



MEMORANDUM

TO: Bruce Schulte, Chair
and Members of the
Marijuana Control Board

DATE: April 15th, 2016

FROM: Cynthia Franklin, Director

RE: Director's Report

Licensing Section

The Licensing Section has begun accepting and reviewing marijuana applications even as it continues to address liquor license applications and questions in a timely fashion. Although all four examiners are learning the marijuana licensing rules, the Records and Licensing Supervisor and I have determined that for the first wave of marijuana applications, specialization of the unit is the most efficient way to manage the onslaught on new applications. Therefore, we have assigned Jane Sawyer and Tina Thibodeaux the processing of marijuana applications and Max Andrews and Shilo Senquiz the processing of liquor license and permit applications. Ms. Oates continues to work with both teams and process both types of applications personally as her time permits.

The Licensing section has developed an appointment schedule to work with applicants on both types of licenses. We are continuing to work on ways to maximize the efficiency of the unit given that four examiners are not enough to process both types of licenses as marijuana applications swell. Ms. Oates and I will continue to press for additional staff as new licensing fees are collected and we are able to demonstrate the need.

Enforcement Section

All open enforcement positions have been filled. James Hoelscher, our Enforcement Supervisor, welcomes a new Anchorage investigator, Kendrick Whiteman, and a new Fairbanks investigator, Amanda Bean. Investigator Whiteman is a recent transplant from Wyoming who has significant experience as a police officer as well as a regulator. Ms. Bean was a North Pole patrol officer, has significant experience as a police dispatcher, and was most recently employed at Fort Knox. Both investigators will be a significant asset to the AMCO.

Administration Section

The administration section has been busy. Administrative Officer John Calder has been the project manager on the purchase and implementation of the marijuana inventory tracking system in addition to all of his regular supervisory, budgetary and administrative duties.



Administrative Assistant Joe Samaniego has become an expert in assisting members of the public in the objection process, on top of his full time job sorting travel, procurement and the day-to-day administrative activities of the office. Office Assistant Naomi Johnston has excelled at creating multiple spreadsheets and maps for marijuana applications, as well as creating a detailed instruction manual for the alcohol written order database and receiving APSIN training that will greatly assist the enforcement team. Overall the administrative section has excelled in handling a multiplicity of new duties with grace and humor.

Legislative Session

I traveled to Juneau several times during this legislative session to address various legislative committees on bills related to both alcohol and marijuana. Senate Bill 165 passed the legislature, affecting the composition of the ABC Board, penalties relating to minors possessing or consuming alcohol and minors presence on licensed premises, and containing a section related to marijuana criminal history checks.

HB 75, which addressed background checks as well as local option in the unorganized boroughs and the inclusion of established villages in the definition of local government for local control provisions in commercial marijuana licensing, failed to pass. HB 337, a Department of Revenue bill which requires a bond to be posted for tax purposes by marijuana cultivation licensees, failed to pass. SB 1 and its companion, HB 328, which would have regulated smoking and affected the boards onsite consumption regulations project, failed to pass. All other marijuana bills from the 1st half of the session (2015), such as SB 30, failed to pass.

Additionally, our request for a new employee in the next fiscal year, a Local Government Specialist, has been maintained in the budget. At this writing, the budget has not been passed, but should the position be maintained in the budget, it will be a big help. The LGS will assist in education related to both liquor licensing and marijuana licensing, and will be responsive to the questions and concerns of local governments relating to both local option and local control. The addition of this position will help us fulfill some of the education related tasks that are desired by the Title 4 stakeholders group, and will also help with the management of the flood of marijuana questions that we are fielding.