



State of New Jersey  
CANNABIS REGULATORY COMMISSION  
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PHILLIP D. MURPHY  
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER  
Lt. Governor

DIANNA HOENOU, *Chair*  
SAMUEL DELGADO, *Vice Chair*  
KRISTA NASH, *Commissioner*  
MARIA DEL CID-KOSSO, *Commissioner*  
CHARLES BARKER, *Commissioner*  
JEFF BROWN, *Executive Director*

MINUTES - PUBLIC MEETING NO.  
OCTOBER 27PM 2022-1:00PM  
*Publicly Accessible via YouTube*  
*Board of Public Utilities, 44 South Clinton Ave., Trenton, NJ*

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

The October 27, 2022, public meeting of the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission was called to order by **Chairwoman Houenou** at **1:01pm** at **44 South Clinton Ave., Trenton, NJ 08609**.

Toni-Anne Blake, Director of Communications read the following statement:

"Chairwoman Houenou, this is a special meeting of the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission. Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with the Senator Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of the meeting was provided to the Asbury Park Press, Atlantic City Express, Bergen Record, Courier Post, Star Ledger and the Trenton Times on October 13, 2022. The agenda and information regarding the agenda and information regarding the meeting was also posted on the CRC website as well as in the building where this meeting is located. The meeting time and location has also been posted on the website of the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission and with the Office of the Secretary of State."

## 2. ROLL CALL

Director of Communications, Toni-Anne Blake took the roll, and the following Commissioners were present:

Mr. Charles Barker, Ms. Maria Del Cid-Kosso, Mr. Samuel Delgado, Ms. Krista Nash, and Ms. Dianna Houenou.

**No one was absent.** *The following staff members were present:* Jeff Brown, Jolitha Joannem, Toni-Anne Blake, Daniel Said, Wesley McWhite, Kelly Anderson-Thomas, Cluistopher Riggs, Justin Rodriquez.

## 3. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairwoman Houenou called for a motion to go into Executive Session for approximately **45 minutes**. **Vice Chair Delgado made the motion, and Commissioner Nash seconded.** Hearing no discussion, Ms. Blake took the vote.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Commissioner Barker, Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso, Commissioner Nash, Vice Chair Delgado, Chairwoman Houenou

NAYS: None

**The motion was passed.**

**Executive session started at 1:06pm and ended at 1:50pm.**

**4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES**

**The open, public portion of the meeting began at 1:58pm.** Ms. Blake noted that the minutes were shared with the commission members prior to the meeting. **Chairwoman Houenou** asked for a motion to adopt the **minutes and executive session minutes** for the **October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022**, meeting. Commissioner Barker made the motion, and Vice Chair Delgado seconded. Hearing no discussion, Chairwoman Houenou called the vote.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Commissioner Barker, Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso, Commissioner Nash, Vice Chair Delgado, Chairwoman Houenou

NAYS: None

**The motion was carried.**

**5. CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chairwoman Houenou gave updates on rules and regulations proposals that are being adopted along with adding new rules and regulations. She addressed the comment period the public had to send in their comments and to have them reviewed by the Commission. Chairwoman Houenou also recognized Director of communications Ms. Toni-Anne Blake for her award for her tremendous work in communications and public relations in the State of New Jersey.

**6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Executive Director Brown gave updates on the Medical Cannabis Program, specifically enrollment, and this shows what has happened with enrollments essentially this year, so the beginning of January and running through October. We are still enrolling a tremendous amount of patients month over month, and, looking at the average new patients enrolled per month in 2018, that was 2,280. This year we're still averaging 4,634 new patients enrolling in the Medical Cannabis Program every month. This looks at enrollment over time with some key milestones. So you can see at the beginning of Governor Murphy's administration, the sixth executive order directed the extension of the medical program. The Department of Health implemented that in March of 2018. That kicked up enrollment initially. The Jake Honig Compassionate Use Medical Cannabis Act was signed in July 2019, and enrollment started to increase. The medicinal cannabis program, in August, had almost 5,000 patients enrolled. In September, there was a drop to just under 3,000.

Hillview is a new cultivator. Garden State has opened a new medical-only cultivation facility. Sweet Spot is a new dispensary that's been permitted in Voorhees. Justice Grown, has a medical only dispensary Bloc in Ewing. MPX New Jersey has a medical-only dispensary in Atlantic City, and Breakwater opened their second dispensary, medical-only, in Roselle Park

**7. AUDIT COMMITTEE'S REPORT**

Vice Chair Delgado shared that the CRC's Audit Committee submitted a recommendation to the Department of the Treasury to fund the New Jersey Business Action Center's new technical assistance program for cannabis businesses. Vice Chair Delgado shared highlights of the new program.

Chairwoman Houenou introduced Executive Director Melanie Willoughby from the Business Action Center who have been meeting with the Audit Committee on her outreach program to help people with technical assistance program in the cannabis business.

Executive Director Willoughby of New Jersey Business Action Center talked about what type of assistance her program has to offer the public at zero to very minimal charge. The program is expected to start next year.

**Commissioner Barker:** Madam Chairwoman, I just have one quick question. Director Willoughby, thank you again. I echo the Chair's comments about you being a trailblazer. I have a simple question and it may have come up in the beginning of your statement. What is the cost for prospective applicants?

**MELANIE WILLLOUGHBY:** There is no cost.

**COMMISSIONER BARKER:** I thought I heard that.

**MELANIE WILLLOUGHBY:** No, there is no cost.

**COMMISSIONER BARKER:** I just wanted you to make that a little bit clearer.

**MELANIE WILLLOUGHBY:** No, there is no cost, and that is because we have a responsibility to provide these services at no cost to those who are in special categories, which are social equity businesses, the legacy operators, the microbusinesses, women, minorities, and veterans, and impact zone businesses. Funding is coming from the sales tax on cannabis. We are really looking to keeping this very low cost because we also have other staff at the BAC who is also able to help supplement it. So the program is free because I know how costly it is for those who are struggling to do this on their own with paying for a lot of professionals to help them, and I think that for those who are new to this, we want to be there for them.

**COMMISSIONER BARKER:** Thank you very much.

#### 8. **SOCIAL EQUITY EXCISE FEES:**

Director Brown explained the formula for setting the Social Equity Excise Fee. By statute, the fee is currently equal to 1/3 of 1% of the average price per ounce of cannabis. As of August 1, 2022, the average retail price of an ounce of cannabis was \$455.56. The new proposed fee for calendar year 2023 is \$1.52 per ounce.

Chairwoman Houenou asked for a motion to adopt the resolution concerning the Imposition of Social Equity Excise Fees on Class 1 Cannabis Cultivators for the 2023 calendar year.

**Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso made the motion and Commissioner Barker seconded.** Hearing no discussion, Director Blake called the vote:

#### **VOTE:**

**AYES:** Commissioner Barker, Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso, Vice Chair Delgado, Commissioner Nash, and Chairwoman Houenou

**NAYS:** None

**The resolution was passed.**

#### 9. **CONDITIONAL LICENSE EXTENSION**

Executive Director Brown summarized the recommendation to extend certain conditional licenses by up to an additional two 45-day periods as allowed by regulations in order to allow those applicants to have more time to convert from conditional licensure to annual licensure.

**VOTE:**

Chaitwoman Houenou asked for a motion to adopt the resolution on the extension of conditional licenses as recommended by the staff. Commissioner Nash made the motion, and Commissioner Del Cid-K.osso seconded. Hearing no discussion, Director Blake called the vote:

**AYES:** Commissioner Barker, Commissioner Del Cid-K.osso, Vice Chair Delgado, Commissioner Nash, and Chaitwoman Houenou.

**NAYS:** None

**The resolution was passed.**

**10. ADULT-USE CONDITIONAL LICENSE:**

Executive Director Brown summarized the conditional license applications as it being the first opportunity for people to get into this market. These applications have been reviewed for priority. There are 296 awardees.

**VOTE:**

Chaitwoman Houenou asked for a motion to adopt the consideration of applications for conditional licenses as recommended by the staff. Commissioner Barker made the motion, and Vice Chair Delgado seconded. Hearing no discussion, Director Blake called the vote:

**AYES:** Commissioner Barker, Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso, Vice Chair Delgado, Commissioner Nash, and Chaitwoman Houenou.

**NAYS:** None

**The resolution was passed**

**11. CONDITIONAL LICENSE APPLICATION FOR SVA NJ SERVICES LLC:**

Chaitwoman Houenou explained that, in accordance with New Jersey Administrative Code 19:61-7.5, Vice Chair Delgado is recused from matters involving applicant ID# 1965, SVA NJ Services, LLC, due to a family relationship. Vice Chair Delgado's recusal has been memorialized in writing and submitted to the Cannabis Regulatory Commission's Ethics Liaison Officer as well as the State Ethics Commission. Vice Chair Delgado left the meeting room for the consideration of this application.

**VOTE:**

Chaitwoman Houenou asked for a motion to adopt the resolution concerning SVA NJ Services LLC's application for a conditional license as recommended by the staff. Commissioner Del Cid-K.osso made the motion, and Commissioner Nash seconded. Hearing no discussion, Director Blake called the vote:

**AYES:** Commissioner Barker, Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso, Commissioner Nash, and Chaitwoman Houenou.

**NAYS:** None

**The resolution was passed**

**RECESS:**

The court reporter transcribing the meeting requested a brief recess to adjust equipment. Chaitwoman Houenou granted a six-minute recess.

**12. ADULT-USE CONDITIONAL CONVERSION LICENSE:**

Executive Director Brown summarized the applications to convert from a conditional license to an annual license and the prioritization of applications by social equity businesses, diversity-owned businesses, and impact zone businesses.

**VOTE:**

Chairwoman Houenou asked for a motion to adopt the Consideration on Adult-use Conditional Conversion License Applications as recommended by the staff. Vice Chair Delgado made the motion, and Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso seconded. Hearing no discussion, Director Blake called the vote:

**AYES:** Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso, Commissioner Nash, Vice Chair Delgado, and Chairwoman Houenou.

**NAYS:** Commissioner Barker

**The resolution was passed**

13. **ADULT-USE ANNUAL LICENSE:**

Executive Director Brown summarized the process for annual licensure. An adult-use license applications are reviewed like conditional conversion applications. Conditional licenses are prioritized fast, as are their conversions, depending on what type of business they are.

**VOTE:**

Chairwoman Houenou asked for a motion to adopt the Consideration on Adult-use Annual License Applications as recommended by the staff. Commissioner Nash made the motion, and Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso seconded. Hearing no discussion, Director Blake called the vote:

**AYES:** Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso, Vice Chair Delgado, Commissioner Nash, and Chairwoman Houenou.

**NAYS:** Commissioner Barker

**The resolution was passed**

14. **CURALEAF ATC EXPANSION (BORDENTOWN):**

Executive Director Brown summarized that Curaleaf is currently up for consideration for expansion. Currently they are approved at their two other dispensaries. We require municipal approval, proof of sufficient supply to continue to meet the patient need after expansion, plans to ensure patient access, plans to address social equity and safety, compliance with our labor provisions, a labor agreement as well as compliance with other provisions. Our consideration is focused on patients the number of inpatients enrolled statewide at this dispensary. He noted that we are dead serious about ensuring patient access, dead serious about ensuring compliance with the labor provisions and if approved, we will have very vigilant eye on Curaleaf and all the expanded ATCs.

**VOTE:**

Chairwoman Houenou asked for a motion for Certification for Curaleaf ATC (Bordentown) as recommended by the staff. Vice Chair Delgado made the motion, and Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso seconded.

**Discussion:**

Commissioner Nash: I am not fully convinced that Curaleaf has made good faith efforts as it relates to our labor provisions. However, as Director Brown stated, they have met the minimum statutory requirements. With that said, we will be closely monitoring their efforts, and I will add that any other cannabis business that wishes to do business here, we will be doing the same.

Chairwoman Houenou: I have also become concerned about some of the actions of this particular entity and its commitments to workers, to safety, and to public health, and to patients. And there has been a lot of information that staff reviewed related to these certification materials and a lot of information for

Commissioners to digest and process, as well. I know I need some more time to review some of the material and the information that has been shared., I do echo your sentiments, Commissioner Nash, that accountability is critical here and I think this Board, if I do say so myself, I think this Board really takes its enforcement responsibility seriously when it comes to making sure that we are setting up an industry that has safe and responsible operators who recognize the importance of our regulations and our rules and adhere to those.

**AYES:** Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso, Vice Chair Delgado, Commissioner Nash.

**ABSTAIN:** Chairwoman Houenou, my vote is to abstain on this matter as for the reasons I mentioned before. I simply need more time to review the information that's been provided by staff and become comfortable with making a final determination, so my vote is to abstain

**NAYS:** Commissioner Barker

**The resolution was passed**

15. **BUSINESS NAME CHANGE:**

Executive Director Brown summarized the three name change requests before the Commission. GLCPC, LLC would change to ReUp Dispensary. GSD NJ LLC would change to Ayr Wellness NJ, LLC. Middle Valley Partners LLC would change to Valley Wellness LLC.

**VOTE:**

Chairwoman Houenou asked for a motion to adopt the resolution regarding business name changes as recommended by the staff. Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso made the motion, and Commissioner Barker seconded.

Hearing no discussion, Director Blake called the vote:

**AYES:** Commissioner Barker, Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso, Vice Chair Delgado, Commissioner Nash, and Chairwoman Houenou.

**NAYS:**

**The resolution was passed**

16. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chairwoman Houenou reminded the public that they can submit their comments to the CRC during or after the public meeting in writing via the CRC website at [nj.gov/cannabis/meetings](http://nj.gov/cannabis/meetings) by 5:00pm on October 28, 2022. Chair reminded the public that all submitted questions and comments are shared with the Commission members and are made public along with the minutes.

Invited speakers and the public had the opportunity to share questions, ideas, and concerns with members of the Commission.

**Diana McElroy:** Thanking the commission for the space to make public comments. Understand they are under a lot of pressure, they rolled out adult use and medical, but thinks consumer education is still not where it should be, thinks consumers who are taking these products and don't understand the effects, the cannabis market will be hurt if the consumers are not educated.

**Gabriella Wilday:** CEO of a diversly-owned conditional retail license holder. Conditional license was approved during the last public meeting on September 9<sup>th</sup>, which was 159 days after it was submitted. Concerned about the timeframe for licenses to be approved as compared to the timeframe given in the published guidelines subchapter 7.2c.

**Edward Lefty Grimes:** Member of Sativa Cross Organization a 501c3, representing cannabis patients' rights and disabled veterans. Contending that in-person meetings are an institutional enable-ism to the

disabled who cannot attend in-person meetings. Friend Jeff Oaks from Jeff's Law took part from his deathbed with stage four cancer. CRC should hear from people like Jeff, disabled vets, sick and dying people because CRC said they are patient focused.

**Chirali Patel:** Wanted to reiterate her written comments on the proposed amendments to the regulations to create important changes that will help achieve true social equity and justice because what's happening right in in the industry. There are predatory practices, and she believes it's due to overregulation. If CRC allows the market to flow as it should, it will create organic growth.

**Abigail Perl:** Introduced herself as a researcher, graduate from the University of San Francisco with masters degree in Nonprofit Administration. Completed her capstone project for a nonprofit program in the cannabis industry creating cross-sector partnerships for a sustainable and equitable future in New Jersey and beyond. Spoke to Alija Molian chair of the Cannabis Oversight committee, San Francisco, about her research, and in terms of social equity, he does not believe that the NJ CRC has done any justice to the community affected by the war on drugs.

**Melody Molinaro:** Co-Founder of Cognitive Harmony Technologies, which is helping to create billions of dollars in wealth for underrepresented communities through cannabis business ownership. Have been interviewing applicants with priority status for the CHT accelerator sponsorship program. They provide sponsorship winners with mentorship, education, SOPs, narrative documents, and access to technology platform free of charge.

**Mollie Hartman Lustig, Esq.:** NJSA 17:30-6.8(g) concerning familial ownership of licenses. There are families who are estranged, and it would be quite inequitable to prohibit a sibling who has been estranged from their sibling for a period of 20 or more years from both holding licenses in cannabis.

**Osbert Orduna:** CEO of Cannabis Place, Co-Chair of National Hispanic Cannabis council Tristate Chapter, who has spoken to many applicants and issues he finds is that the turnaround time to move from conditional license to the next step of paying for their license. The turnaround time for this to happen causes issues for the applicant because unlike other state businesses they are not able to pay the fee as soon as they are approved by the CRC due to the timeframes it takes for the CRC to allow them to do so.

**Violeta Peters:** Representing Empire Dispensary, questions about their license and the conditional license process.

**Leo Bridgewater:** Thanks the Commissioners for acknowledging the legacy aspect of the cannabis industry and providing the technical assistance program for legacy program.

**Sophida Artis-Mills:** President and Co-Founder of United Empowerment Party which is a political party registered with the SEC. Thanks to the Commissioners for thinking of the legacy individuals who started in the cannabis business before it was in the legal space it is in now, offering mentorship for those individuals and providing opportunities for them.

**Lemunuel Edwards:** Thanks the Commissioners for thinking of the legacy individuals and mentioned he is from DC and there is no legacy program or social equity in DC.

**Alfonso Tucky Blunt, Jr.:** Has been selling cannabis since he was 16 years old, the first ex-felon licensed to sell cannabis out of four retail shops and now cannabis consumption area in Oakland. His store is 13 blocks from where he caught his case.

**Kristen Goedde:** Trichome Analytical, the first licensed cannabis testing laboratory and the only non-Multi State laboratory in New Jersey. Spoke about issues plaguing the cannabis industry- some labs take advantage of the lack of regulatory oversight to purposefully alter testing data, reducing levels of

contamination like yeast and mold or increasing levels of cannabinoids and terpenes.

**Jesse Marie Villars:** Owner and CEO of Baked by the River Dispensary a class 5 conditional and micro business licensee, and CEO and Founder of Cannabis Equity Employment an online employment platform specifically helping to connect people who have been directly harmed by the war on drugs to find job opportunities in cannabis industry.

**Afia Dash:** Director of sales for Cannabis Equity Employment, social equity in the cannabis business is a moral imperative, black and brown brothers and sisters built this industry with their blood sweat and tears is an understatement, they grew and tended the crops whilst the powers to be reaped all the benefits and controlled the narratives. The NJ CRC is supposed to set the standards and think it can be done a little bit better.

Director of Communications, Toni-Anne Blake, called on members of the public who signed up to speak. All speakers were given three (3) minutes to speak. Director Blake called on the invited speakers to speak first.

#### 17. **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Barker gave a final speech thanking the Legacy Operators that spoke during public comments.

#### **VOTE:**

Chaitwoman Houenou called for a motion to adjourn. Vice Chair Delgado made the motion to adjourn and seconded by Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso. Chaitwoman Houenou called the vote.

AYES:Chaitwoman Houenou, Vice Chair Delgado, Commissioner Nash, Commissioner Barker, Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso

NAYS:None

**The public meeting adjourned at 3:55pm.**

#### **CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes represent a true and complete summary of the public meeting held by the Cannabis Regulatory Commission on **OCTOBER 27, 2022**



Christopher Riggs  
Chief Counsel



Jolitha Joanem  
Administrative Assistant

Date: December 12, 2022

Date: December 12, 2022