

Lauren Davidson

From: rod grimes <grimesllc@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 13, 2016 10:44 AM
To: Planning
Cc: Sheilah Kennedy; rcambell@co.okanogan.wa.us; Jim DeTro; albert_@hotmail.com; deesculz7@gmail.com; mcmlandco@live.com; sigurdoshea@yahoo.com; prdart11@gmail.com
Subject: Re: Public Comment

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Rod Grimes, Producer/Process Tonasket WA. Speaking on behalf of our family operated farm. I was in attendance for the first meeting, but was unable to make the April 11th meeting to provide my comments.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this subject. I know you've heard a great deal of testimony so far so I will try to be brief.

At the heart of the matter I believe all of us want the same thing...a vibrant community that is economically healthy and one that promotes a quality of life that is safe and secure to raise our families. I urge you to please carefully consider any actions going forward that would prevent us from achieving this goal. I have three main points I would like you to consider.

1. At the very least, please protect those of us who have already invested our life's savings into the community based on current policy and commitments made by our public representatives. For many of us, changing the rules at this point, requiring a conditional use permit and/or offering an amortization clause would be fatal. We have already spent our startup capital and have long term leases in place. Relocating would not be an option and would bankrupt us. Instead, please grandfather those of us that are currently approved and work with the handful of individual farms to resolve outstanding community concerns.
2. Please keep our right to farm as agriculture! Taking this away would have many unintended consequences, from irrigation water rights that existing farms already count on, to zoning requirements that would push the industry to commercial indoor operations that is neither economically or environmentally sustainable long term. It would artificially drive up consumer pricing and limit customer choices. This model would favor big business and put small family farms at a disadvantage. Allow the next generation to farm and invest in the community they live in.

3. Lastly, I would like to encourage you to create a working group that represents the "broad "spectrum of producers/processors that you can collaborate with to develop policy going forward, mitigate public concerns and work together to bring home more of the industries' tax dollars so that it can be invested in our communities infrastructure, support education, youth programs and law enforcement to keep us safe and compliant.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

On Thu, Mar 17, 2016 at 12:14 AM, rod grimes <grimesllc@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear, Commissioners,

I would like to ask for your consideration in helping to save my family farm, my industry and the future well-being of my community in Okanogan county.

I have worked for more than 40 years and am at the end of my career. Like most parents, I would like to see my children and their children do better.

Although it may be difficult for some of us to see given our personal biases of the cannabis industry, our younger generation has a much greater vision. They see it as opportunity to be a part of developing something bigger than themselves. An industry that will benefit the community as a whole and one that has the potential to transform our county.

They see cannabis, as many of us saw the wine industry transform struggling communities in earlier decades. Look at those communities now! Wouldn't it be grand to create the next Napa Valley of Okanogan county!

Their hope is to foster an industry that promotes economic development and lifts the standard of living for many, not just a few. An opportunity to generate significant tax revenues that can be reinvested in infrastructure and support education, youth programs and law enforcement to keep us safe. And some day, as stereotypes fall away, maybe even have a chance to partner with our state's world renowned medical research centers to find unknown treatments for currently incurable diseases.

It's quite a vision, but without your support and visionary leadership, its only be a dream.

A cannabis moratorium is not the answer! It simply stops all progress towards building a viable industry and a stronger community.

To be successful we need your help to grow responsibly.

At a minimum, please protect those of us that have taken the risk to pioneer our vision of a better community by eliminating the amortization proposal, conditional use permit requirements and allow current zoning that meet the LCB guidelines.

Otherwise the consequences could be devastating and turn the industry over to big, out of business who will squelch the independence of locally owned, family operated farms and our community connections.

To be successful long-term, we must maintain our current definition of marijuana as an agricultural crop with the right to farm! Without it we will be forced to commercial zones and growing practices that are not economically or environmentally sustainable. As an industry we need to encourage organic, sun grown sustainably produced cannabis.

Please help support this vision and allow our next generation to FARM!

Respectfully,

The Grimes Family
Crescent Valley Farms
Tonasket, WA

Rod Grimes, 54

Lola Grimes, 55

Stephen Grimes, 26

Katy Grimes, 24

Andrew Grimes, 23

Jess Kahler-Grimes, 22

Sydney Grimes, 28

Sarah Grimes, 22