

# News from around the Ojai Valley

## Ojai inching closer to issuing cannabis licenses



Details

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**Andra Belknap**, *Ojai Valley News reporter*

The city of Ojai is inching closer to issuing its first-ever licenses for medical cannabis dispensaries and delivery services.

City Manager Steve McClary reported to the Ojai City Council June 13 that final decisions on the licenses will be made “in the next couple of weeks.”

McClary confirmed June 21 that an interview committee consisting of himself, Capt. James Fryhoff of the Ventura County Sheriff's Office (VCSO) Ojai Station and Anthony Wagner of the Santa Barbara Police Department interviewed seven individuals who have applied to run a medical cannabis dispensary and/or delivery service in Ojai.

The seven applicants represent 13 applications; most have applied to operate as both dispensary and delivery service. City officials have said they will issue up to three licenses for dispensaries and three licenses for delivery services.

McClary planned to add a fourth member to the committee representing the cannabis industry, “but the person we had lined up had to pull out with little notice and we were unfortunately not able to find a replacement,” he said.

Wagner is a public health and safety land use expert who previously assisted the city of San Diego in regulating approximately 15 medical cannabis dispensaries there.

Wagner was responsible for creating permit conditions to ensure the safety of dispensary employees and their adjoining businesses, he said.

Now, McClary's office is working with VCSO to process background checks of each medical cannabis applicant. At least one license applicant faces felony charges from the Ventura County District Attorney's Office related to cannabis.

Another, Jeff Kroll, a license applicant on behalf of the Shangri La Care Cooperative, had felony charges related to his work with medical cannabis dismissed by a Ventura County Superior Court judge June 21.

Chelsea Sutula, another license applicant, faces three felony charges related to her work with the Sespe Creek Collective, a Ventura County medical marijuana collective.

Sutula is unconcerned, though.

“They can't use it against me since there is no conviction,” she said.

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