Pot permit raises legal questions

IW residents face $141 fee for homegrown marijuana

ANNA RINER AND SHERRY KARRAS

In a move marijuana and legal experts call unconstitutional, Indian Wells City Council passed an ordinance Thursday requiring residents wanting to grow marijuana in their home under the voter-approved Adult Use of Marijuana Act to register for a $141 per year permit from City Hall.

In order to get the permit residents are required to allow a home inspection by city employees in order to determine that no more than the maximum six plants allowed under AUMA are being grown. There is adequate ventilation for the plants and cultivation is happening in a designated locked area. Assistant City Manager David Gasaway said no residents spoke for or against the permit during a boo-hiss held Thursday and the council adopted the ord- inance in a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Ty Pobjoy abstaining. “I just don’t believe in mari- juana,” Pobjoy later said, explaining that it is being legal- ized in California when it should not be and federal law and decided to abstain from voting.

Unfinished deal likely falls to Trump administration

LAW JAMES THE DESERT SUN

Several months ago, managers of wa- ter agencies in California, Arizona and Nevada were expressing optimism they could finalize a deal to use less water from the dwindling Colorado River be- fore the end of the Obama administra- tion.

Now that Jan. 20 deadlines no longer seem achievable and parties to the talks acknowledge they likely won’t be able to finish an agreement until at least several months into President-elect Donald Trump’s administration.

With Lake Mead’s water level hover- ing near record low levels, representa- tives of the three states, water agencies and the federal government say they’ve made progress in negotiating the re- called Drought Contingency Plan, which would involve temporarily drawing less water from the reservoir near Las Vegas to avert a serious shortage. The deal is being held up by complications, though, and one of the major sticking points is the Imperial Irrigation District.

Managers of the Imperial Valley’s wa- ter district, which is the largest single us- er of Colorado River water, are demand- ing California officials first present a de- tailed plan for addressing the Salton Sea’s accelerating decline. They say they want the 73-year-old drought contingency plan they have in place to be replaced with the thousands of acres of lakebed that will be left exposed in the coming years and that could turn their valley into a dust bowl, posing a serious public health hazard.

“I don’t think we’ve seen anything in the last 14 years,” Kelley said in a recent meeting of the Western Water Users Association. “We’ve had more progress at the Salton Sea.”

Kelley has been voicing that stance for months, and he reiterated his con- cerns on Thursday in Las Vegas, where he and other managers of water districts from across the West met this week for the 92nd annual conference of the Colorado River Water Users Association.

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Scott Sahsn receives Jim Stanuton Award

ANDREW L. JOHN

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Before he could realize what he was into, Sahsn was attending soccer camps and studying instructional VHS tapes, honing his knowledge of the sport. He settled in on whatkind offormation he wanted to use and the best ways of attacking the opposing team’s goal.

Ultimately, though, he’d re- mind himself of the AYSO man- ner of displaying good sports- manship in a positive, fun envi- ronment, and of the values and lessons he wanted to instill in his players—not just in soccer, but everyone he coached. His goal was to keep that at the forefront of his coaching philosophy.

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Lake Mead has been declining for years and has recently reached its lowest levels on record.

2 men are accused in Indio killing

INDIO - Prosecutors file paperwork Friday indicating they do not intend to press charges against two men whose murder trial is set to begin in a year.

Steven Mesa Rapan, 25, and Gary Griffen Ra-
nie, 25, are each charged with murder in the first degree, attempted murder, and other charges. Rapan's and Griffen's case is set for trial in 2018.

The two are accused of fatally shooting a woman, Yanez, and her cousin, Alvarado, in the parking lot of a shopping center in Indio on May 28, 2014. The two men, who were 17 and 19 at the time, are each charged with murder, attempted murder, and other charges.

Both Yanez and Alvarado, who were both Yanez's friends, had been attending a party at the shopping center when the two men walked up to the door and asked what was going on.

"And as I would expect that in some way, "It just wasn't enough for us to accept the med-

The negotiation has not progressed past the point of articulating some of the elements of a deal, including the fact that the new administration is willing to take the initiative in the negotiation process. The district is looking for a deal, the adoption of a plan and the rest of the terms. The negotiations involve a lot of complex issues and will require more time to clarify.

JAY CALDERON/THE DESERT SUN