

**RIO DELL CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 6, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Rio Dell City Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Garnes.

ROLL CALL: Present: Mayor Garnes, Mayor Pro Tem Carter, Councilmembers Orr, Wilson, and Woodall

Others Present: Chief of Police Allen, Finance Director Sanborn, Wastewater Superintendent Kelly, Community Development Director Caldwell (Attended Remotely), Water Roadways Superintendent Jensen (Attended Remotely), Senior Fiscal Assistant Maciel, and City Clerk Dunham

Absent: City Manager Knopp (excused)

CEREMONIAL MATTERS

In Appreciation to Sarah Reback for her Dedication to the Community

Mayor Garnes said that the City Council would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge and thank Sarah Reback from the Rio Dell Community Resource Center for her hard work and dedication to the community.

She read a statement on behalf of the City Council (included with these minutes as Attachment 1), thanking her for the amazing job that she and her staff do for Rio Dell and presented her with a Certificate of Appreciation and a Yeti cup with the City's logo that read "Sarah Reback – In Appreciation for your Hard Work and Dedication to the Community."

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Garnes invited public comment on non-agenda matters.

Sharon Wolfe addressed the Council and thanked Sarah and the Community Resource Center for all that they do. She said that every time the state, county or local government has asked the Community Resource Center to step up for services they have, and gone far beyond. She noted that they will be asking more of the Community Resource Centers as they implement Barely First Prevention Services throughout the County. She said that Rio Dell is in a good position because of having such an awesome community resource center.

Steven Saunders addressed the Council regarding his sewer bill and said that he was displaced after the earthquake and has not been able to live in his home yet is still being

billed for sewer service. He presented a utility bill in the amount of \$323.95 (representing charges from September 2023-January 2024). He said that the charges are unfair and requested the Ordinance be amended to include language to allow for an exception to waive the sewer charges in the event of an emergency when the homeowner is not allowed or able to occupy the residence. He requested the matter be placed on a subsequent agenda to address the issue. He also asked for donations from the community to help pay the outstanding bill and asked that donations be left with Sarah Reback at the Community Resource Center.

Consensus of the Council was to place the item on the next agenda for discussion and/or consideration.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Mayor Garnes asked if any councilmember, staff or member of the public would like to remove any item from the consent calendar for a separate discussion.

Councilmember Woodall asked that Consent Calendar Item #4 be removed for separate discussion.

A motion was made by Carter/Woodall to approve the consent calendar including the following items:

- 1) Minutes of the January 16, 2024 regular meeting;
- 2) Authorizing the City Manager to purchase exercise station equipment in the amount of \$19,258.81; and
- 3) Approving Award of Bid to Hooven Construction for the Clean California Grant Rio Dell Exercise Station in the amount of \$34,945 and authorizing the City Manager to execute an agreement in coordination with the City Attorney

Motion carried 5-0.

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

Approve Award of Bid for the Clean California Gateway Landscape Improvement Project to Jagimo Corporation Inc., DBA J & G Lawn and Garden in the amount of \$148,984 and authorize the City Manager to execute an Agreement in coordination with the City Attorney
Councilmember Woodall said that in reading the staff report, she realized that the plan is to remove all of the trees in the Gateway under the proposed project. She said that she understood that the original plan was to only remove the trees that were not doing well. She expressed disappointment to learn at the last minute that all the trees would be removed, including the beautiful flowering Cherry trees and others.

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Mayor Garnes said that she was also disappointed and explained that under the grant application, all of the trees must be replaced. She said that the City Manager is discussing with the contractor the possibility of removing the trees and replanting them rather than destroying them although the additional cost would be on the City.

Councilmember Wilson asked for clarification on which trees in the Gateway were to be removed.

Mayor Garnes said that it would include all the trees at the beginning of the Gateway from the north end of town to Davis St.

She said that it was her understanding that the State awarded the grant and require that all of the trees identified in the grant application be planted. She said that the concern is not what happens to the existing trees but that all of the trees included in the application be planted.

Councilmember Wilson recommended the Council get better clarification on the terms of the grant before tearing out the trees and noted that this is also his first-time hearing that all of the trees would be removed. He asked if the City was in jeopardy of losing the grant if work does not commence in the next month or so.

Finance Director Sanborn said that the grant expires on June 30, 2024 so the City is on a fairly tight timeline to get the contract executed and get the project started. He explained that as stated in the grant, there are a certain number of trees the City is obliged to plant which requires removal of trees in the median. The City has the choice of uprooting the existing trees and trying to replant them but it would be at the City's expense as the grant would not cover that.

Discussion continued regarding the project timeline and destroying the existing trees versus saving them.

Mayor Garnes pointed out that the issue is timing and if the City starts the project and does not meet the timeline for the grant, the City could ultimately owe the State \$148,984. It doesn't matter to the State whether the City decides to save the trees or not. She said that the item before the Council is to award the contract as prescribed by the grant then come back and discuss a possible change order for removal of the trees so that they remain as viable trees as that was not part of the original bid. The additional cost would be at the City's expense. She noted that the City Manager asked the contractor if they had the ability to remove the entire root ball to save the trees and for a cost estimate which had not been determined.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter pointed out that the AdHoc and the City Manager asked the state to approve a change to the scope but they denied the request.

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Councilmember Orr said that he understands the idea of trying to save the trees but the bigger picture is why three of the council members didn't find out about this until now.

Mayor Garnes commented that the AdHoc discussed the project with the City Manager and the item was previously ajenized and discussed with the Council.

Councilmember Orr expressed concern regarding the communication between the Council, or lack thereof.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter said that the Council can move forward with awarding the bid then come back and discuss the disposition of the trees once the estimate for the tree removal is received since they are two separate issues.

Councilmember Woodall said that she would like the item continued to the next regular meeting.

Motion was made by Orr/Woodall to continue the item to the meeting of February 20, 2024 for further discussion. Motion carried 3-2; with Garnes and Carter dissenting.

REPORTS/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor Garnes provided highlights of the staff update and invited questions from the Council.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter commented that she was glad to see the City Manager attending the City Manager's conference which allows him the chance to talk about what the City experienced last winter with the earthquakes and storms.

She asked Wastewater Superintendent Kelly to provide a brief recap of the recent storm event.

Wastewater Superintendent Kelly commented that the extra I & I (inflow and infiltration) has impacted the bugs at the plant and they are doing their best to keep them happy as they do not like the dissolved oxygen that is coming in through the rainwater. Councilmember Woodall commended Superintendent Kelly for her written staff update and said that it was very thorough.

Mayor Garnes acknowledged the Police Department for recent efforts in helping to clean up the City and getting guns and drugs off the streets.

Mayor Garnes called for public comment on the Staff Update. No public comment was received.

SPECIAL CALL ITEMS/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS/PUBLIC HEARINGS

Provide Staff Direction Regarding Letter of Opposition on Measure A, the Humboldt County Cannabis Reform Initiative

Mayor Garnes read the City Manager staff report outlining the background of Measure A, the Humboldt Cannabis Reform Initiative and invited public comment on the measure.

Jesse Jeffries addressed the Council regarding the origin and impacts of Measure A on small farmers. He said that he is the owner of multiple cannabis farms in Humboldt County and the City of Rio Dell. He said that the proponents of Measure A say that it is to benefit the small famers however, this is far from the truth. He commented that small farmers were not involved in the drafting of this initiative and was an initiative created by two individuals and a San Francisco attorney. He said if the initiative was drafted with the small farmer and environmental concerns in mind then landowners, environmental groups and community members, policy makers and council members would have been involved in the drafting process of Measure A.

He added that it has taken many years to draft the current cannabis ordinance in Humboldt County and the ordinance already addresses all of the things the initiative seeks to change. It portrays that cultivation in Humboldt County is rapidly growing and needs more regulation in an already over-regulated industry. He said that over-regulation has already played a role in putting small farmers out of business.

He said that while the current ordinance is not perfect, it is effective and was created from input from community members, environmental groups, and other regulatory agencies. Environmental policies are already in place to protect residents, neighborhoods, land owners, wildlife, and watersheds. He said that Measure A is not only about the cannabis industry but is an attack on landowner's private property rights and land use designations. They claim that Measure A is to keep mega-grows out of Humboldt County but at the best is disingenuous as there are no mega grows in Humboldt County. He asked the City Council to vote No on Measure A and not let two disgruntled individuals change the course of the cannabis policies in Humboldt County. He finished by saying that this initiative will negatively impact the farmers and the community as a whole.

Ross Gordon, policy director with Humboldt County Growers Alliance addressed the Council and said that he opposes Measure A and completely agrees with the comments made by Mr. Jeffries. He said that the County of Humboldt has very comprehensive cannabis regulations and Measure A is 38 pages of very detailed law and rewrites the County ordinance without any public input. He referred to a long list of community members who oppose Measure A including Sheriff Honsal and other local Cities and

Commerce organizations. He expressed concern that the proposed initiative is not about regulating cannabis but more about micro-managing cannabis by restricting water usage, energy usage, or the number or size of structures. He noted that this is extensively discussed in the Humboldt County Planning Department's report. He said that this affects every single farmer within the County's jurisdiction regardless of size and passage of this initiative would have devastating effects on the entire county. He pointed out that the County received \$52 million in cannabis revenue from local farmers and encouraged the City Council to endorse a No vote on Measure A.

Gabriel Smith, general manager of Root 101 commented that the cannabis business has been decimated over the past two years and if Measure A passes, as one of the biggest tax payers in Rio Dell, they may be forced to close their doors. He said to please vote No on Measure A.

Dylan Matole, a farmer from Honeydew addressed the Council and said that over the last eight years as a farmer and a citizen he has engaged in policy and spent countless hours in front of the County Board of Supervisors and more recently, the Arcata, Eureka, and Fortuna City Councils. He acknowledged the difficulty of being a council member and applauded them for being willing to take on this job and listen to these issues. He pointed out that what Measure A is doing is undoing hours and hours of policy making decisions and it allows two wealthy retired individuals to fund a policy that will negatively impact the County. This will undue and supersede the current policy which is setting a dangerous precedent for establishing complex policies.

Craig Johnson said that he owns a small farm in Southern Humboldt under 10,000 square feet which is exactly what the proponents ran this measure on. He referred to a map from the Measure A website which show the concentration of cannabis farms in Humboldt County as far as the different water sheds. He noted that the legend shows that one of the dots reflects 1.5 miles so it represents that the green dots represent miles and miles of farms. However, to date if you add up all the legal farms they would fit into one-half of a square mile. He said that this type of policy is no longer necessary as farms have already been fully regulated. He commented that this community as well as other communities want the farmers to succeed and all have different reasons whether it is the medicine, the economic gain or just the right of private property rights. He asked the City Council to join the farmers in opposing Measure A.

Andy Riggs, a local business owner then addressed the Council in opposition of Measure A and said that he grew up in this area and now lives on his family farm in Stafford where he operates a small 3,000 square foot cannabis farm. He said as a kid growing up here, he attended Fortuna High and imagined himself attending college with a career in forestry, a subject he grew a passion for because of his Ag teacher Mr. Myers. He said that many of his peers also considered a career in forestry and knew they had the mill to fall back on if college didn't work out. Sadly, the decline in the forest industry changed that for many

locals and no matter how anybody feel about cannabis, it is a viable industry. He said that raising a crop has never been easy work yet it is a renewable and sustainable endeavor. The money that used to flow in from cannabis would spread through the County to local establishments such as restaurants and car dealerships and bolster the local economy. He said that although the local cannabis industry is a fraction of what it once was, it still brings money, hope, and opportunity to our local area. He said that he believes that Rio Dell understands this and is something he appreciates. He said that what scares him most about this measure is the precedent it will set as this 38-page initiative will amend 13 pages of the County's General Plan. He said that other industries could be next and urged the City Council to oppose Measure A.

Cassandra Terrafelo, said that she is a small farmer and also owns and operates a distribution and processing facility in Eureka. She said that the proponents of this measure have consistently said that the opponents don't understand the intention and are misinterpreting the initiative. She said that if this measure passes, she will have to comply with what the law says but the Humboldt County Planning Department basically said that it will be impossible to enforce. She commented that Ross Gordon is a genius and interprets a lot of this initiative and so they are not misinterpreting it. She provided stickers opposing Measure A.

Supervisor Bushnell said that she also spoke at the Fortuna City Council meeting and has taken opposition to Measure A since early on. She indicated that she was part of the AdHoc that worked with Mark and Betsy, the proponents of this measure and tried to work with them to start a change to the County ordinance noting that the ordinance is not perfect and a work in progress. She said that brand new industries grow and change and you need to be able to adapt to those changes but something that is tied to the General Plan does not allow that. She said that one of the things that has been continually said is that it is not the intent to punish cultivators but when you create an ordinance it becomes law which takes a lot of work by attorneys and while it may not be the intent, how you accomplish that doesn't always work out.

She said that what is strange about this initiative is that no other industries have come up against this so why not dairies or other industries. She said that it is not really about cannabis but rather the policies and the way it is being directed. Cannabis is legal whether you like it or not which is understandable but you have to get along to co-exist and it is not fair to punish farmers who have come from 2016 to now and followed every rule and regulation to comply. She said that the sheriff opposes this measure because it will cause farmers to go underground.

She added that the Planning Department will have to create these ordinances and cultivators will have to change according to the new regulations; that cost would be passed onto the cultivators.

Kelly Flores from Margro Advisors provided a handout on Measure A (included with these minutes as Attachment 2). She explained some of the technical elements of the measure and said that it would prohibit cultivation expansion or expansion of any new cannabis cultivation related structures including ancillary buildings, water storage tanks, ponds, or solar arrays. It also would limit farmers to no more one cultivation permit with a limit of 10,000 square feet. In addition, farms would be prohibited from being located along unpaved roads. She said this measure is over zealous and over-reaching as well as being over restrictive and does not support local farmers or the County as a whole. She asked that the City Council support the letter of opposition and allow this industry to move forward.

Suzanne Maese from Margro Advisors commented that they moved into town two years ago and have made major investments in Rio Dell. She said that they have a very busy cannabis consulting firm here and passage of this measure would dramatically affect their business and require them to close their doors. She urged the City Council to consider the collateral damage and protect the farmers who are taking care of the land. She reiterated that if this measure passes, there will be no amendments or expansions of cannabis activities which is what they help facilitate.

Mark Thurmond, one of the co-sponsors of Measure A addressed the Council via Zoom and said that the analysis done by the County is seriously flawed. He indicated that the measure does not prohibit improvements, only expansion of existing cannabis farms. He said that it also does not require existing farms to upgrade the road standards or improve facilities. He asked the City Council to carefully read both the initiative and the Humboldt County Planning Department analysis and compare what each document says. He said that there were many false statements in the analysis and statements made tonight and said that this initiative is not about two old retired fuddy-duddies getting together and writing this initiative as it was crafted in collaboration with the growers. He said that they collected 7,000 signatures from people in support of Measure A.

Nick Erickson, resident of Rio Dell since 1996 and owner of a small cannabis farm clarified that Mr. Thurmond indicated that they have 7,000 supporters of Measure A yet at every function he has attended there have only been two or three supporters show up. He also pointed out that when Ordinance 1.0 was formulated, there were public forums where everybody could come together and try to formulate the regulations, none of them showed up. He said that it wasn't until they realized that they might have a farm in their own backyard that they decided to act. He said with regard to obtaining 7,000 signatures in support of Measure A, they presented it as protecting small farms and protecting the environment. He noted that it took the County six weeks to go through the 38-page initiative so the average person signing the petition would not at a glance understand the initiative. He strongly urged the City Council to vote No on the initiative.

There being no further public comment, the public hearing was closed.

Councilmember Orr said that he was raised that you don't share your votes or try to influence people but that you trust them to read and understand things on their own to vote their conscience. He said that he teaches his students the same thing in school. He thanked Supervisor Bushnell for reiterating the same thing. He said that when he came here tonight it was an obvious No vote for him as the measure is decisive and draconian and excessively restrictive. He commented that he read it three times and does not need a legal degree to see what's going on. He said that he doesn't feel qualified to sway anyone's vote or tell them how to vote however, he will vote to oppose this initiative. He added that if passed, it could drive Humboldt County bankrupt.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter said that she read the initiative and has been following this for about two years. She said that she re-read the initiative and the county analysis before the meeting as well as the rebuttals that came from the proponents of Measure A. She pointed out that the legal cannabis industry is relatively new and there is need for flexibility to be able to change with the times. She also said that this would be undoing all of the work that went into transitioning from the black market to a legal market. She noted that to prepare for this meeting, she went out and talked to people in the community including those in support of the measure. She said that the industry is already strained and everyone has worked really hard to come into compliance.

She said that her most important point is that her job as an elected official, regardless of what her own personal opinions about cannabis may be, is that she is here to speak for her constituents and in hearing from the residents and businesses of Rio Dell, nobody wants this so it is her duty as an elected official to speak for those people and vote No in support of Measure A.

Councilmember Wilson said that this discussion takes him back to 2016 with legalization of cannabis and said that his views have changed considerably since then. He said that he was opposed to Rio Dell's cannabis ordinance and Prop 64 through the State. Those things passed and the citizens of Rio Dell spoke. He said that the more conservative people wanted to see money coming into Rio Dell. The City has a very good ordinance which is modeled after the County's ordinance. He said that through all of the work that has been done, he feels that the County and the City of Rio Dell have been successful in making this industry work.

He said that in listening to Sheriff Honsal, who he greatly respects, his big concern was that this initiative would push farmers back into the black market. With the decline in the timber and fishing industries, the only way people were going to make it around here was in the cannabis industry and to push that back into the illegal market is not good. He commented that the illegal grows don't seem to have decreased.

Supervisor Bushnell commented that illegal grows in Humboldt County have decreased from 15,000 to less than 1,000.

Councilmember Wilson said that he trusts the people in this room who are involved in the industry and think that the activities of the County have made it a viable legal industry along with guidelines and it is not productive to push farmers back into the illegal market. He said that the people in support of this initiative don't seem to be around except for on the telephone and he also opposes Measure A and he supports the letter of opposition.

Councilmember Woodall said that she was glad to see people come and voice their concerns to the Council which helps to understand the initiative. She said that she has always supported the cannabis industry and will also vote in support of the letter of opposition to Measure A.

Mayor Garnes noted that the legal farmers in Humboldt County have done everything they could do to be in compliance and that it doesn't seem like there is any more to regulate except some minor tweaks here and there. She commented that Rio Dell had over a hundred meetings before approving the cannabis regulations and the County had many meetings and the County and the Cities came to this decision and feel that the farmers have done everything they could to meet the requirements. She said that everything has already been covered in her opinion but she did ask that the City Manager bring this matter forward and allow the City Council to take a stand for the farmers and for all of the hard work of everyone in developing cannabis regulations.

Councilmember Orr said that he married into Humboldt County so hasn't had a lifetime around this industry. He said that his father-in-law was in the logging industry and he knows people in the fishing industry so it didn't take him long to figure out what happened there. He expressed appreciation to everyone for showing up and keeping the same thing from happening to the cannabis industry.

Motion was made by Carter/Orr to approve the letter opposing Measure A, the Humboldt Cannabis Reform Initiative. Motion carried 5-0.

ORDINANCES/SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS/PUBLIC HEARINGS

Second reading (by title only) and adoption of Ordinance No. 402-2024 Related to False Alarms and Fees

Chief Allen provided a staff report and explained that the ordinance was introduced at the January 16, 2024 regular meeting and is back for its second reading and adoption. He said that Ordinance 402-2024 establishes false alarms and fees. The Rio Dell Police Department is responsible for responding to both commercial and residential alarms and a majority of those calls they respond to are false alarms due to non-maintenance of the equipment or operator error.

If adopted, it will start in January 2025 and the fees will be \$20.00 every two years with the first two years waived. He explained that false alarms refer to excessive alarms so the first two false alarm calls would not be charged. The third false alarm would result in a fee of \$75.00 and would increase with subsequent false alarm calls.

Mayor Garnes opened the public hearing to receive public input on the proposed ordinance.

Sharon Wolfe said to reiterate, this is for commercial alarms that trigger a police response.

Chief Allen said that it is for commercial and residential alarms that trigger a police response.

Motion was made by Orr/Carter to approve the second reading (by title only) and adoption of Ordinance No. 402-2024 *Related to False Alarms and Fees*. Motion carried 5-0.

Introduction and first reading (by title only) of Ordinance No. 403-2024 Amending the City's Zoning Regulations to 1) define and allow for residential care homes with six or fewer persons by right in all residential zones; 2) update the definition of family to mean one or more persons living together in a dwelling unit, and 3) provide for farm employee housing consistent with state law in zones that allow agriculture as a permitted use pursuant to the State Employee Housing Act (Health and Safety Code of Regulations), Section 5061(b)(3)
Community Development Director Caldwell provided a staff report and said that state law and the City's approved Housing Element require that the City identify the City's housing goals, policies, and implementation programs for the planning period 2019 through 2027. He said that the proposed text amendments fulfill some minor implementation measures in the Housing Element. He said that the City has the option to not implement these changes however; would not be eligible for future grant funding.

He reviewed the three proposed zoning text amendments and said that they were presented to the Rio Dell Planning Commission at their meeting of November 28, 2023 and the commission unanimously approved the text amendments as recommended.

Councilmember Woodall noted that the City already has residential care homes and asked if this zoning amendment just incorporates the regulations in the ordinance.

Community Development Caldwell explained that the current regulations refer to Residential Care Facilities as a facility that provides 24-hour non-medical care for more than six persons and this amendment defines residential care homes with six or fewer persons principally permitted in residential zones.

Motion was made by Carter/Orr to approve the introduction and first reading (by title only) of Ordinance No. 403-2024 *Amending the City's Zoning Regulations to 1) define and allow for residential care homes with six or fewer persons by right in all residential zones; 2) update the definition of family to mean one or more persons living together in a dwelling unit, and 3) provide for farm employee housing consistent with state law in zones that allow agriculture as a permitted use pursuant to the State Employee Housing Act (Health and Safety Code of Regulations), Section 5061(b)(3) and to bring the ordinance back to the Council at their meeting of February 20, 2024 for its second reading and adoption.* Motion carried 5-0.

COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor Pro Tem Carter addressed the recent head-on collision that occurred a couple miles north of Rio Dell tragically taking the lives of two Rio Dell residents. She said that it not only affected the family members of the victims but it also affected the entire community including the children at school. She extended heartfelt condolences to anyone affected by this tragedy.

She said that the regular meeting of the Rio Dell School Board was moved to February 27, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. as the result of this tragedy and the loss of one of their students.

She also reported on the last Chamber of Commerce meeting and said that they are already discussing plans for Wildwood Days.

Councilmember Orr commented on the recent fatalities and said that Christina Freitas was a bridesmaid in his wedding so he knew her and her family well. He extended special thanks to Officer House for responding to the scene. He said that he attended the funeral and memorial service and it was nice to see how many people showed up

Councilmember Wilson reported that he would be attending an HWMA meeting on Thursday.

Councilmember Woodall reported that she would be attending a Fire Department Board meeting on Thursday.

Mayor Garnes reported that she would be attending an HTA meeting on Wednesday morning.

Chief Allen announced that because this accident was such a tragedy to the community, there would be a candlelight vigil at Memorial Park for Christina and her daughter on Monday at 6 p.m. and invited the community to attend. He commented that Officer House was one of the first responders on the scene and witnessed what officers hope they never have to witness and thanked the City Council for the support.

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Supervisor Bushnell asked that the invitation be extended to the Fortuna Fire Department.

Mayor Garnes then reminded everyone of the Disaster Preparedness Academy on March 2, 2024 at the Rio Dell Fire Hall. She urged everyone to go online to the Blue Lake Casino website to register and said there are flyers at City Hall and at the Community Resource Center. They will be giving out first aid kits, disaster preparedness kits and disaster plans and encouraged everyone to attend. She said on March 3, 2024 there will also be a Spanish speaking Disaster Preparedness Academy.

She also reported on the CERT meeting that occurred last night at the Rio Dell Fire Hall with another one scheduled for February 28, 2024. In addition, on February 17, 2024 there will be a CERT training in Blue Lake and at the Fortuna Fire Hall for CERT qualified people on February 22, 2024 at 6 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Carter/Woodall to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m. to the February 20, 2024 regular meeting. The motion carried 5-0.

Debra Garnes, Mayor

Attest:

Karen Dunham, City Clerk

Sarah,

You know there are people that were made to do certain jobs. People who go above and beyond. People who not only have the right mindset, but the determination, tenacity, and most importantly, the heart to do certain jobs well. You, Sarah, are one such person. While we all know that running a Community Resource Center can be rewarding and energizing, we also know that it can be difficult, emotionally taxing and chaotic, sometimes even scary and thankless. But Sarah, through it all, you've not only done it well, but you have found the joy in it. You almost always wear a smile on your face which in turn puts a smile on the faces that come through the door.

You and your staff have created a warm, welcoming, and helpful environment for all of the citizens of Rio Dell and really, for anyone who has a need regardless of their address. You have provided people at any level, a safe place to work on resolution of difficult issues dealing with Medicare and MediCal, Social Security, living spaces and so on, or even, just a safe place to simply be, without judgment.

So, thank you Sarah, and thanks to your staff for creating a Community Resource Center that has become a pillar of Rio Dell. A Community Resource Center that is about one thing, having a happy, healthy and solid community.

The Rio Dell City Council

MARGRO ADVISORS

Public Comment

Measure A

February 6, 2024

info@margroadvisors.com

(707) 500-2420

ATTACHMENT 2

Measure A Restrictions

Prohibits: Expansion of any new cannabis cultivation related structures including ancillary buildings, water storage tanks, ponds, or solar arrays

Result: Those who have received water and solar tanks gants requiring building permits can not be approved

Prohibits: Having more than 1 cultivation permit per property

Result: Farmers with nursery or processing permits, which are cultivation activities, would be “non-conforming”

Prohibits: Farms over 10,000 sq ft

Result: Those over 10,000 sq feet would be “non-conforming”

Measure A Restrictions

Prohibits: Farms from being located along unpaved roads

Result: Requires Farms be located on a Category 4 Road (paved with two 10' wide lanes separated by a painted stripe) or be considered "non-conforming"

Prohibits: Any new permits or modifications for expansion beyond the amount in existence as of March 4, 2022

Result: No new permits, no modifications to expand cultivation of any size until the amount drops below the March 2022 level

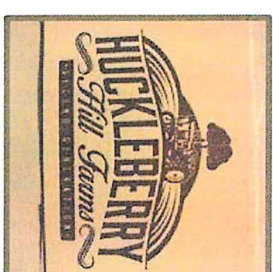
What is non-conforming?

Non-Conforming:

Means to be out of compliance with the county code. It means that the county will not be allowed to approve any future land use permits, amendments, or modifications until the site comes into compliance with the requirements of the County code.

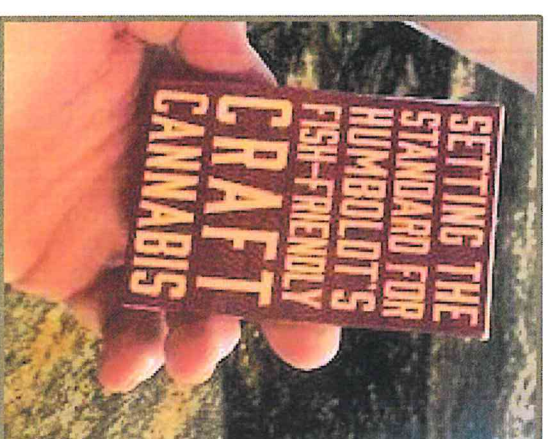
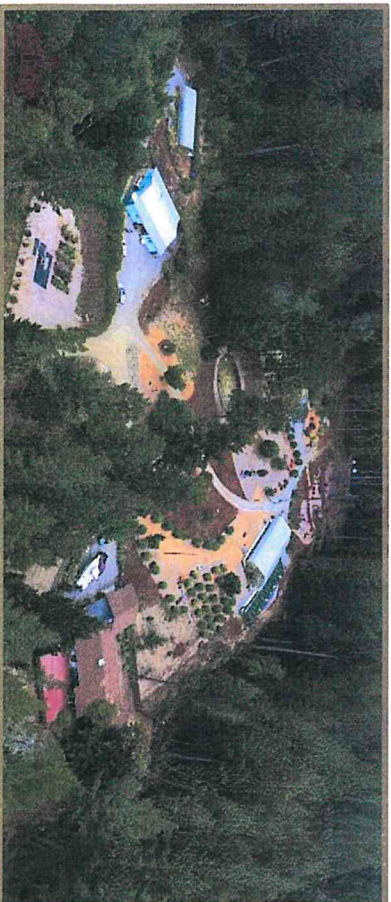
Result: “non-conforming” farms will be frozen in time. They can exist but will not be allowed to make any changes or improvements including environmental upgrades that require county approval.

Who will be impacted?

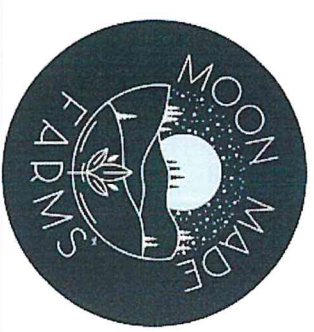


Huckleberry Hill Farms is a supplier to Willie Nelson's brand "Willie's Reserve" and a vocal advocate for sustainable farming by providing educational tours to visitors through their county Tourism Permit.

The farm has an Outdoor Permit along with a Nursery Permit to share their genetics with other farmers. The company would not be allowed to make any upgrades or changes to their site, or they would lose a permit due to a prohibition on not having more than one permit per parcel.



Who will be impacted?



Moon Made Farms is a regenerative Sun + Earth certified and DEM Pure certified farm that works to contribute more to the environment than it takes from the ecosystem.

It has plans to expand its solar array by adding a larger \$50,000 system partially funded through state Cannabis grants.

Their farm is 16,934 sq ft. Measure A would render the farm “non-conforming” and force them to reduce their farm by 40% to 10,000 sq ft or cancel moving forward with permitting the solar project to “expand” their renewable power resources.



Cannabis vs Other Agriculture

How do Cannabis Farms compare with other farms in Humboldt?

Measure	Non-Cannabis	Cannabis
Average Size Farm	731 acres 31,482,360 sq ft	0.36 acres 15,613 sq ft
Number of Commercial Farms	849	1,103
Total amount of County Land Used	970 sq miles	0.61 square miles
Percentage of Humboldt Land Used for Farming	27%	.016%
Percentage of Commercial Farms over 1 acre	100%	2%
Percentage of Commercial Farms Over 10 Acres	75%	0%
Median Size Farm	60 acres / 2,613,600 sq ft	0.23 acres / 10,000 sq ft

Data Sources: USDA 2017 Census of Agriculture County Data, Humboldt County CCMLUO Report 9-15-2022 & HCRI Analysis and Recommendations