

Missoula City Council Public Safety, Health and Operations Committee Minutes

June 29, 2022

1:30 PM

ZOOM Webinar

Members present: Stacie Anderson, Mirtha Becerra, Daniel Carlino, John P. Contos, Jordan Hess, Gwen Jones, Kristen Jordan, Mike Nugent, Jennifer Savage, Sandra Vasecka, Heidi West

Members absent: Amber Sherrill

1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

1.2 Approval of the Minutes

1.2.1 Minutes of June 15, 2022, PSO meeting

3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

3.1 A resolution supporting entheogenic plant practices

Council member Daniel Carlino began discussion with an overview of reasons for proposing this resolution. He reiterated that the use of psychedelic plants is a victimless crime. He emphasized that the resolution is not meant to legalize the substance. He is asking that the government not waste taxpayer dollars by using police time arresting people for using psychedelic plants such as peyote and psilocybin mushrooms.

Dr. Larry Norris of Decriminalize Nature stated that healing with entheogenic plants is an unalienable right that is protected by the First Amendment by way of religion.

Council member Kristen Jordan said that we should not criminalize mental health. She wants everyone to ask themselves if this resolution will cause more or less harm if it passes.

Leah Fitch-Brody, a substance abuse specialist with the City-County Health Department, pointed out that the use of marijuana use among youth in Missoula has increased 22% since legalization. She believes that decriminalizing hallucinogens would have a similar affect.

Faith Price of All Nations Health discussed research that is available in terms of benefits and risks of potential use. She states that scientific conclusions are: 1) there is not enough research out there at this time, 2) there are commercial interests at play by popular media and wealthy enthusiast, 3) Native Americans already have the right to use for ceremony and do not support this support this measure at this time, and 4) there is concern for youth and the message passing the resolution will send to them.

Council member Heidi West stated that she does not disagree that the plants can have some benefits, but that there is no infrastructure for medical or therapeutic use.

Council member Kristin Jordan withdrew her motion. The resolution was tabled and the sponsors will have six months to reintroduce the measure.

Moved by: Daniel Carlino

Table the resolution regarding decriminalization of entheogenic plant practices in the City of Missoula.

AYES: (10): Stacie Anderson, Mirtha Becerra, Daniel Carlino, Jordan Hess, Gwen Jones, Kristen Jordan, Mike Nugent, Jennifer Savage, Sandra Vasecka, and Heidi West

NAYS: (1): John P. Contos

ABSENT: (1): Amber Sherrill

Vote results: Approved (10 to 1)

4. ADJOURNMENT

2:48pm