



State of New Jersey
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Lt. Governor

DIANNA HOUEYOU, *Chair*
KRISTA NASH, *Vice Chair*
HARRIS LAUFER, *Commissioner*
AMELIA MAPP, *Commissioner*
CHRIS RIGGS, *Acting Executive Director*

NEW JERSEY
CANNABIS REGULATORY COMMISSION

PUBLIC MEETING

Friday, February 20, 2026

1 BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

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3 KRISTA NASH, Chair

4 AMELIA MAPP

5 HARRIS LAUFER

6 DANIEL SAID, Secretary

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1 CHAIR: Good afternoon everyone. Welcome
2 to the special meeting of the New Jersey Cannabis
3 Regulatory Commission. I will be chairing today's
4 meeting in Chairwoman Houenou's absence.

5 The time is 11:59 and I call this meeting
6 to order.

7 Mr. Said, can you please read the notice
8 of special meeting?

9 THE SECRETARY: Vice chairwoman, this is a
10 special meeting of the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory
11 Commission's 2026 annual meeting schedule. Adequate
12 notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance
13 with the Senator Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings
14 Act. Notice of the virtual special meeting was
15 provided to the Asbury Park Press, Bergen Record,
16 Courier-Post, Star-Ledger and The Trenton Times on
17 February 18th 2026. The agenda and information
18 regarding the virtual nature of the meeting and the
19 ability to livestream was also posted on the CRC
20 website. The meeting time and location has also been
21 posted on the website of the New Jersey Cannabis
22 Regulatory Commission and with the office of the
23 Secretary of the State.

24 CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Said. Can you
25 please take roll call?

1 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Laufer?

2 MR. HARRIS LAUFER: Present.

3 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

4 MS. AMELIA MAPP: Present.

5 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

6 CHAIR: Present.

7 THE SECRETARY: And Chairwoman Houenou is
8 absent. We now have a quorum.

9 CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Said.

10 I will now turn the floor over to
11 Executive Director Riggs.

12 MR. CHRISTOPHER RIGGS: Thank you,
13 chairwoman.

14 We have two annual license renewal
15 applications up for consideration by the board today,
16 Green Oasis Dispensary NJ LLC, A-Z Supply Incorporated.
17 Both adult use licenses that were good for renewal --
18 that are up for renewal on the one year annual license
19 period. Both of these entities have submitted the
20 renewal materials. Those materials have been reviewed
21 by our Office of Licensing and our Office of Compliance
22 and Investigation, and staff is recommending that the
23 board renew these licenses today. Thank you.

24 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs.

25 Are there any questions for Director

1 Riggs?

2 Hearing none, is there a motion on this
3 matter?

4 MR. LAUFER: Madam vice chair, I move to
5 approve the two licenses.

6 CHAIR: Is there a second?

7 MS. MAPP: Second.

8 CHAIR: Seconded by Commissioner Mapp.

9 Is there any discussion on this matter?

10 MS. MAPP: No.

11 CHAIR: I would like to remind businesses
12 that the commission must receive a renewal application
13 with all documentation and fees no later than 90 days
14 prior to the expiration date of the current cannabis
15 business license. So please, please, please, prepare
16 in advance for your renewal so as not to risk the lapse
17 of your license.

18 Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

19 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Laufer?

20 MR. LAUFER: Yes.

21 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

22 MS. MAPP: Yes.

23 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

24 CHAIR: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou is

1 absent. The motion passes.

2 The next order of business, we have the
3 open public comment period.

4 CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Said.

5 For public comments as we do for every
6 board meeting, members of the public can submit written
7 comments during or after this special meeting via our
8 website at nj.gov/cannabis/meetings. Written comments
9 will become part of the public record. The deadline to
10 submit written comments for today's meeting is Monday,
11 February 23rd at 5 p.m.

12 Mr. Said, I will now turn it over to you.

13 THE SECRETARY: Thank you, vice
14 chairwoman.

15 As a -- as a reminder, public speakers
16 during this afternoon's public comment period will be
17 limited to three minutes. Please be respectful and
18 concise during your comments.

19 The first person I have on the list
20 registered to speak is Chief Vincent Mann. Last four
21 of the telephone number is 0023. Chief Vincent Mann.
22 Last four is 0023. I don't see that person.

23 The next person is Sam Reichbart, last
24 four is -- last four of the telephone number is 3654.
25 Samuel Reichbart. I don't see that person.

1 The next person on the list is Thomas
2 Norcia. Last four is 2406. Thomas Norcia, 2406.

3 And as a reminder, if you're calling in,
4 it's -- press star -- star nine to raise your hand. I
5 see you Thomas. Just gimme one second.

6 Thomas, the floor's yours.

7 MR. THOMAS NORCIA: All right. So I was
8 chiming in on this, but honestly I registered to speak
9 at the March meeting, so that must have carried over.
10 So I'm not sure if anybody else is gonna have that
11 issue too.

12 Just so -- I just had a break right now, I
13 was able to chime in, so that's great my name is here.
14 So I will speak on a few things. You know, I thought
15 it was a little bit rude the comments were -- I mean,
16 it was on virtually before I think some people thought
17 the meeting would start and someone commented, people
18 actually registered to speak. So I thought that was a
19 little bit rude considering we only have three minutes
20 and I could go all day with you guys. So people look
21 forward to that three minutes. So that's a little bit
22 rude and disrespectful to even be commenting like that.
23 So keep that in mind you guys.

24 The other thing is, you know, psychoactive
25 hemp ban. We gotta stick up for the farmers. You

1 know, we want you guys to ask Ruiz's office for the
2 letter of intent so the CBD licensed businesses by the
3 Department of Agriculture could sell their full
4 spectrum, non intoxicating products in dispensaries you
5 know. It's key we need that.

6 You know, like I said, I wasn't really
7 prepared at this very last second because I didn't
8 expect to speak at this, but you guys know why I'm
9 calling. You guys gotta stick up for the hemp farmers.
10 Ruiz's bill said it would not affect us. We need
11 people to do the right thing. We know Department of
12 Agriculture's legal -- legal team is on something, but
13 it'd be nice if you guys stuck up, did the right thing
14 so that we don't have to destroy 100s of 1000s of
15 dollars worth of products.

16 You know, you guys are allowing your
17 people to do the same thing. You got topicals, you got
18 tinctures, you got all sorts of stuff. You're allowing
19 them to bring over hemp products over state lines.
20 Yes, it's an input, but it's still over that 0.3 so
21 it's considered adult use. It's interstate commerce on
22 adult use cannabis. You're not supposed to be doing
23 it, you shouldn't be doing it. It's gotta be even
24 across the board. This definition of hemp can't be
25 different from the Department of Agriculture to you

1 guys. That's what creates interstate commerce. Hemp
2 is a product on one side, hemp is an ingredient on the
3 other. We gotta get with the program and we gotta get,
4 you know, together because it's a little absurd that we
5 got different definitions of hemp across the state.

6 The hemp program was here in 2020. You
7 guys established after that. You guys should have rode
8 the definition of hemp that was already here and not
9 created your own. I think New Jersey has their own
10 definition of hemp versus every other state in the
11 country. So that's a little bit crazy.

12 We're the garden state, we need home grow
13 and I'll let my last little bit of time go to the next
14 people. Thank you.

15 THE SECRETARY: Thank you, Thomas.

16 The next person on the list is Damien
17 Rodgers. Last four of the telephone number is 0631.
18 Damien Rodgers.

19 And as a reminder, it's star nine to raise
20 your hand if you're dialing in through a phone number.

21 I don't see that person.

22 The next person on the list is Nichelle
23 Santos. The last four of the telephone number is 0557.
24 Nichelle Santos, 0557. Okay. I see you, Nichelle.

25 MS. NICHELLE SANTOS: Thank you.

1 THE SECRETARY: Nichelle, you -- you have
2 the floor.

3 MS. SANTOS: Thank you.

4 Good afternoon, chairwoman and
5 commissioners.

6 In 2012, New Jersey legalized medical
7 cannabis to serve patients suffering from chronic and
8 debilitating conditions. That program grew to more
9 than 130,000 certified patients and ultimately became
10 the foundation for today's successful adult use market,
11 but today, the patient is being left behind.

12 Enrollment in the medical program is declining rapidly.
13 1000s of patients are leaving each month, not because
14 they are no longer -- because they no longer need
15 cannabis as a medicine, but because the medical
16 infrastructure no longer supports them as patients.
17 They are being absorbed into the AU market where
18 medical oversight, therapeutic product diversity and
19 clinical guidance are limited. For these individuals,
20 cannabis is not a consumer product, it's a medicine.

21 Now that the AU market has matured and
22 stabilized over the last five years, it's time to
23 modernize the medical cannabis program. First, we must
24 revitalize the medical marketplace, incentivize
25 operators to maintain true medical grade product

1 diversity across all modalities, require certified
2 medical staff such as trained bartenders or cannabis
3 nurses to support patients, implement telehealth
4 systems to provide guidance on drug to drug
5 interactions and safe therapeutic use, and allow
6 diversely owned adult use dispensaries to apply for the
7 medical license to expand access.

8 Second, we must integrate medical cannabis
9 into employer sponsored health plans as an -- as an
10 alternative benefit as is being done with CannaCoverage
11 and Bennabis Health.

12 Healthcare costs are increasing at double
13 digit rates year over year. Employers in public sector
14 health plans are searching for innovative solutions to
15 address chronic pain, behavioral health conditions and
16 opioid dependency. Medical cannabis when responsibly
17 integrated can serve as a cost saving or cost
18 mitigating therapeutic alternative reducing reliance on
19 opioids, lowering pharmacy spend, and improving health
20 outcomes.

21 THE SECRETARY: 30 seconds.

22 MS. SANTOS: But without a strong medical
23 cannabis infrastructure in New Jersey, employer sponsor
24 integration becomes impossible.

25 So there's much to say, and I will submit

1 my written testimony, but this is not about expanding a
2 market, it's about protecting patients and preserving
3 medical integrity. Without infrastructure, there is no
4 medical program and without a medical program, the
5 patient disappears.

6 Let us make New Jersey both strong and
7 jersey healthy. Thank you.

8 THE SECRETARY: Thank you, Nichelle.

9 The next person I have on the list is Dr.
10 Roz McCarthy. Last four is 1302. Okay. I see you,
11 Dr. Roz.

12 So Dr. Roz, it's star 6-2. Yeah.

13 You have the floor, Dr. Roz.

14 MS. ROZ MCCARTHY: Hi. Thank you so much.

15 Good afternoon to the commission and
16 executive directors. My name is Dr. Roz McCarthy. I'm
17 the founder and the CEO of Minorities for Medical
18 Marijuana and I also am a proud Trentonian. I live in
19 the city of Trenton here in New Jersey.

20 I started my journey with my non-profit
21 out of the state of Florida, and Florida is by far the
22 largest state with a significant medical population of
23 almost 900,000 patients that are on service.

24 I think there are some true takeaways that
25 can be transferred and lessons that can be learned that

1 can help to make sure that we do not cannibalize the
2 medical population.

3 At the end of the day, individuals who are
4 going into dispensaries, I would say between 50 to 60
5 percent are patients and don't -- they either know
6 their patients and they haven't been identified as, or
7 they don't realize their patients, and that's the
8 reason why they -- they consume their cannabis.

9 I think there's an opportunity for us to
10 utilize with the new regulations that have been
11 introduced and other new opportunities and new things
12 that we should discuss, ways to make it easier to be
13 self identified.

14 This -- the -- the District of Columbia
15 about five years ago actually created a self-
16 certification program where it's no cost to get your
17 card, you can self certify as a medical patient. I
18 know if I'm a patient or not.

19 If you give me the -- the infrastructure
20 to be able to identify and to do it respectfully and do
21 it in -- in a way that is not cost prohibitive, I think
22 you can see more patients.

23 There is this call -- a thing called, you
24 know, you have the chicken or the egg, what comes
25 first? You have dispensary owners who wanna service

1 the medical population, but they don't see enough
2 consumers that are coming through. We have to figure
3 out how to balance that so there's more parity so that
4 it makes sense for that operator. And also that there
5 is an advantage and a benefit for patients.

6 Also, as we continue to see the growth of
7 the program, the adult use, the medical program, I also
8 wanna address on the business side where we have in a
9 programmatic side, there is the -- there are new
10 opportunities for us to recalibrate some of -- some of
11 the -- the entities that are participating in the
12 program as producers, as cultivators, as retailers.
13 There is a -- a new category that is not being
14 captured. And this -- this is a brand. And I'm
15 speaking because I am a brand. I have a brand called
16 Black Buddha.

17 THE SECRETARY: 30 seconds.

18 MS. MCCARTHY: We're in 125 store --
19 stores here in New Jersey. We need to capture what
20 brands are in the stores. Are they servicing medical
21 patients? How are they relating to the retailer? And
22 I really encourage the -- the commission to really look
23 at how do we interact with those brands, those third
24 party entities that are servicing the communities here
25 in New Jersey.

1 Thank you for your -- my time and thank
2 you for your time. I'm sorry.

3 THE SECRETARY: Thank you, Dr. Roz.

4 The next person on the list is Gaetano
5 Lardieri, last four is 9164. Gaetano Lardieri.

6 All right. I don't see that person.

7 The next person on the list is Andrea
8 Raible, last four is 2164. Okay. I see you Andrea.
9 Andrea, you have the floor.

10 MS. ANDREA RAIBLE: Hello, my name is
11 Andrea Raible.

12 I'd like to start by thanking the previous
13 speakers for actually speaking up for patient needs in
14 this market. It's really reassuring as a patient to
15 hear that the industry does care and that they're
16 looking for ways to support us too. I agree with
17 basically everything they both said, and I just had to
18 take a minute to say thank you.

19 What I'm really here to talk about today
20 is more in regards to last week's meeting. We need to
21 talk about transparency in the market. As a consumer
22 right now, when I walk into a dispensary, there is no
23 way for me to differentiate between a compliant product
24 and a -- a product that was illegally grown and not
25 properly tested by a New Jersey licensed testing

1 facility.

2 New Jersey consumers are paying some of
3 the highest prices in the country for gray market
4 products which were not grown or tested with any real
5 oversight. This industry -- this -- this was
6 essentially an industry bailout from consumer pockets
7 and we need to take action to prevent this from
8 happening again.

9 Right now, consumers are paying for broken
10 promises and the illusion of safety.

11 In my last testimony, I expressed that I
12 feel the state made the right decision to release the
13 illegally grown products because they were deemed as
14 safe as anything else on the market, but I should also
15 be clear, I think that is an incredibly low bar. I do
16 not think your market is inherently safe, and I do not
17 think your enforcement actions are adequate to
18 encourage compliance.

19 This is the second time we have seen
20 grossly negligent behavior by labs downplayed to a slap
21 on the wrist.

22 Not only is crossing state lines with
23 cannabis a crime, but that means those products have
24 not been tested to compliance and are still on shelves.

25 There is a lack of adequate oversight and

1 a lack of protections in place to prevent future bad
2 actors from running rampant in your market. The bill
3 A1291 can help be that defense, but you don't actually
4 have to wait until that bill passes to start improving
5 the market. A public COA database, stronger
6 whistleblower pathways, better data management.

7 We need to take steps forward because our
8 market is vulnerable. It's not just the businesses
9 that are vulnerable, it's not just the patients that
10 are vulnerable.

11 As you heard the other speakers say,
12 without adequate structure, we don't really have a
13 program. We need to do better as a state and we have
14 the opportunity to do better. I understand these are
15 very difficult problems, but they can't continually be
16 swept under the rug.

17 THE SECRETARY: 20 seconds.

18 MS. RAIBLE: I will just save my time then
19 and say thank you and I look forward to seeing what we
20 can do to improve things in the future.

21 THE SECRETARY: Thank you, Andrea.

22 I'm just going to go over the list for
23 those that didn't get a chance that registered. Chief
24 Vincent Mann, last four is 0023. I see you, Chief
25 Vincent.

1 MR. VINCENT MANN: Yeah.

2 THE SECRETARY: You have the floor.

3 MR. MANN: Yes, thank you.

4 THE SECRETARY: Yes.

5 MR. MANN: My name is Chief Vincent Mann.
6 I'm the Chief of Ramapough Lenape Nation. I'm also
7 hemp farmer. And I wanna reiterate, you know, what TJ
8 from Grow Works was saying in regards to us hemp
9 producers in the state and also in regards to the
10 cannabis -- recreational cannabis market, you know,
11 being able to bring in hemp derived products to even if
12 they're going to add it in as a -- you know, as a part
13 of what they're doing, they still need to have a -- a
14 license for hemp.

15 We've been through this and over this for
16 the last couple of years and we still find ourselves in
17 the same situation. You know, we hear about what's
18 happening in the gray market like the last person
19 commented on.

20 I'm a resident of Andover, New Jersey,
21 where we had what amounts to an illegal marijuana grow
22 of 40 acres. And I have a lot -- a lot of questions in
23 regards to that because you know, here we are allowing
24 for illegal marijuana grow to be put into this market.

25 And it's not just about health and safety,

1 it also goes beyond that. You know, did the town
2 receive, you know, two percent tax on 30,000 pounds of
3 illegally grown material, you know? Is the residents -
4 - are the residents of the township of Andover, New
5 Jersey, going to be, you know, hit with elevated taxes,
6 property tax to reclaim some of that money that they
7 should have to give back?

8 This isn't something that should just be
9 swept under the rug. This is something that should be
10 adjudicated. It's something that should be made very
11 public because we are sitting here all trying to do the
12 right thing. We're the ones that are sitting here
13 trying to represent ourselves because we have no
14 representation in regards to the hemp and how that
15 correlates to the CRC market. We're always the ones
16 that are left on the outside of this game. And here
17 you have somebody who has -- has a -- a license for a
18 micro grow for 2,500 square feet and they grew on 1.7
19 million square feet. That is absolutely absurd to just
20 allow for that to be swept under a rug, you know. The
21 videos are out there showing the whole entire grow.
22 The town has a requirement to -- you know, to verify,
23 you know, that there is this -- this facility here in
24 Andover has been licensed by the CRC. There's just a
25 complete and utter failure of the system. And --

1 THE SECRETARY: Chief, just wrap up your
2 comments.

3 MR. MANN: Excuse me?

4 THE SECRETARY: Just wrap up your comments
5 whenever -- the time --

6 MR. MANN: Sure.

7 THE SECRETARY: Yeah.

8 MR. MANN: I appreciate you, Daniel.

9 THE SECRETARY: Yeah.

10 MR. MANN: And so, you know, we want
11 transparency. There needs to be transparency.

12 This is a conversation that is gonna --
13 gonna continue to go on and I hope that the CRC reaches
14 out to me. They have my -- my number and my e-mail.

15 Thank you today for giving me my
16 opportunity to speak. Thank you.

17 THE SECRETARY: Thank you, Chief Vincent.

18 The next person on the list, Sam Reichbart
19 (inaudible). Sam Reichbart, last four of the telephone
20 number is 3654. I don't see that person.

21 The next person is Damien Rodgers, last
22 four of the telephone number is 0631. All right. I --
23 I think I see you, Damien.

24 MR. DAMIEN RODGERS: Hello.

25 THE SECRETARY: Damien?

1 MR. RODGERS: Yes, hello.

2 THE SECRETARY: Yes, you have the floor,
3 Damien.

4 MR. RODGERS: I just have a couple simple
5 questions. As a victim of a cannabis war, I'm curious
6 if the illegal grow is gonna be handled as if it was a
7 non-licensed holder and will they be prosecuted? And
8 as to the interstate drug trafficking handled by a
9 licensed lab, will that be prosecuted as if they didn't
10 have a license? And that's it.

11 THE SECRETARY: Thank you so much, Damien.

12 The next person on the list is Gaetano
13 Lardieri, last four of the telephone number is 9164.
14 Gaetano Lardieri. I don't see that person.

15 Vice Chairwoman Nash, this will conclude
16 the registered speakers we have for today's public
17 meeting.

18 CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Said. And thank
19 you to the registered speakers who signed up to speak
20 and provided very meaningful commentary.

21 With that, I move to adjourn. Is there a
22 second?

23 MS. MAPP: Second.

24 CHAIR: Seconded by Commissioner Mapp.

25 Is there any discussion on this motion to

1 adjourn? Hearing none, all those in favor of
2 adjourning say aye?

3 MS. MAPP: Aye.

4 CHAIR: Aye.

5 MR. LAUFER: Aye.

6 CHAIR: All those opposed say nay?

7 Any abstentions? Hearing none, the motion
8 passes.

9 The time is 12:24 and we are adjourned.

10 Thank you everyone.

11 MR. RODGERS: Great work, Krista.

12 CHAIR: Have a wonderful weekend. Thank
13 you.

14 MS. MAPP: Thank you. Take care.

15 MR. RODGERS: Great work.

16 THE SECRETARY: Thanks everyone.

17 (Meeting concluded)

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