

PUFF, PUFF, PASS

Harrah works to modernize after voters say 'Yes' to medical marijuana

By Ryan Horton
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Nearly 900,000 Oklahoma voters headed to the polls during the 2018 primary election to vote on State Question 788.

With 506,782 'yes' votes, SQ 788 passed, making Oklahoma the 30th state in the country to legalize medical marijuana.

The vote made it legal to grow, sell and use marijuana for medical purposes in the state, and has left towns and cities across the state scrambling to adopt appropriate local ordinances for the regulation of marijuana.



In recent years Harrah has seen the popularity of CBD products spread, and now Harrah is setup for medical marijuana dispensaries to open for business.

Oklahoma County Results:

Yes: 63.45 %

No: 36.55 %

170,009 Oklahoma County voters weigh in on SQ 788.

Harrah Ordinance approved Feb. 22, 2019

“The voters voted for medical marijuana to be used in our state, but every city has to adopt a separate ordinance,” said city manager Clayton Lucas. “For example, it’s like speeding being illegal in Oklahoma. If we didn’t have a city ordinance making speeding illegal in Harrah there would be nothing we could do about speeders in the city limits. Only the Highway Patrol would be able to enforce the state laws, while the city could not. We have to have an ordinance in place that regulates the growth, production and sale of marijuana.”

The law allows for individuals 18 and older to obtain a medical marijuana license with a board-certified physician’s signature.

“Basically it will allow for the sale of marijuana in industrial and commercial zones, and it has to be at least 1,000 feet away from any schools which is state statute. The only fee would be for growing. If you need a card to go buy marijuana we don’t care, but if you are going to grow marijuana at your house we proposed a \$50 fee,” explained Lucas. “That fee would just cover the cost of our inspections. If you’re growing in your house or garage and using electric setups or venting and things like that we are required to make sure everything’s working properly. The only fees the city would impose would be on the growing and selling.”

The proposed ordinance changes went in front of the Harrah City Council Feb. 22.

City officials approved the ordinance as written other than the removal of a personal use permit requirement.

Marijuana dispensaries were approved to start applying at 9 a.m. the following day, Feb. 23.

Following the state’s lead Harrah’s ordinance limits dispensaries from being within 1,000 feet of any school entrance, requires state licensing and must comply with city zoning restrictions.

Cities like Harrah aren’t alone in their efforts to correct laws as the state is still working to regulate the newly legalized marijuana.

The Legislature is currently looking at a proposal that sets guidelines for medical marijuana testing, tax collections, seed-to-sale product tracking, packaging and employment restrictions. State leaders are also looking

at creating a regular fund for the Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority and giving the state Health Department the authority to handle monitoring and disciplinary actions.

Regulations remain

Marijuana remains illegal at the federal level, and that is still causing some conflicts with regulation.

A major impact to locals seeking medical marijuana will be firearm ownership.

To purchase a firearm from a licensed dealer citizens are required to fill out form 4473. Question 11. e. on the form asks you if you’re an unlawful user of marijuana or other substances.

If you answer ‘Yes’ you will be denied a firearm, because marijuana is still illegal under federal law with violations listed as resulting in up to 10 years in prison and or a fine up to \$250,000.