

**Cape May Court House, New Jersey  
TOWNSHIP OF MIDDLE  
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE  
WORK SESSION AGENDA  
January 17, 2024 4:00 PM (prevailing time)**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mayor's Announcement: I hereby declare that notice has been given to the Herald Times, the Atlantic City Press and posted on the bulletin board of the Middle Township Municipal Building, stating the time and place of the following meeting, as required in P.L. 1975, Chapter 231 of the State of New Jersey. (Sunshine Law).

Notice of this meeting was properly given in Resolution No. 31-24 entitled "Establishing Work Session Meeting Nights" which was adopted by Township Committee of the Township of Middle on January 3, 2024.

Members present are Mayor Leusner, Deputy Mayor Gandy, and Committeemember Norris

Business Administrator/Township Clerk Kimberly Osmundsen, Deputy Township Clerk Emily Bartleson, Deputy Business Administrator Suzanne Schumann, Township Engineer Vincent Orlando & Municipal Solicitor Matt Rooney

**FLAG SALUTE:****PRESENTATIONS OR DISCUSSIONS:**

Cannabis Local Support Denial Appeal -  
Ganja Babe, LLC

*Christopher Lipari, Ganja Babe LLC Attorney, introduced applicants. Stressed that they are local to Cape May County versus other applicants. Continued to discuss the factors surrounding the applicants for consideration in regards to the State's intent for small business owners. He advised that his clients do not have knowledge as to the reason their application was denied. He urged that his clients are more than what is on paper.*

*Christopher Lipari, Ganja Babe LLC Attorney, introduced applicant's uncle, James DeNatale, who owns his own cannabis businesses and would be supporting the applicants and the business. Continued to discuss the various cannabis businesses that James owns. Provided the steps that the applicants had already taken to get the business going. He then discussed the 2% revenue received from these businesses that the amount that James' businesses have given to Egg Harbor Township. Further explained the applicant's intent to donate to the Middle Township Recreation Department.*

*Christopher Lipari, Ganja Babe LLC Attorney, explained the difficulty of getting cannabis business experience as locals in New Jersey since the law is new. Continued to discuss various factors to that should be taken into consideration for his client's application.*

*Mayor Leusner asked how long the cannabis in Winslow had been there.*

*James DeNatale, gave background on his cannabis business and his process to obtain his various licenses. He explained he has been growing in Winslow since June 2023 and have had two harvests so far. He continued to discuss his cannabis crops and other businesses. Explained he will be going through the process in its entirety with the applicants.*

*Christopher Lipari, Ganja Babe LLC Attorney, suggested Committee visit, Brute's Roots, before making a final decision on the application. Asked, if the Township chooses not to move forward with the application, can they please advise to the applicants why the application is being denied.*

*James Maley, Township Cannabis Attorney, explained that he has advised the applicants and their lawyers that the reason is in the denial resolution.*

*Mayor Leusner advised that what James Maley stated, that the Governing Body choose to take a pause on applications, is correct. Explained the reason for the pause to take steps slowly to be able to gauge the impacts these licenses may or may not have on the community as this is a new process for everyone. Advised that if they choose to move forward with approving a second letter of support, he is open to re-reviewing their application again. He then explained his discussions of the cannabis business with the previous governing body as chief of police and the impacts these businesses have had on other communities and their need to proceed with caution.*

*Committeeman Gandy explained he feels these businesses will eventually be popping up everywhere much like breweries. He reiterated Mayor Leusner and James Maley's explanation that Committee did choose to pause on the licenses. He advised that the process has been very back and forth. Then asked why the applicant's choose Middle Township to place their business since they are from Upper Township.*

*Ganja Babe LLC Attorney, explained the reason for choosing Middle Township is it is still close to home.*

*Committeeman Norris advised he is in agreeance that he would be willing to review the application again if they choose to open the process back up. Explained that Committee's stance from the beginning had been to proceed slowly through this process. Advised that they have to continued to take in the concerns of their residents and proceed slowly.*

**DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS AND PROJECT UPDATES:**

**Administration:**

**Finance:**

**Public Works:**

**Engineering:**

**Legal:**

**Tax Collection:**

**Tax Assessment:**

**Construction/Planning/Zoning:**

**Recreation:**

**Police / Animal Control/ Code Enforcement:**

**Buildings and Grounds:**

**Sewer:**

**Economic Development:**

**Personnel:**

**Zoning:**

**Township Clerk:**

**PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE**

Motion to Adjourn Meeting – 4:30 pm

1<sup>st</sup>: Committeeman Gandy                      2<sup>nd</sup>: Committeeman Norris

Roll Call Vote: Committeeman Gandy, Committeeman Norris, Mayor Leusner