

April 13, 2017

Campbell River asks Court to order two marijuana dispensaries closed

The City of Campbell River has filed legal proceedings for a Court order to close local marijuana dispensaries that are operating in contravention of municipal bylaws and federal criminal law.

“We understand people are eager to see the law changed and marijuana dispensaries permitted, but until a new federal law is enacted, the current law stands, and the Prime Minister has been very clear that he expects compliance with the law,” states Mayor Andy Adams.

“Council has always recognized the benefits of medical marijuana for providing relief for several afflictions, and we are prepared to make the necessary bylaw amendments as soon as the government has provided clarity on what will be permitted once the federal and provincial laws change and the legislative authority and regulatory approvals are in place for these changes,” the Mayor says.

In the meantime, the Prime Minister has confirmed that although the federal government has a clear mandate to change the laws and legalize marijuana, that hasn't happened yet.

Currently, marijuana is legal for medicinal purposes with a prescription from a medical doctor. According to regulations, it can only be supplied by Health Canada-licensed producers and delivered by mail, or homegrown in small amounts.

“Storefront dispensaries that claim to be supplying medicinal marijuana are not federally licensed and are breaking the existing federal law, and City zoning and business licence bylaws,” explains City manager Deborah Sargent. *“The federal government, through the Prime Minister himself, has been clear that the current law applies, and the City of Campbell River is working with the RCMP and the Court system to uphold the law. We understand this action may not be popular with some people, but until the laws change, Council will follow the direction of the federal government to uphold the current legal requirements.”*

The City's petition addressed breaches of zoning, business licensing and Community Charter requirements and follow up on the warnings and municipal tickets issued by City bylaw enforcement officers.

Last week the Supreme Court of British Columbia provided WeeMedical with an extension to file its response to the City's petition.

WeeMedical has until April 18 to respond, after which a hearing date is expected to be set.

###

Contact: Deborah Sargent, City Manager

250-286-5740

