

Agenda item 6B September 22, 2020

Honorable Board of Supervisors –

Our 10,000 square foot provisionally state licensed & county permitted cannabis farm is situated on a mountaintop in Rangeland near Covelo. We are safe, but it has been a grueling few weeks during the August Complex Fire, etc. We appreciate the continued discussion related to the best ways forward for Mendocino County's Cannabis Ordinance. Thanks to the Cannabis Adhoc Committee expedient work on bringing this item back to the board. We read the item. We agree with much of the MCA memo. We also support the Powell letter. We especially agree with what she wrote in asking the Board to please put clear direction to Staff as to specific focus on Phase One as well as timelines & reports back to the Board. We read the Slota letter & although it's not directly related to this agenda item, we want to comment on it as well. We support & are grateful for the enforcement that has been done this season by the MCSO & we are as concerned as the greater community with robberies & other violent crimes as well as with environmental degradation by illegal grows that need to be addressed. We are also thankful to the Board, MCSO & other agencies for including cannabis as agricultural businesses during the recent fire evacuations.

We have been in the County cannabis program since its inception, all the way back to the 9.31 program, which mean we have paid thousands of dollars worth of fees & taxes to the county to date. We have witnessed firsthand merry go round of Staff & Board confusion in meetings & as applicants. We read the findings of this Adhoc committee as: the County wasted much of our time & money the past few years switching departments & office buildings, with much less (time & money) spent on getting the approx. one thousand applicants through the system. We all want to move forward rather than continue to get shuffled around.

1. YES! CEQA has been the elephant in the room. The County has been telling cultivators they were taking care of with the MND, Appendix G, etc. yet here we are... it is time to find a way to "Appendix G" grandfather in Phase One applicants that qualify. The most important thing we can say today is, PLEASE FIGURE OUT HOW TO FIX THIS CEQA SITUATION FOR YOUR PHASE ONE APPLICATIONS ASAP.

2. Yes. Better tech capabilities assist everyone.

3. No, wait. Spend more time & money figuring out your costs?!

4. Yes to biologist.

5. Wait on cannabis permitting guide until we have fixed the cannabis permitting program.

6. Yes to quick turnarounds.

7. YES! Equity program should happen simultaneously as it sounds like it is also a matter of State deadlines. Question: Has it been clarified whether the equity program is for new applicants only or if it can also be used to help finance the countywide or individual SSR/ CEQA, etc. for Phase One applicants?

8. Yes to streamlining the process. Send out letters to get applicants to finish process or leave program, follow up with code enforcement for noncompliance.

9 YES YES YES! Legislative agenda, State Reps, etc.

10 NO! Phase Three is important we all agree. The answer now is WAIT. To take even more staff time starting to work on it in addition the Use Permit which seems it will benefit Phase Three more than Phase One is not appropriate now. As we have said & the Board has agreed to this point, it must wait until the mess that is Phase One has been straightened out.

Small farmers are becoming an endangered species & we need you help to survive. "Cannabis is Agriculture & We are Farmers" is what MCA has helped our local agencies understand better than ever through the most recent crisis our County faced, & we agree. "Cannabis is Agriculture & We are Farmers."

Thank you , Laura & Marty Clein