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Levy County medical marijuana moratorium passes



Levy County Commissioner Lilly Rooks

Story and Photos

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BRONSON – Anyone who is buying farmland in Levy County based on some fanciful notion that they can plant and harvest a medical marijuana crop may as well hang up that thought for at least nine months.



Levy County Commissioner Matt Brooks

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A 5-0 vote by the Levy County Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday morning (Feb. 7) resulted after the second and final public hearing on a moratorium on medical marijuana activities in Levy County. County Commissioner Lilly Rooks made the motion, seconded by County Commission Matt Brooks.



Levy County Commission Chairman John Meeks

Also voting in favor of the Rooks'-Brooks' motion were Commission Chairman John Meeks, County Commissioner Rock Meeks and County Commissioner Mike Joyner.

Joyner asked about the moratorium, and he asked if the County Commission would have the power to "keep this county safe" so that marijuana would not be sold near schools, parks and the like.



Levy County Commissioner Rock Meeks

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Levy County Commissioner Mike Joyner

“A moratorium doesn’t allow any activity to occur,” Commission Chairman Meeks explained. “There will be no applications for land, no permits. Nothing happens in this nine months.

“It’s a dark period,” Chairman Meeks continued, “so to speak, until the Legislature straightens out what they’re going to do.”

While state lawmakers mull over how to regulate Florida’s future medical marijuana, Levy County Commission members adopted the moratorium for all matters related to medical marijuana.

Chairman Meeks said this nine-month moratorium helps county leaders, because a person who bought land speculating on growing or dispensing medical marijuana might try to have some sort of litigation against the county if the county tried an after-the-fact method to preclude this industry from taking root in Levy County.

The nine-month moratorium may survive the whole time, but some prognosticators are predicting challenges to local lawmakers creating legislation to overcome this latest amendment to the Florida Constitution.

The passage of Amendment 2 in November has caused the Florida Legislature and the Florida Department of Health to develop rules for patients who qualify to receive medical marijuana. This revision of state law creates a potential for new business interests; however the state must create methods and rules to regulate this new industry.

Right now, the unincorporated area of Levy County and several municipalities here have completely stopped any ability by a developer to make progress in growing or dispensing medical marijuana to anyone. The moratoriums vary between six and nine months in time.

The local legislators are creating moratoriums to stop what the majority of active voters in Florida and Levy County voted to happen – and that is to allow the cultivation and dispensing of marijuana to treat people for medical reasons.

Hence the predictions of the state telling local lawmakers that they must abide by the rule of law in Florida, rather than trying some sort of end run to skirt what the majority of voters chose to happen.