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March 21, 2021

via e-mail

Alberta Miller, Clerk  
Town of Hardwick  
P.O. Box 523  
Hardwick, VT 05843

Dear Alberta:

I am writing to request the Town's approval for us to hold a 1.5 and 3 mile swim on Caspian Lake Sunday, August 15th, 2021. We would be using the (Hardwick) Town Beach as a start and finish. We swim to Bath Tub Rock with most turning around and swimming back to the beach. We shuttle the others. We offer a picnic lunch after the swim. This year the swim will be limited to no more than 20 swimmers and 20 kayakers.

The swim is part of our NEK Swim Week in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont and The Eastern Townships of Quebec – 46 miles of swimming in 8 lakes over the course of 9 days. Because of the substantial support we receive from volunteers in Orleans, Essex and Caledonia Counties, we invite all local residents and property owners to join the swim for 50% off the normal fees. Insurance would name Hardwick and Hardwick Electric as co-insured.

I am writing to request a formal approval by the Selectboard of this swim as part of the state's permit process for this event.

All my best,

Phil White, Director  
Kingdom Games, Inc.

Approved this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021. \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Cannabis Update per Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT MARCH 26, 2021 ISSUE NO. 12**

Cannabis. On Wednesday, the Senate passed S.25 at this link <https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2022/S.25> the only legislation currently moving in the State House that addresses the regulation of cannabis. The bill makes several amendments to cannabis laws but none of them is helpful to municipalities. The Senate failed to include any amendments to provide taxing authority or revenue sharing to a municipality that hosts a cannabis establishment. The Senate does include another mandate, however, and proposes that all municipalities must hold a vote to opt in to the retail cannabis marketplace by March 8, 2023. Any municipality that fails to do so will be deemed to allow such retail operations.

VLCT had hoped the Senate would authorize municipalities to set their own local cannabis license fees, but it didn't. Thus, the state retains that authority and will dictate what license fees are appropriate to "help defray the costs incurred by municipalities" that host cannabis establishments. We had also hoped the Senate would support a local taxation mechanism because, historically, they have been very supportive of such authority and also supportive of exploring new revenue sources for municipalities. VLCT has very little hope the House will include any beneficial taxation authority or revenue sharing because, year after year, the House has failed to support such measures.

See pages 806-822 of the March 24 Senate Calendar for the bill's language and approved amendments. At this link <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/CALENDAR/sc210324.pdf>

### **Portion of Hardwick Select Board Meeting Minutes from January 21, 2021 –**

#### **6:54 P.M. – 7:25 P.M. Item #4, Select Board to discuss Cannabis retailers & Licensees and to approve whether or not to put specific questions on the Town Meeting Warning**

There has been conversation about Cannabis all throughout the state whether or not Cities/Towns should approve of retail cannabis operations within given municipalities. The first step that has been talked about to possibly have Towns put it on their Town Meeting warning.

Jessica Bickford, Coordinator of Healthy Lamoille Valley, stated that there have been recent changes to the Legislature, so she warned the Board that if they were to vote on having it on the warning, things may shift within the next year.

Lucian stated that some of this could be considered agricultural, so there might not be as much control over it.

Tonight's potential vote is to allow specific questions on the Town Warning for the public to have input. It does not mean that Cannabis retail sales would be implemented without some additional input from the local level. Jessica suggested a few different options. One option is to create a commission or task force. Another option is for the Select Board to discuss and approve

applications like they do for the liquor licenses. The third option is to have the Town delay a vote and wait until Town Meeting of 2022.

Ceilidh asked what the timeline was before applications started coming in. Lucian stated that applications would not start coming in until at least Spring of 2022.

Alberta pointed out that since ballots are being mailed out to all registered voters, there might be more of a say in all of the items this year compared to other years. On the flip side, Aaron stated that he would prefer other Town's to do it first.

After some discussion, the Select Board has generally agreed to not put it on the Town Meeting Warning. The Town Manager will bring it back mid to late March to create a commission, or task force.

To members of the greater Hardwick community:

We are all tired of COVID and want nothing more than life to return to normal. It seemed that we were very close, but unfortunately cases are on the rise once again. This is likely due to several factors: because Vermont has done so well with controlling infections, most people are still susceptible; variant strains are circulating that are more contagious; the relaxing of social distancing rules; and pandemic fatigue. With increasing cases, we run the risk of having to tighten the spigot once again. This could mean restricting social gathering even more, closing schools, limiting visitation of the elderly in nursing homes or patients in hospitals, closing restaurants and other businesses, and further limiting travel. More people will also become sick, some will need to be hospitalized, and some will have long-term health issues or even die as a result. Vaccination is working, but we need time to get vaccines into more arms. We need to remain vigilant, avoid unnecessary interactions, and always mask up. Please consider what is at stake, and re-double your efforts to follow the recommended precautions. If we all make personal sacrifices over the next few months, we can slow the rate of COVID infections. This will ultimately bring us more freedom and save lives. We are almost there! We have made it this far. Please try to hang in there for just a little bit longer.