

South Tahoe to entertain pot club moratorium

By Kathryn Reed



When the South Lake Tahoe City Council meets in a week it is expected to discuss the possibility of creating a moratorium on medicinal marijuana collectives.

Most of the councilmembers have said the three collectives in town are more than enough.

Cody Bass with the Tahoe Wellness Center told the council on Nov. 3 he favors a moratorium as well.

“We are slow. I don’t think we need a fourth (collective),” Bass said.

The irony is that same day the council heard the appeal on the Do It Center. Free market dominated – let good service and pricing dictate which business survives. It doesn’t matter how many hardware-like stores are within walking distance – at least city code is written that way.

Apparently when it comes to a more controversial subject like medicinal marijuana, a free market system is not what the council wants to have.

Clearly, the conflict between state law which allows the sale of pot for medical use and the federal ban on it presents all California cities with a dilemma. But it is hard to understand how South Lake Tahoe can regulate the number of one type of business and not others.

Some of the discussion last week centered on whether the collectives could be regulated by where they are located. No one mentioned the possibility of treating them like the medical entity they are purported to be and therefore mandating they fit the criteria all medical offices do.

As it is now, none of the collectives has a business license.

Bass said when his dispensary tried to renew its license it was denied.

Business owners sign a statement acknowledging, "No use that is illegal under local, state, or federal law shall be allowed within the city of South Lake Tahoe."

Bass said staff in the business license department wouldn't give him the license because of that statement.

Council will also need to decide who regulates the collectives. Police Chief Terry Daniels had wanted to craft an ordinance earlier this fall that would give the police department oversight. Police have jurisdiction over taxi cab drivers and massage therapists.

The entire matter could be a moot point and another waste of taxpayer money because California keeps pushing toward legalizing marijuana.

The council meets Nov. 17 at 9am at Lake Tahoe Airport.