

Mayor Greg Mapes called a special meeting/work session of the Alma City Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held in Commission Chambers at the Alma Municipal Building. A quorum was present.

Roll Call

Present: Roger Allman, Roxann Harrington, Greg Mapes, Nick Piccolo, Michelle Pitts, and Audra Stahl.
Absent: Daniel Wernick.

The purpose of the work session was discussion on various items, including processes for allowing recreational adult use marihuana sales within city limits, and the possible formation of a public arts advisory group.

All members of the City Commission were duly notified of the meeting, and the business to be transacted thereat, at least 12 hours before the time of the meeting, in accordance with Section 2.13(b) of the Charter of the City of Alma. Public notice was also given in compliance with Act 267, of the Public Acts of Michigan, 1976.

Motion by Commissioner Piccolo, seconded by Vice-Mayor Harrington, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Yes: Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Piccolo, Pitts, and Stahl.
No: none.
Absent: Wernick.

Mayor Mapes led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

New Business

City Manager Aeris Ripley asked the Commission for review of the proposed recreational marihuana sales ordinance, section by section, together with their input regarding decisions that will need to be made to complete the ordinance. Discussion followed about how much time the Commission wanted to spend on discussion.

Section 1 & 2:

No concerns were expressed.

Section 3:

Discussion about safety compliance facilities, definitions, and allowable facilities.

Section 4:

Ripley explained this section controls types of facilities. At a question from Harrington, Ripley confirmed medical and recreational use licenses are separate and selling both would require both licenses. Ripley referred the Commission to Portage's ordinance which combines both types into the same ordinance. Discussion followed about the "sunset" clause in that ordinance which expired in November of 2021 and required a two-year medical license before a recreational license could be issued. City Attorney Costanzo indicated a point system could also be used for determinations. Ripley explained the Commission would need to determine the number and types of facilities allowed. Commissioners agreed there was no interest in consumption establishments.

Section 5:

Ripley briefly reviewed the license fee and discussion followed about the local licensing authority. It was agreed the City Commission would be the local licensing authority.

Sections 6 and 7:

Ripley explained a special use permit would be required for permitted locations. Discussion followed about the buffering requirements. Ripley suggested maps showing different buffer options and agreed to provide them for

the next Commission meeting. Lengthy discussion followed regarding the downtown area, schools and parks. Stahl spoke about Cadillac's ordinance saying the smaller towns seemed to be locating the establishments outside of downtown areas. Ripley agreed to contact Cadillac for a copy of their ordinance. Additional discussion followed about building aesthetics and zoning requirements.

Section 8:

Costanzo noted he had set up the proposed ordinance to give the City Commission final authority for issuing licenses, but he said that decision was also up to the Commission. Stahl, Allman, and Ripley agreed the Commission should have final say on issuance. Additional discussion followed about Sections 8(B) and 8(D)(12).

Section 9:

Piccolo asked about including an additional requirement showing procedure for vetting and training employees.

Sean McEwan of Consume Cannabis was in the audience and answered questions from Commissioners regarding state regulations.

Discussion followed about language for weighted scoring. Mapes suggested Section 9 could be combined with business plan requirements, saying he preferred it all be included in the business plan for evaluation. Costanzo agreed to include a subsection for the business plan and add information regarding community outreach.

Section 10:

Discussion followed about expectations and requirements for background checks.

Section 11:

Ripley reviewed the requirements. Costanzo spoke about transferring licenses and confirmed, at a question from Pitts, that requests for transfer would be reviewed by Commission. Costanzo also said application transfers will be prohibited.

Section 12:

The group briefly discussed operational standards for retail establishments and skimmed through Sections 13 through 16 regarding operational standards for other facilities.

Section 17:

Ripley explained the process for license revocation.

Section 18:

Costanzo noted the language regarding 90 days imprisonment had been added in error and would be removed.

The group took note of the time and agreed to continue review, returning to Section 6 at Pitts' request. Discussion followed about establishments in the downtown area. Ripley reminded members they would need to determine the type and number of facilities. Allman added qualifications would also need to be considered. Stahl asked Costanzo to review LaPeer's ordinance regarding restrictions on establishments in a downtown area.

Costanzo will make changes as discussed and send out amendments. Ripley noted a public hearing would be required prior to full approval. Brief discussion followed about the number of facilities allowed in neighboring communities.

Ripley presented the request from KAB (Keep Alma Beautiful committee) for creation of a public arts advisory group. He added the committee would like the Commission to consider development of an ordinance on murals.

Discussion followed about qualitative standards, political signs, and Alma College student art presentations.

Commissioner Comments

Pitts spoke briefly about local businesses decorating lampposts for upcoming city events. Allman reminded everyone of the Lucky McDuck and Alma Alive events scheduled for Saturday.

Public Comment

Sean McEwan of Consume Cannabis, commented on the discussion regarding Section 4 of the proposed marihuana ordinance.

Les Rosan of Alma, commented about how things have changed over the years.

Motion by Commissioner Stahl, seconded by Commissioner Allman, to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m. Motion carried with a voice vote.

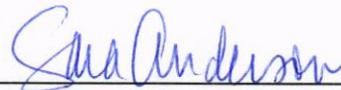
Yes: Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Piccolo, Pitts, and Stahl.

No: none.

Absent: Wernick.



Gregory S. Mapes, Mayor, City of Alma



Sara Anderson, Clerk, City of Alma

Date of Approval: Sept. 27, 2022