

# Sonoma Board of Supervisor Candidate Questionnaire

## Where does your future supervisor stand on Medical Cannabis Issues? May 2008

Sonoma County Medical Cannabis Council is dedicated to preserving patients' rights to cannabis as provided by California Law. On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 3 of the 5 board of supervisor seats for Sonoma County are up for election. There are fifteen candidates running for these three positions. The board of supervisors plays a very important role in determining local policies that will affect patients. For example the board of supervisors approves personal medical use guidelines (how many plants & pounds) for the county, and they have the authority to amend dispensary regulations (not to mention the final vote on who gets approved for their permit within unincorporated portion of the county). SCMCC sent out a survey to all of the supervisory candidates to see where their positions are on medical cannabis. We have also offered them the opportunity to share their views, positions, and experiences in person at a meet and greet. Twelve of the fifteen candidates returned our questionnaire, those that did not return the survey include; Efren Carrillo, Lawrence Wiesner & Shirlee Zane (see her comments).

Below we have listed the yes or no questions (in full) as they were sent out in the questionnaire:

1. Do you support proposition 215, passed by California voters in 1996 allowing for patients (and their caregivers) with approval from their doctor to possess and cultivate personal amounts of cannabis?
2. Do you support current possession and cultivation guidelines already established here in Sonoma County?
3. Would you support a dispensary in your district assuming it met requirements of county regulations?
4. Do you support the concept of patients growing their medicine cooperatively or collectively as provided for by SB420?
5. The cities of Berkeley and San Francisco have declared sanctuary status for medical cannabis patients, providers, and landlords to seek to ensure that patients continue to have safe access to their medicine. Would you be willing to pass a similar law for the County of Sonoma?
6. The California State legislature is considering a non-assistance resolution, which would limit local law enforcements involvement in federal medical cannabis investigations, raids, and prosecutions. As supervisor would you approve of a similar resolution for the County?
7. Are you aware that Sonoma County medical cannabis patients are being raided paramilitary style by agencies such as CAMP, DEA and The Sonoma County Task Force routinely?
8. As supervisor, would you consider putting a condition on CAMP's funding requiring that no legal medical cannabis cultivation be destroyed?

The following are comments made related to table on the previous page:

*... I don't have time for another questionnaire, but please get back to me after the primary and if I am successful I will do it then –Shirlee Zane (See quotable comments)*

**Question 1**

*I was surprised and very disappointed when the state convention in 1996 the state Democratic Party made the decision to remain neutral on 215. I was chair of the Sonoma County Democratic Party at the time. The state let us know it would be alright for local parties to take a position. When I came home, I made sure the Sonoma County Democratic Party took a public position in favor of Prop 215. –Maddy Hirshfield*

**Question 2**

*Numbers should be more limited –Guy Smith*

*Generally. –Tim Smith*

*I don't know...what are the current regulations? –Tom Lynch*

**Question 3**

*As a Planning Commissioner for the county, I have already made public my support of dispensaries. –Rue Furch*

**Question 4**

*Concerned about abuses and plant numbers, and profit motives –Guy Smith*

**Question 5**

*Need more info –Guy Smith*

*Generally speaking, I oppose sanctuary ordinances and resolutions on matters outside the purview of local government-impeachment of federal officers, sanctuary for illegal aliens, or any number of issues under the control of higher levels of government for which we have elected representatives to seek redress and change through. –David Reber*

*Maybe, I need to study their law. –Jim Maresca*

*Would depend (on) your precise wording thereof. –Tim Smith*

*Need to see language. –Valerie Brown*

*I don't know... I haven't studied their laws and thought about the consequences.*

*–Tom Lynch*

**Question 6**

*The primary reason I cite for this is that we cannot pick and choose what laws we obey. Medical Marijuana is however, a situation where we have to pick which law-state or federal-to obey. The people of California have spoken on the issue and most specially the people of Sonoma County. As such, I would do what I could to carry out their will. However as a matter of fidelity to intellectual integrity I do not favor a local resolution which is only a statement of philosophy. –David Reber*

*State law would be better. –Tim Smith*

*If the legislature gets the legislation signed-would certainly follow. –Valerie Brown*

*I'm not sure...I would talk with local law enforcement and cannabis groups. Again I have concerns about violence and crime associated with cannabis. –Tom Lynch*

**Question 7**

No, and I think it is inappropriate. –Jim Maresca

...somewhat, I would like to know more about it. –Veronica Jacobi

What do you mean by “paramilitary” and “routinely”? –Tim Smith

Could you provide me with the details of these raids? Are they being reported in local press? –Tom Lynch

### **Question 8**

I would consider it. –Tim Smith

I think so... again I think part of the solution in some large state approved farms that would take the profit motive incentive out of growing cannabis and robbing people. If cannabis dispensaries were able to provide quality organic cannabis for \$10/ounce there would be no profit incentive. So often the prohibition of a product makes opportunities for criminal elements to thrive and endanger our community. –Tom Lynch

Following the yes and no portion of the survey, we included the candidates’ responses to two important questions.

### **What changes would you like to see federally to allow safe access for patients?**

I need more information in order to respond –Sharon Wright (see Quotable comments)

Common Sense –Guy Smith

The Federal Government should respect State and local law to protect medical marijuana patients. John Conyers, House Judiciary, should be encouraged to follow through to open hearings. A social cost/benefit analysis should be implemented as part of federal administrative decision-making, recognizing the value of allowing medicinal programs to continue. Put another way, what is the social cost of leaving people with a choice between cutting patients off from a legitimate and effective treatment regimen, or pursuing medicinal sources that are not subject to any oversight? The Conyers’ review would not only address the relative merits of allowing such programs to continue, but the disproportionate allocation of federal resources to preclude medicinal use of a drug that is dramatically less addictive than other drugs that are not only allowed but embraced as part of a larger treatment regimen. –Rue Furch

Legalization of Marijuana –David Reber

I would like to see the protections that California Voters adopted in 1996 adopted at the federal level. As a healthcare professional for almost two decades I’ve seen first hand how medical cannabis has helped some of my patients. There is ample evidence that medical cannabis is a legitimate form of treatment and that programs to allow it, in a formalized and regulated way, can be successful. Not only would this provide for compassionate care for many but it would allow the feds to use their resources more effectively on other more important issues rather than on otherwise legitimate uses of cannabis. I truly believe there are much more serious and dangerous drugs passing over out pharmacy counters everyday. People who legitimately need medical cannabis should have access to it in a way that’s safe for everyone involved. –Maddy Hirshfield

I would like to learn from and work with your organization on how best to meet the needs of patients and be optimally effective on every level-and especially locally. –Veronica Jacobi

*...revision of federal regulation with regard to medical cannabis. –Tim Smith*

*I would like to see federal law protecting patients, I don't think it is the role of supervisor although I support it. Supervisor's role is to be a voice and I will represent the needs of my constituents. Our nation is missing an opportunity by vilifying hemp. We have an opportunity to use this powerful plant to support our economy including revenue and to help fight against climate change. –Dan Kahane*

*After hours of public testimony on the issue at the board of supervisors I will certainly continue to support safe access. I am very concerned however with the ease of obtaining medical approval-when a 17 year old claiming to have a bad back can get marijuana legally-I worry. –Valerie Brown*

*I feel like this war on drugs is a total hoax, drugs need to be legalized so that people can have access and have the choice of using drugs like tobacco & alcohol, and be educated about it. By legalizing and educating people about drugs, making it a choice, the war on drugs would end and we would save billions of dollars and thousand of lives. –Will Pier*

*I would like to see a decriminalization of Federal laws that allow state regulated large scale organic cannabis production with safe dispensing of cannabis through the dispensaries. Also allowing personal production at home if one would like. –Tom Lynch*

**As supervisor in Sonoma County, what do you plan to do to protect medical cannabis patients?**

*I will be tough on associated crimes, especially home invasion robberies to ensure our citizen's rights to partake in the Sanctuary of their own homes. –Guy Smith*

*I will need to learn more to make a conclusive statement, and am willing to learn from your professionals and patients. I have read that the number of dispensaries is too low to serve the patient populations for safe consistent supply. If we don't have enough dispensaries, then we need to reassess whether our sitting requirements are essentially precluding facilities, or if there are other factors. I also want to follow up on the raids you mention in an earlier question. The standards for growing medical marijuana in Mendocino differ from those in Sonoma County and perhaps there is potential there. I know that the service you provide is critical to many people's lives. I have friends whose quality of life would be tragically diminished without medical marijuana so it is easy for me to understand the value of your work. –Rue Furch*

*Unfortunately, it is federal agencies which threaten patients, not state or local. I favor lobbying our federal representatives to, at a minimum, take marijuana off the controlled substance list, or at best leave the subject of legalization to the states. –David Reber*

*As supervisor the main thing I would do is actively support efforts to implement sanctuary at the county similar to Berkeley and San Francisco. I would further use our influence over the budget for law enforcement to put some teeth in making it clear that the funding would not be made available for attacks on medicinal cannabis patients and for cooperation with federal agencies. Finally, I would use my position as supervisor to support legislation at the state level, such as AB 2743, which protect medical cannabis patients and dispensaries.*

*–Maddy Hirshfield*

*Whatever is needed, in priority order, based on urgency and long term improvements.*

*–Veronica Jacobi*

*Follow State law and cards ordinances. –Tim Smith*

*I plan to be a voice for reasonable discourse so that people feel that they are heard and to ensure that medical cannabis be available. A key component is education of our young people; marijuana use recreationally first of all is illegal and can become a problem for kids. I want to be sure that groups are playing an active role in educating medical users and the rest of the community on what is safe and legal. –Dan Kahane*

*I am a strong supporter of the use of medical marijuana and will continue my support.  
–Valerie Brown*

*I would work toward reducing the violence and crime associated with cannabis production and distribution by enabling the production of affordable cannabis on a large scale. \$20/pound herb would essentially remove the criminal element from the equation completely. –Tom Lynch*

*I would make sure dispensaries were set up so that people were protected and would not get harassed going in and out of them. It all relates to education people need to be exposed to the benefits of cannabis, people have a right to use medical cannabis, and that should be protected under the law. –Will Pier*

**Other Quotable Comments:**

*Yes, I am supportive! I absolutely believe that if we made Cannabis legal (medical and otherwise) we would not spend so many millions of dollars hunting illegal sellers and growers down and we could receive millions of dollars in taxes! -Shirlee Zane*

*...let me assure you that I do support the use of medical marijuana and local cannabis clubs. While on the Santa Rosa City Council and as Mayor, I spoke passionately about the need for such a local ordinance and voted to approve cannabis clubs in our City (with regulations, of course). That was in the face of notices from federal agencies advising us that our local ordinance would be in violation with federal law and considerable local opposition. -Sharon Wright*

*I regard medical marijuana as a lesser issue in the whole questions of legalization. My general philosophy is that it is no one's business what each of us puts into our bodies, unless or until it affects the rights of others (e.g. drunk driving). I find it delicious irony that we live in a region which extols alcohol in the form of wine, while federal officers are raiding neighbors for their medical marijuana stash. Last I checked, alcohol kills hundreds of thousands of people each year, yet I know of no one who had died from abuse of marijuana. –David Reber*

*Helping those that need advocacy and protection is especially rewarding. I am an activist. I would also like to discuss Climate Recovery and the need for local action to combat Global warming. I would especially be curious about various methods of cannabis cultivation and carbon sequestration. No till in best for other plants and sequestration. –Veronica Jacobi*

*I should mention that I strongly support the safe and legal use and cultivation of medical Cannabis. –Dan Kahane*