe resident Dolly Leisten spoke in support of marijuana businesses, as she did in January. Leisten's position included the stance that, being as marijuana was legalized by the voters of Washington State, the city should honor that by allowing one store; as was allotted per the Washington State Liquor Control Board.

"All the state is trying to do is enact what we had voted for," said Leisten.

She also brought up the fact that the city could lose revenue as a result of disallowing marijuana businesses, as well as the fact that teenagers would not be allowed to walk into a licensed retail marijuana establishment and purchase "a joint."

"If the store sells to somebody underage, the store will be shut down," said Leisten. "It will be run like how the state liquor stores were run."

Leisten also commented that, as she's been out information-gathering in the community, it had been brought to her attention that the drug of choice in the Monroe area is heroin, not marijuana. She stated that, by keeping legal marijuana establishments from operating, the city is simply allowing the black market to remain and flourish, and that it's the black market that can facilitate citizens obtaining and utilizing other drugs.

"Heroin over marijuana is the drug of choice in this town," said Leisten. "The black market is where they're going to say, 'you want to buy something else to go along with that?'"

"Let's cut that black market out, little by little, as much as we can," she continued.

Monroe City Council has maintained consistency on their stance about marijuana-related businesses, and has held numerous conversations on effective methods for keeping these businesses out of the city; most recently with a business license ban. The current Monroe Municipal Code stipulates that, in order for a business license to be issued in the city of Monroe, it must comply with both state and federal law. It is currently impossible for a marijuana-related business to fulfill this criterion.

This strategy has been adopted in Wenatchee.

In discussion on Tuesday, several councilmembers pointed out to the public that establishing the zoning guidelines does not mean that they have decided to become in favor of marijuana businesses.

"I really like the idea of just prohibiting it altogether, but I think a multi-layered approach would be good," said Councilmember Kevin Hanford.

He reiterated what Councilmember Patsy Cudaback pointed out during January's public hearing; that the zoning regulations are strictly a precautionary measure, should any legal complications arise.

"If we get overturned, then at least we have these guidelines in place," said Hanford.

Councilmember Jason Gamble echoed the sentiment.

"I still don't understand why we need a super majority for a school bond and we can pass pot with a simple majority," said Gamble, referring to the fact the school district needs to obtain over 60 percent of the favorable vote to pass a capital facilities bond, while an initiative like I502 was able to pass with a favorable vote of over 50 percent.

Many citizens who provided testimony brought up the aspect of tax revenue for the city, encouraging the city to not be swayed by dollar signs. Gamble assured the public that, in his eyes, it has never been an issue wherein they've been looking forward to receiving money from marijuana businesses.

"This is never been something that we've looked at from a revenue perspective," said Gamble.

Gamble agreed that, as a safety precaution, zoning regulations must be established.

Councilmember Patsy Cudaback requested that council consider moving forward with the first reading of the zoning regulations. She also asked city attorneys to develop an ordinance which would effectively enact the business license ban for review at a future council meeting.

"That would be a local business license ban," said Cudaback.

"The business license ordinance would state that we have to be in compliance with state and federal law," she continued. "So that's what I would propose that we do."

Councilmember Goering made two motions; one to proceed with the first reading of the zoning guidelines. The other motion requested that the attorneys prepare an ordinance "to prohibit the issuance of a Monroe business license to any marijuana-related use, and thereby prohibit the establishment of marijuana related businesses in

Council decides on parallel, angle parking combo

📅 April 6, 2015 👁 393 Views

Police Blotter | April 7, 2015

📅 April 6, 2015 👁 200 Views

Letter | Bond covers needed renovations

📅 April 6, 2015 👁 186 Views

## UPCOMING EVENTS

April 9, 2015 10:00 am

**Tabitha House - Clothing Drive**

April 14, 2015 7:00 pm

**Monroe City Council**

April 16, 2015 6:30 pm

**Evergreen Republican Women's Club**

April 17, 2015 7:00 pm

**The Slaughterhouse Lounge presents  
psychic/medium Ankhasha Amenti**

## MAGAZINES



the city of Monroe.”

Both motions passed unanimously.

Like 13 Tweet 4

← Previous Post

Next Post →

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



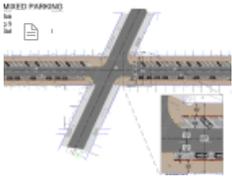
**Polly Keary**

Polly Keary is the editor of the Monroe Monitor and Valley News.



All Posts by : Polly Keary

## RELATED ARTICLES



Council decides on parallel, angle parking combo

📅 April 6, 2015



Police Blotter | April 7, 2015

📅 April 6, 2015



Council considers hiring Minnick's lobbying firm

📅 March 31, 2015



Leftover funds mean bigger 2015 city budget

📅 March 31, 2015

## 3 COMMENTS



**Dan Hacker**

February 9, 2014 at 12:50 am

One of the reasons why there are so few people showing support at the council meetings for allowing marijuana in Monroe is because just a few months ago, they were still throwing people into cages for it. Every imprisonment that has ever occurred for the possession of marijuana has been cruel and unusual, and the fear of that inhumane persecution still exists.

The single biggest gateway drug is nicotine, and it causes 480,000 deaths per year.

Alcohol is responsible for 88,000 deaths per year.

These statistics are based on consumption alone. No one has ever died from toxicity by ingesting marijuana. It can't be done.

How many places in Monroe can you buy cigarettes? Countless. Alcohol? At least two full blown stores and countless other outlets. Would we ever even consider banning alcohol? Not a chance. We've already learned the lessons of such an action (it was called Prohibition, and it was proven to not work).

It simply doesn't make sense to ban marijuana. And frankly, we need the money.

Also, if you don't know this already, Dolly Leisten's quote about heroin in Monroe is true, the town is flooded with it. The only reason I know this was because I was in the position to try and help a young woman who was addicted to the stuff, little did I know that by bringing her to Monroe I had put her in the middle of a thriving heroin market. It did not end well. I would only suggest that marijuana is (literally) the LEAST of our problems in Monroe.

Reply ↩



**cyrixlord**

February 10, 2014 at 10:46 am

wow, looks like we all know where the black market is going to be for Snohomish county now, and enforcement of the ban will be at taxpayer expense since we wont see any state or county tax revenue from the industry coming to us since we won't be participating.

Reply ↩



**L. Allan Davis**

February 11, 2014 at 10:14 am

If we are forced to tolerate a Wal-Mart, we should at least allow a few pot stores as well.

Reply ↩

#### LEAVE A REPLY

Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked \*

Name \*

Email \*

Website

Comment

Post Comment

Notify me of follow-up comments by email.

Notify me of new posts by email.

---

#### SUBSCRIBE TO BLOG VIA EMAIL

Enter your email address to subscribe to this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email.

Join 76 other subscribers

Email Address

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

April 9, 2015 10:00 am

**Tabitha House - Clothing Drive**

April 14, 2015 7:00 pm

**Monroe City Council**

April 16, 2015 6:30 pm

**Evergreen Republican Women's Club**