

**WAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP  
STEARNS COUNTY  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2023-1001**

**AN INTERIM ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A STUDY AND IMPOSING A  
MORATORIUM ON THE OPERATION OF A CANNABIS BUSINESS**

THE TOWN BOARD OF WAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

**ARTICLE I.** Authority and Legislative Findings.

- A. The Minnesota Legislature recently enacted, and Governor signed, 2023 Minnesota Session Laws, Chapter 63 – H.F. No. 100 (“Act”), which is comprehensive legislation relating to cannabis including, but not limited to, the establishment of the Office of Cannabis Management (“OCM”), legalizing and limiting the possession and use of cannabis and certain hemp products by adults, providing for the licensing, inspection, and regulation of cannabis businesses and hemp businesses, taxing the sale of cannabis flower, cannabis products, and certain hemp products, establishing grant and loan programs, amending criminal penalties, providing for expungement of certain convictions and providing for the temporary regulation of certain edible cannabinoid products.
- B. The Act provides local units of government certain authority related to cannabis businesses, including the authority to (1) require local registration of certain cannabis businesses operating retail establishments, (2) adopt reasonable restrictions on the time, place, and manner of the operation of cannabis businesses, provided that such restrictions do not prohibit the establishment or operation of a cannabis businesses, (3) limit the number of certain cannabis businesses based on the population of the community, and (4) prohibit the operation of a cannabis business within 1,000 feet of a school, or 500 feet of a day care, residential treatment facility, or an attraction within a public park that is regularly used by minors, including a playground or athletic field.
- C. The Act requires the OCM, which was established effective July 1, 2023, to work with local governments to develop model ordinances for reasonable restrictions on the time, place, and manner of the operation of cannabis businesses. The Act also requires the OCM to establish additional rules and regulations relating to the operation of cannabis businesses. The Township will benefit from reviewing and analyzing the OCM’s model ordinances, rules and regulations before making any decisions related to the regulation of cannabis businesses in the Township.
- D. The Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 342.13(e)) expressly allows a local unit of government that is conducting studies or has authorized a study to be conducted or has held or scheduled a hearing for the purpose of considering adoption or amendment of reasonable restrictions on the time, place and manner of the operation of cannabis businesses to adopt

an interim ordinance applicable to all or part of its jurisdiction for the purpose of protecting the planning process and the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens. The interim ordinance may regulate, restrict, or prohibit the operation of cannabis businesses within the jurisdiction or a portion thereof until January 1, 2025.

- E. Given the uncertainty regarding the model ordinances to be developed by the OCM and the broad scope of the changes to Minnesota law brought about by the Act, the Township desires to adopt an interim ordinance for the purpose of protecting the planning process and the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens.
- F. The Township desires to conduct a study for the purpose of considering the adoption or amendment of reasonable restrictions on the time, place and manner of the operation of cannabis businesses as well as the other regulations local units of government may adopt under the Act.
- G. After published notice, the Town Board held a public hearing regarding the consideration and adoption of an interim ordinance prohibiting the operation of cannabis businesses within the Township until January 1, 2025 and recommended its adoption.

**ARTICLE II. Definitions.** For purposes of this Ordinance, the following terms shall have the meaning given them in this section.

- (a) “Act” means 2023 Minnesota Session Laws, Chapter 63 (H.F. No. 100).
- (b) “Cannabis Business” has the meaning given the term in Minnesota Statutes, section 342.01, subdivision 14.
- (c) “Township” means Wakefield Township.
- (d) “Edible Cannabinoid Product” has the meaning given the term in Minnesota Statutes, section 151.72, subdivision 1(f).
- (e) “OCM” means the Office of Cannabis Management, established as set forth in Minnesota Statutes, section 342.02, subd. 1.
- (f) “Ordinance” means this interim ordinance, which is adopted pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 342.13(e).

**ARTICLE III. Study Authorized.** The Town Board hereby authorizes and directs the Zoning Administrator to conduct a study regarding the adoption or amendment of reasonable restrictions on the time, place, and manner of the operation of Cannabis Businesses, as well as the other potential local regulations allowed under the Act, and report to the Town Board on the potential regulation of Cannabis Businesses. The study must include a review of the model ordinances the OCM is directed to draft under Minnesota Statutes, section 342.13(d), an analysis of potential setback regulations allowed under Minnesota Statutes, section 342.13(c), and such other matters as staff may determine are relevant to the Town Board’s consideration of this matter. The report shall

include the Zoning Administrator's recommendations on whether the Town Board should adopt regulations and, if so, the recommended types of regulations.

**ARTICLE IV. Moratorium.** A moratorium is hereby imposed regarding the operation of a Cannabis Business within the Township. During the term of this Ordinance, no business, person, or entity may establish or operate a Cannabis Business within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Township. The Township shall not accept, process, or act on any application, site plan, building permit, zoning request, or other approval, including any requested confirmation, certification, approval, or other request from the OCM or other governmental entity requesting Township review of any application or proposal for a business proposing to engage in the operation of a Cannabis Business.

**ARTICLE V. Violation.** During the term of the moratorium, it is a violation of this Ordinance and a misdemeanor for any business, person, or entity to establish or operate a Cannabis Business within the Township.

**ARTICLE VI. Exceptions.** The moratorium imposed by this Ordinance does not apply to: (1) the continued operation of a business as part of the Medical Cannabis Program administered by the Minnesota Department of Health that was lawfully operating within the Township prior to July 1, 2023; (2) the lawful sale of Edible Cannabinoid Products in compliance with Minnesota Statutes, section 151.72 and any regulations of the Township; or (3) sales of Edible Cannabinoid Products at an exclusive liquor store in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 340A.412, subdivision 14. Nothing in this Article exempts a business, person, or entity that is selling Edible Cannabinoid Products from having to comply with all requirements and prohibitions of applicable laws and ordinances.

**ARTICLE VII. Enforcement.** Violation of this Ordinance is a misdemeanor. The Township may also enforce this Ordinance by mandamus, injunction, or other appropriate civil remedy in any court of competent jurisdiction. A violation of this Ordinance may result in the Township reporting the violation to the OCM if relevant to OCM licensing. The Town Board hereby authorizes the Township Clerk, in consultation with the Township Attorney, to initiate any legal action deemed necessary to secure compliance with this Ordinance.

**ARTICLE VIII. Duration.** This Ordinance shall become effective on the first day of publication after adoption and shall remain in effect until January 1, 2025. This Ordinance may be repealed earlier upon the effective date of an ordinance adopting or amending reasonable restrictions on the time, place and manner of the operation of a Cannabis Business within the Township or by resolution of the Town Board terminating this Ordinance prior to the expiration date.

**ARTICLE IX. Severability.** Every section, provision, and part of this Ordinance is declared severable from every other section, provision, and part thereof. If any section, provision, or part of this Ordinance is held to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such judgment shall not invalidate any other section, provision, or part of this Ordinance.

**ARTICLE X. Effective Date.** This Ordinance shall be effective upon its adoption.

Adopted this 28<sup>th</sup> day of August 2023.

/s/John Willenbring, Chairperson

ATTEST: /s/Heidi Stalboeger, Clerk