

From: [Matt Kurth](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Cc: [Lazar, Steve](#)
Subject: Business License
Date: Monday, August 08, 2016 10:20:07 AM

Members of the Planning Commission,

My name is Matt Kurth and I am the founder of Humboldt Cannabis Tours. We are a small local Humboldt start up detected to providing the highest quality educational and fun cannabis themed tours of the Emerald Triangle. We do not wish buy, sell, grow, process or transport cannabis. Individuals on our tours may possess their own cannabis that is kept on their person for their own use.

Everything has been moving along briskly. I have one difficult hurdle to get over. My business license is held up at the Planning Department because they consider us a cannabis business. We have turned down around 25 potential groups so far because I do not have a license. We are, for all legal purposes a regular tour company that uses the word cannabis in their name. I would like you to help us to be considered the regular business that we are. Here are the details so far. After the details I will explain why I believe we are not a cannabis business.

The Details

I filed my Mobile Business License on February 19, 2016. Steve Lazar phoned me the week of March 21, 2016 to gather information about my business license. The application landed on his desk because the County had recently passed its Medical Marijuana Land Use Ordinance and I got lumped in with the cannabis business applications. I believe this is because of the name and not the nature of the business.

Mr. Lazar wanted to know about my business in general and ask me about some specific concerns that he had. His concerns were:

1. Humboldt Cannabis Tours would be selling, buying, growing or transporting cannabis. I explained that none of these activities were in our business model.
2. Humboldt Cannabis Tours would only visit farms that were licensed or in the process of becoming licensed. I explained that part of our business plan is to strictly follow all state and county laws and that we would only visit county licensed cannabis farms.
3. Mr. Lazar was concerned that guests on tours would be purchasing cannabis at the farms which will be in violation of the new Medical Marijuana Regulation and Safety Act (MMRSA). I informed him that there would be no direct sales. Guests would have to buy cannabis from a county licensed dispensary.

Mr. Lazar then asked me to send him an operations plan as well as a sample itinerary. I sent this to him in an e-mail on April 1. Mr. Lazar e-mailed back on April 5 and said he would take a look at it and get back to me. I never heard anything back. I sent a follow up e-mail on May 4.

I did not hear from Mr. Lazar until by chance we saw each other at a Chamber of Commerce mixer on June 9. He approached me and apologized for not getting back to me. I told him that I understood that it must be crazy down at the planning department because of all the new cannabis applications. I mentioned that my application is not a cannabis business. Mr. Lazar then explained why my license had not been processed.

This is what I gathered from the conversation; Humboldt Cannabis Tours has been lumped in with applications for transporters, of which there are many. I do not want or think I need a cannabis transportation license. When the county passed its Medical Marijuana Land Use Ordinance it only covered growers, distributors, processors and retail. Right now the planning department has no guidance from the county on what to do with transportation applications so they are just sitting on them waiting for someone to tell them what to do with them.

I again explained that Humboldt Cannabis Tours is a cannabis business only in name and that we did not need or want to be put with the transporters. Mr. Lazar then explained that he was concerned that tours would have an adverse effect on the neighbors of the farms that we would like to visit. We talked about the example of a bunch of vans suddenly driving down what used to be a deserted dirt road. I do not wish to degrade the rural lifestyle or the

environment that I love so much about living here.

We are not a cannabis business

I firmly believe that my business license should be processed as a regular Mobile Business application. We do not wish to sell, buy, give away, grow, process, handle, transport, store or test cannabis. It is simply not a part of our business model.

We, as a county, need to think about if we want to encourage cannabis tourism in general. In Napa County the value of the tourist industry is equal to the out of county wine sales. Every single person that I have talked to thinks that cannabis tours are inevitable and beneficial part of the future of Humboldt County. If we do want more cannabis tourism we need to plan for it now. Oakland is acting, check out their cannabis museum exhibit. They have had thousands of visitors.

I agree that there should be a process of figuring out which farms are a good candidates for tourism. I think that as in every other county the location needs to be permitted to have tours come there. Not the tour driver needing to be licensed visit a certain place.

For example a independent logging truck driver gets a mobile business license from the county that allows her to operate anywhere on any road that is open to the public. It is the logging contractor that she picks up logs from that needs to worry about noise, dust, environmental impact and such as far as the county is concerned. If we apply the same thought process that the Planing Department is applying to me to other businesses it just does not make sense.

I do not want a cannabis transporters license because I do not want to transport cannabis. We need basically the same license as the other two limo operators in the county. Will they need to get transport licenses because passengers may incidentally have a joint in their pocket? In the future if we make every cannabis tour operator get a transporters license then there will be no local operators. There will be operators from out of the county.

Think Napa, it is close, they have fleets of busses, they know the basics of the tour business. Most importantly they already have the licenses. They can drive up tomorrow to cannabis farms with busses full of Bay Area tourists. Nothing is stoping them except they are uncomfortable with cannabis but that will fade soon. Our only chance is to get a jump on them and build the local industry now. Who do we want running our cannabis tourism industry and where do we want the money to end up?

Thank you so much for helping Humboldt County into the future and helping Humboldt Cannabis Tours get our business license so that we can move forward. Please feel free to call or write with any questions, concerns or ideas.

Matt Kurth

Owner

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