

Linking Letter

July 30, 2017

by *Anne Scheck*

7/25/2017 CITY COUNCIL

Order of Content in the *Linking Letter*

- | **Marijuana:** Untangling Snags
- | **Mecanico:** \$50K to Rescue?
- | **PIN REPORT:** Inspiring Garden
- | **DATE-TO-NOTE:** August 15, 2017
- | **Letter-from-Editor:** Citizen Service!
- | **FINALE:** Rep. Evans "Inclusivity"
preview of editorial by Jenn Flores

Background Checks

Tangle Marijuana Biz

Marijuana business-license rules enacted by Independence contain confusing language about the way background checks are to be carried out and fail to offer guidance on enforcement, Independence Police Chief Robert Mason said at the last city council meeting.

Calling the wording in the new licenses “a stumbling block,” the chief told councilors that there were “no regulatory guidelines established along with the requirements” in the license for new or prospective marijuana businesses in the city. The chief made his comments as a follow-up to an announcement by City Manager David Clyne during a prior city council meeting that revisions in the marijuana business-license are needed. (Mr. Clyne was not available at the recent meeting to answer questions; He reportedly was taking vacation time.)

Asked privately during a short break in the meeting why the way the license is written seems so problematic to him, Chief Mason handed over his highlighted copy of the ordinance. The section in question, which contained several referrals to other sub-sections, appeared to lack clarity for background checks, particularly how to address lapses.

During the meeting, City Councilor Marilyn Morton, who said she previously had “trepidation” about marijuana-licensing changes, explained that Mr. Clyne’s comments at the last meeting made “it sound like we were going to try to ‘dumb down’ the ordinance and I didn’t want to see that.” Councilor Ken Day observed: “That is why we have staff and they can do their job.” Bruce Patton, a local resident who had advocated for provisions in the license before it was adopted, told councilors in public testimony that the issue “sounds like a real bureaucratic problem.” A staff report on the matter is expected to come before the council by the end of summer.

Mecanico Pledges \$50K In Effort to Remain Open

Seeking to save *Mecanico* from foreclosure by the City of Independence, owner Matthew Lind asked the City Council this past Tuesday to accept an immediate \$50,000 payment toward the debt he owes on the property and to allow the business to stay open. “This has been a successful investment,” he said.

Under a previous agreement granting him an extension, Mr. Lind was scheduled to pay the debt on the land and structure by this fall, a sum that comes close to \$200,000. Instead, he proposed paying \$50,000 now, with a two-year extension on the existing loan. In this way, equity can continue to build, enabling eventual refinancing by means of a bank loan, he said.

“I had taken a derelict property, cleaned it up, and refurbished it,” he said. *Mecanico*, which had been a gas station, now houses a largely outdoor establishment that serves food and drinks.

Mr. Lind reminded city councilors that both MINET, the city’s telecom company, as well as several businesses, have benefited from monetary support by the city – and he asked for the same consideration. A decision on *Mecanico* is expected in August.

>|PIN REPORT:
Public Interest News

Inspiration Garden!

It may not be as spectacular as the coming solar event, but the beauty of Independence's "Inspiration Garden" far eclipses the typical sights of a summer stroll by offering gardens galore. Where else can you walk among a rock garden, a rose garden, a medicinal plant garden, a bee and butterfly garden, a Japanese garden and a children's garden? Longtime civic volunteer Betty Plude is encouraging anyone to make a morning visit to "Inspiration Garden," located in Mt. Fir Park, off F Street between 7th and 9th streets. The plantings, by master gardeners, are downright astronomical.

<|**DATE-TO-NOTE: 8/15/2017-8/25/17**

The city will host a traveling exhibit "**Architecture of Internment: The Build Up to Wartime Incarceration**" starting August 15. 8am-5pm on the 2nd floor, Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., according to Heritage Museum personnel. For more information on content see: www.grahamstreetproductions.com

+++**Letter from the Editor**+++

Hello to everyone,

There's a better way than *The Linking Letter* to learn about local leadership and City Hall matters: personal involvement on a city board, commission or committee.

At the last council meeting, City Councilor Ken Day urged his fellow citizens to sign up and serve by applying for one of a half-dozen volunteer opportunities, ranging from a seat on the planning commission – recently vacated by Andrew Wynings – to positions on Parks & Recreation, Historic Preservation, Traffic Safety and the Museum Board.

I couldn't have said it better or agree more. Thanks, Mr. Day. -- *Anne Scheck*
PICK UP the August issue of The Independent this week, available on 8/1 at: The Ovenbird Bakery, The Golden Horse, Elite Cleaners (all downtown) and The Starduster at the airport AND NOW ALSO @ Brew & Tap House, 211 S. Main.

FINALE: Rep. Evans Lauds Inclusivity Vote

A resolution unanimously approved this week by the Independence City Council declaring the city "inclusive" is timely and important because the

public needs to hear that message from locally elected leaders, State Representative Paul Evans said at a town hall meeting Saturday. Speaking to constituents over pastry and coffee at the Ovenbird Bakery in downtown Independence, Rep. Evans noted that the recently passed city resolution -- to recognize and affirm diversity in Independence – reflects the state view but reinforces it at a community level. It's reassuring to those who are undocumented that they reside in a place that “protects people’s identities until a crime has been committed,” he said. A city benefits when there is full residential participation, he added. “Democracy dies in the shadows,” he observed.

The passage of the resolution drew a crowd that packed the Independence Civic Center Tuesday night. One of the speakers, Jennifer Flores, considers the term “inclusive town” to represent a city “willing to look beyond stated limits.” In an editorial she wrote following the meeting, she described the vote on inclusivity as evidence “that we, as people of Independence, Oregon, see our neighbors as Human Beings. Nothing more, and certainly nothing less.”

(The complete editorial by Ms. Flores' on inclusivity will appear in a special edition of The Linking Letter. Look for it in August).

TO UN-SUBSCRIBE, HIT REPLY, LEAVE 'NO' MESSAGE

LINK to 7/25/2017 meeting video below

Paste into your browser, not search line

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DT_RVSc8Vr8

***The Linking Letter* is published by Trammart News, an Oregon corporation.**

Mailing address is Trammart Inc., 3760 Market Street NE, #409, Salem, OR 97301

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