

Edwardsville OKs Cannabis Sales in City

by Leanne Guthrie, Reporter
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville City Council Meeting on Tuesday brought out a large crowd ready to discuss for and against the big topic of the night - the prohibition of cannabis sales in Edwardsville.

Cannabis sales will be allowed within the city of Edwardsville. After many community members spoke with very differing opinions both opposed and in favor, and the council themselves debated the topic at length before they voted. The vote ended in a tie, and without four alderman voting to prohibit the sales, the sales will not be prohibited.

“The state law has made the recreational sale and use of marijuana legal,” Edwardsville Mayor Hal Patton said. “If a community wants to opt-out of marijuana sales, it must

pass a local ordinance to opt-out, communities can not opt-out of the personal use portion. To establish a local ordinance in Edwardsville it requires two readings, tonight is our second reading. And an affirmative vote of at least four elected aldermen is required to support the opt-out ordinance.

"We have one alderman that is not here this evening. I can break ties when it's not an ordinance and it doesn't involve spending money. This is an opt-out ordinance, if it fails to get the four alderman votes necessary to opt-out, then the sales would be allowed," explained Mayor Patton before the council began their discussion on the topic.

With Mayor Patton unable to break the tie, the City of Edwardsville will not be opting out of the sales of marijuana.

During the council's discussion, opinions were completely split, though Mayor Patton was the last to speak before the vote.

"The state of Illinois passed this, it's here, we're going to have to deal with this. You can find articles both pro and con on this particular drug. It is a little hypocritical in my opinion to pick one drug versus the other, I know that we like to say that all drugs are bad. Alcohol is for sale in many areas in this community and in many convenience stores. And it is a more harmful drug than marijuana absolutely.

"More people die because of the overdose or abuse of alcohol. And as our police chief pointed out, there's a lot of accidents that occur and fights that occur, people get angry on alcohol. There aren't too many, if any, fights that occur because somebody is too high." the Mayor spoke on his own opinions on cannabis.

With sales now allowed, the next steps would be approving requests of opening a dispensary and debating locations. Recreational marijuana in Illinois goes into effect on January 1, 2020.