

INCORPORATED VILLAGE OF MINEOLA

HEARING OF THE 2021 09 01 06:30 PM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

September 1, 2021
6:30 o'clock p.m.

B E F O R E:

SCOTT P. STRAUSS, Mayor

PAUL A. PEREIRA, Deputy Mayor

PAUL S. CUSATO, Trustee

GEORGE R. DURHAM, Trustee

DENNIS J. WALSH, Trustee

ALSO PRESENT:

JOHN P. GIBBONS, JR., ESQ., Village
Attorney

JOSEPH R. SCALERO, Village Clerk

DANIEL B. WHALEN, Superintendent of
Buildings

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JANINE M. COLASANTI, RPR
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER
516-493-3351

1 MAYOR STRAUSS: Good evening,
2 folks. We have a couple of things on
3 tonight's calendar. We will start off
4 with the public hearing on the cannabis
5 law. Then we will go into the public
6 work session and have the public
7 meeting regarding that.

8 Mr. Scalero.

9 MR. SCALERO: Please take notice
10 that the Board of Trustees of the
11 Incorporated Village of Mineola will
12 hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday,
13 September 1, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. at the
14 Village Hall, 155 Washington Avenue,
15 Mineola, New York, 11501, or at some
16 other location to be hereafter
17 designated by the Board of Trustees in
18 order to receive public comment upon
19 the following:

20 Proposed local law creating
21 Chapter 382, entitled "Prohibiting the
22 smoking or vaping of cannabis products
23 on all village owned properties."

24 The village does not discriminate
25 on the basis of handicapped status in

1 administration or access to or
2 employment in its projects and
3 activities.

4 Joseph R. Scalero has been
5 directed to coordinate compliance with
6 non-discrimination requirements of the
7 Federal Sharing regulations.

8 At this scheduled meeting of the
9 Board of Trustees, reserved decisions
10 meetings from previous meetings, if
11 any, may be acted upon by the Board of
12 Trustees.

13 At the aforesaid time and place,
14 all interested persons will be given an
15 opportunity to be heard.

16 By order of the Board of Trustees
17 of the Incorporated Village of Mineola,
18 Joseph R. Scalero, Village Clerk, dated
19 August 16, 2021.

20 MAYOR STRAUSS: Thank you.

21 Mr. Gibbons.

22 MR. GIBBONS: Yes, Mayor.

23 As the title of the local law
24 implies, this is a prohibition against
25 smoking or vaping cannabis products on

1 village-owned properties which
2 includes, buildings, parks, playgrounds
3 and the pool.

4 A law similar to this has been
5 adopted by most municipalities on Long
6 Island with the recent legalization of
7 cannabis.

8 MAYOR STRAUSS: Thank you.

9 The law certainly makes sense to
10 me.

11 Deputy Mayor, anything?

12 DEPUTY PERIERA: No, Mayor, I
13 think it's a no-brainer.

14 MAYOR STRAUSS: Trustee Cusato?

15 TRUSTEE CUSATO: Mayor, it's very
16 simple. It's just the right thing to
17 do.

18 MAYOR STRAUSS: Trustee Durham?

19 TRUSTEE DURHAM: No comment.

20 MAYOR STRAUSS: Trustee Walsh.

21 TRUSTEE WALSH: Yes, Mayor. It's
22 something we have to do. It's a
23 preemptive strike. I'm good with that.
24 Thank you.

25 MAYOR STRAUSS: At this time we

1 will open it up to the public. I ask
2 anybody wishing to speak, approach the
3 podium, state your name and address and
4 speak slowly and clearly so everything
5 can be properly recorded.

6 Anybody in the second row?

7 Yes, ma'am, come on up.

8 MS. DESENA: Good evening. Thank
9 you. My name is Jen DeSena. I'm the
10 executive director of the Manhasset
11 Coalition against substance abuse, and
12 I'm also running for the Town of North
13 Hempstead Town Supervisor.

14 As you know, the Town of North
15 Hempstead has created a cannabis task
16 force to advise it on whether to opt
17 out of opening retail marijuana stores
18 and even consumption lounges.

19 I've spoken to task force last
20 week, and there are two more scheduled
21 hearings, one in September at Clinton
22 G. Martins Park on September 17 and the
23 other is October 19.

24 I believe they will delay a
25 decision on whether or not to opt out

1 until after election day.

2 At the conference I spoke about,
3 we need to protect our vulnerable youth
4 and urged them to opt out.

5 There were two attorneys there,
6 one of whom stated that the Village of
7 Mineola had opted in to having retail
8 stores, and which, you know, caused me
9 to have a conversation with Mr. Walsh
10 and find out about this hearing
11 tonight.

12 I'm glad to have the opportunity
13 to speak about your resolution. I
14 commend you for prohibiting smoking and
15 vaping on village property.

16 I would encourage you also to
17 eventually opt out of having retail
18 stores and consumption lounges, and I
19 hope the Town of North Hempstead and
20 other villages do as well.

21 By the way, they have an email
22 that you can write to the task force.
23 It's called
24 CTF@NorthHempsteadNewYork.gov.

25 As you know, my town, Manhasset,
Incorporated Village of Mineola - 9-1-2021

1 was devastated this summer by the loss
2 of three young men who were killed by a
3 driver who was speeding and swerved
4 into their car and had marijuana in his
5 car. So we feel that there is no
6 amount of tax revenue that's worth the
7 loss of even one life.

8 I have had conversations with
9 police detectives who said that they
10 would not have been able to arrest that
11 driver solely for having marijuana in
12 his car, according to New York's new
13 law.

14 They also confirmed there are no
15 approved tests for marijuana impairment
16 of drivers. So we just believe it's
17 too soon, and any substance to reduce
18 the amount of marijuana to sale and
19 available to our youth would be in the
20 best interest of public safety.

21 There is a huge gap in
22 understanding today's marijuana. It's
23 much stronger than it used to be. In
24 the 1970s it contained 1 to 3 percent
25 of THC.

1 Today, most youth use vaped
2 marijuana that can be as much as 95
3 pure THC. It's easy to purchase. It's
4 easy to use. And, unfortunately, we
5 now have what used to be daily users in
6 2009, 6.2 million, and in 2018 we have
7 13.8 million daily users of marijuana.

8 We had a social worker explain at
9 our school that this looks like a child
10 starting use in the summer and being
11 hooked by Christmas, a daily user by
12 Christmas.

13 There has been a recent study that
14 has linked marijuana use to increased
15 suicide and harming of themselves, and
16 so until we can explore that risk, it's
17 much better to wait. Why take this
18 risk on now?

19 New York has not promulgated
20 regulations about advertising. So
21 again, why would we take on that risk
22 for our communities now?

23 The United Nation's Office on drug
24 and crime warned there is a disconnect
25 between the real risk of marijuana and

1 perception. And they recommend a
2 complete band on advertising, promoting
3 and sponsoring marijuana to ensure that
4 public health interest prevail over
5 business interest.

6 They also call for restrictions in
7 potency of THC to 15 percent to stop
8 that highly addictive marijuana.

9 And, in fact, in the Netherlands,
10 they did adopt the 15 percent of it.
11 And they have found much less cannabis
12 use disorder.

13 If we learned from evidence is
14 other states that have been legalized,
15 such as Colorado, we've seen increased
16 use among 12 to 17 year olds.
17 34 percent of high school students are
18 reporting dabbing marijuana, which is a
19 high-potency marijuana.

20 Marijuana found in the toxicology
21 screens of 200 suicide victims in 2017,
22 and marijuana impaired drivers located
23 in 18 percent of traffic fatalities.

24 In Colorado they have just
25 declared a state of emergency in their

1 mental health. They are investigating
2 the link to suicide. They have put new
3 restrictions on the amounts that people
4 can buy, particularly mental marijuana
5 of how much people can buy.

6 And they have launched a
7 \$3 million educational campaign about
8 youth use and the association with
9 mental health problems, so that's nine
10 years later that they have launched
11 that educational campaign. We can do
12 better than that. We can learn from
13 what they've learned.

14 Other statistics from Colorado,
15 there is increased illegal marijuana
16 activity. There are over a thousand
17 dispensaries in the state outnumbering
18 all Starbucks and McDonald's combined,
19 but 52 percent of these dispensaries
20 are concentrated within three counties.

21 In fact, 64 percent of Colorado
22 jurisdictions have band both medical
23 and recreational marijuana.

24 In Colorado and Washington alcohol
25 use has also increased along with

1 marijuana use. And poison control
2 calls have increased 112 percent, and
3 ER visits 54 percent since 2013.

4 We cannot rely on quote/unquote
5 regulation as they have found in
6 southern California at 30 percent of
7 regulated stores had sold marijuana
8 contained pesticides.

9 And in Colorado, they find butt
10 doctors advising pregnant customers to
11 use marijuana for morning sickness.

12 The Nassau County legislature
13 already has ban smoking marijuana in
14 Nassau County public spaces, and Laura
15 Curran is supporting that bill stated,
16 As a parent, I know we must do
17 everything we can to keep cannabis out
18 of kids' hands and out of public spaces
19 where minors may be present, including
20 all county properties and facilities.
21 I look forward to signing this
22 legislation as a number one priority
23 keeping our children safe.

24 Towns and villages were given the
25 right to opt out and should use it, and
Incorporated Village of Mineola - 9-1-2021

1 incidentally, you can always opt back
2 in, but you will not have a chance to
3 opt out again after December 31.

4 In Oregon, 60 percent of
5 municipalities have opted out.

6 In Michigan, over 500
7 jurisdictions have opted out since
8 2018.

9 In California, only 161 of states
10 482 municipalities have opted in. In
11 New Jersey, municipalities have until
12 October 21 to opt out, and almost half
13 have done so.

14 The mayor of Union city, stopped
15 marijuana operations from opening in
16 his Town, even though he is a state
17 senator who casts a yes vote for
18 marijuana legalization.

19 Another local mayor voted to opt
20 out saying, residents didn't vote for
21 17-year olds to become drug users.
22 They didn't vote for some overtaxed
23 products, so some MS-13 gangbanger can
24 come in here and undercut the legal
25 market.

1 And many jurisdictions simply want
2 to wait until the new cannabis
3 commission puts out regulations, and we
4 should wait too.

5 We've been fooled by powerful
6 corporations before. It took 50 years
7 for the tobacco industry to admit its
8 products were harmful, and they are
9 still mitigating with the FDA over new
10 graphic health warning labels.

11 Incidentally, Altria, an investor
12 in creating in marijuana and Jewel is
13 none other than Marlboro with a new
14 name.

15 We were fooled by the vaping
16 industry which claimed its products
17 were for adults most cessation but
18 which paid teen influencers for
19 advertising on social media.

20 We were fooled by the opiate
21 industry. They concealed evidence that
22 their products were addictive. They
23 ignored massive orders for pain
24 medication from small pain management
25 shops that were supplying people's

1 addictions.

2 And one of the former Purdue
3 farmer executives now has his own
4 marijuana company.

5 Teva Pharmaceuticals, a defendant
6 in the New York Attorney General's
7 trap out on Long Island now is a
8 medical marijuana distributor in
9 Israel.

10 Constellation Brands, maker of
11 Corona Beer has a 38 percent stake in
12 canopy growth.

13 Anheuser-Busch is partnering in
14 Canada's Tilray to make
15 marijuana-infused drinks.

16 We have been fooled by
17 legislatures who claim they are serving
18 social justice.

19 Marijuana possession was
20 decriminalized in 2019, and they did
21 nothing to advance the expungement
22 process.

23 Advancing social justice takes
24 real targeted training and education.

25 Instead, they offer another addictive

1 drug that will harm underprivileged
2 communities.

3 The real motive is money and it
4 will go to large corporations because
5 buying a license from the Office of
6 Cannabis Management will be too
7 expensive.

8 Nationally, in the states that
9 legalize less than 2 percent of
10 dispensaries are owned by minorities.

11 Yes, we want jobs but we have so
12 many other needs in the Town of North
13 Hempstead. We want businesses that
14 lift up our youth.

15 Increased accessibility and
16 acceptability means more young people
17 will use marijuana.

18 Clearly, a minimum age of 21
19 doesn't work. Marijuana is legal but
20 not safe. People say we should treat
21 it like alcohol and tobacco, but these
22 are our biggest killers.

23 Each year more than 480,000
24 Americans die prematurely from diseases
25 caused by an exposure to tobacco

1 smoke. Each year 88,000 die from
2 alcohol. Legalizing and regulating
3 does not make something safe.

4 I encourage you to take the first
5 step to educate the public and
6 protecting your youth and the safety of
7 your residents. Thank you.

8 MAYOR STRAUSS: Thank you very
9 much. Appreciate your time. Nicely
10 done. Thank you.

11 Anybody in our fourth row? Fifth
12 row?

13 Any other comments from the Board?

14 I'll entertain a motion to
15 approve.

16 TRUSTEE WALSH: Motion.

17 MAYOR STRAUSS: Motion by Trustee
18 Walsh.

19 Do I have a second?

20 DEPUTY PERIERA: Second.

21 MAYOR STRAUSS: Second by Deputy
22 Mayor Periera.

23 Mr. Scalero, poll the Board.

24 MR. SCALERO: Yes, sir.

25 Trustee Durham?

1 TRUSTEE DURHAM: Yes.
2 MR. SCALERO: Trustee Perreira?
3 DEPUTY PEREIRA: Yes.
4 MR. SCALERO: Trustee Cusato?
5 TRUSTEE CUSATO: Yes.
6 MR. SCALERO: Trustee Walsh?
7 TRUSTEE WALSH: Yes.
8 MR. SCALERO: Mayor Strauss?
9 MAYOR STRAUSS: Yes.

10 Congratulations.

11 Thank you, folks.

12 We will close the hearing. Thank
13 you for your time and your energy on
14 it, and your passion is very much
15 appreciated.

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I hereby certify that the
foregoing is a true and accurate
transcription of my original
stenographic notes.

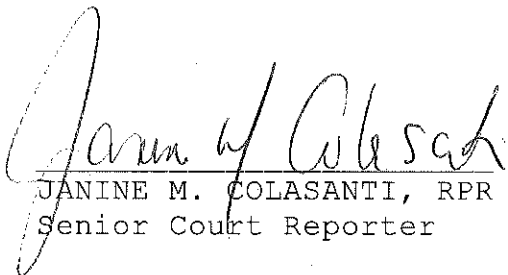
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JANINE M. COLASANTI, RPR
Senior Court Reporter

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