

## Supes hash out details on Land Use, tax measure, pilot programs

By Hans Peter, Woodland Daily Democrat

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Cannabis came before Yolo County Supervisors again — literally, this time.

During their Oct. 10 board meeting, supervisors reviewed some of the final portions of Yolo County's cannabis cultivation ordinance, focusing on Land Use permits, pilot programs, and the cannabis tax measure scheduled for the June 2018 ballot.

Among a smaller-than-usual crowd and resulting public comment, cannabis advocate Jackie McGowan even brought samples of the plant and placed them in front supervisors. She meant to demonstrate healthy nursery samples as Beau Keene, a cannabis cultivator, spoke on the importance of a pesticide-free product.

Supervisors have considered the need for pilot programs like nurseries and cannabis processing facilities, but have been hesitant to allow companies to invest on loose soil.

Nurseries and processing facilities will do well to support Yolo's legal grows, but supervisors have hesitated to incept a potentially stranded asset. Pilot programs would also mean erecting more policy and perhaps relinquishing some control over the industry.

Keene used his public comment window to say that nurseries are the only way to ensure a completely contaminant-free plant. As a horticulturist, he said outdoor plants in an agricultural area would be prone to stray pesticide spraying that would in turn affect plants and all that plant's offspring.

After supervisors batted around the idea some more, they suggested the county could look into permitting two nurseries in the county as part of the pilot program. District 3 Supervisor Matt Rexroad said that pilot programs would understand the risks and more than two could mean allowing the market to breathe and compete.

### 'COLLIDING DIRECTLY'

After months of staff work and dozens of meetings to match, supervisors seemed wary of how the county's planning commission would go forward with the newly imposed Land Use ordinance.

The issue of Land Use has been the center of the most recent talks on the plant, as it will decide where and how growers could operate. During Tuesday's meeting, supervisors addressed some of the guiding principles that will soon direct the planning commission in creating zones specific to growing the plant.

Part of that discussion encompassed what level of control the supervisors would have before handing over a measure of control to the planning commission.

"We're not outsourcing the program," District 4 Supervisor Jim Provenza said. "I'm not interested in starting over; let's not get off track here."

He went on to say that the county had already made rigid decisions like buffer distances, and permitting, and he didn't want to see those decisions uprooted.

Oscar Villegas of District 1 shared Provenza's concern.

"(Grow areas are) the board's decision ultimately," he said.

The new Land Use process will take affect in early 2019; until then, the planning commission and supervisors will need to create interim ordinance based on their current plan.

In that time, the county will host several public meetings to create transparency and gain insight to the community's needs.

Though the planning commission will take over the details, the "guiding principles" laid out by supervisors will comprise of all major details hashed out at this time.

"We're giving them a specific, narrow project to work on," Provenza said, warning that communication between the two groups would need to be constant. "I don't want it to be like two ships passing in the night..." he said.

Don Saylor of District 2 chimed in: "You want those ships to collide directly."

Amid concerns of where control exists, Saylor also said that he doesn't want to smother the industry.

"I don't want to create too great of limits to this potential" he said, suggesting that the revenue and economic growth of the industry could mean improvements countywide. "It's an ongoing balancing act."

District 5 Supervisor Duane Chamberlain said he was fine with the existing guiding principles, but would like to see "rural-residential" areas added to document language to ensure that those living in unincorporated areas also have buffers from the odorous crop.