Pot debate dominates city hearing

Speakers advocate for public vote on marijuana sales

By PEGGY WENDEL
Staff Reporter

A few residents spoke at length during the Stanwood Planning Commission meeting Monday, March 12, about bringing retail marijuana sales back into the city.

Alexis Fackenthall said marijuana opponents felt the city was trying to sneak marijuana stores in before people had a chance to speak out. So he conducted an online survey in which about 77 percent of 600 respondents said the issue should be put on a ballot.

“If it’s not put to a vote, people will think that’s ‘we’ve been robbed,’” he said.

Commissioner Sue Ronken de

nied the issue was not made public.

“I can’t know how people didn’t know about it.” Ronken said. “The

ouncil made a motion and voted on it. It’s going through the proper procedures.”

“No foul play, per se,” Fackenthall said. “(The process) is just happening so fast that we thought it was already decided we wouldn’t have it.”

Since voting against allowing marijuana sales in 2016, the Council has gained two new members, who said they were clear about their position on allowing legal marijuana in Stanwood when they ran for council.

Commissioner Kelly McMillan said people in Stan

wood are becoming more educated about marijuana.

“It’s not so much of a ‘Reefer Madness’ mentality anymore, he said. He questioned the wisdom of putting everything controversial up to a vote and putting every

thing into a public setting.

“The whole thing was nothing but push and promise,” Nestor said.

He did not say if he’d have them try marijuana rather than risk an overdose on alcohol.

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“Terry’s Corner is bustling.

Shoppers buzz about in the 25 or so businesses at the near-capacity Camano Commons.

More than 110,000 commuters annually use the nearby transit hub — an 80-stall park and ride and the Camano Bus Transfer Station.

Thousands of children now frolic in Rotary Playground at the spacious Freedom Park.

However, Terry’s Corner as it looks today almost didn’t happen.

By EVAN CALDWELL | Staff Reporter

Fackenthall said he has been exploring the issue firsthand. He described going into a marijuana store. A black-bag test may be the only fail-safe for identification. Fackenthall said he had to hand over his ID for business license purposes.

“Some people asking for business licenses aren’t asking for business up to public scrutiny,” Fackenthall said. He questioned the wisdom of putting every

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