

1 NEW JERSEY CANNABIS REGULATORY COMMISSION
2 PUBLIC REMOTE MEETING

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8 DATE: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2023
9 COMMENCING AT 10:00 AM

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1 BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:
2
3 DIANNA HOUENOU, Chair
4 SAMUEL DELGADO, Vice Chair
5 DANIEL SAID, Board Secretary
6 KRISTA NASH, Commissioner
7 CHARLES BARKER, Commissioner
8 CHRISTOPHER RIGGS, Chief Counsel
9 WESLEY MCWHITE. Director of Diversity and Inclusion
10 DANIEL SAID, Board Secretary
11 JEFF BROWN, Executive Director

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1 A P P E A R A N C E S:

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3 AL JENKINS

4 CHANDLER PARSONS, Rocket Budz

5 CHEREESE TULINO

6 CHRIS CARUSO, Dank Poet Dispensary

7 CHRIS WOOD

8 CHRISTOPHER APONTE, AC LEEF LLC

9 CHUCKY NENE

10 CYNTHIA VASQUEZ, Cloud Nine Dispensary

11 DAVID FEDER, Weed Law

12 DERECE WARD

13 ELIZABETH CICCONE, 3 Buds Holding Company LLC

14 GABRIELLA WILDAY, Molly Ann Farms

15 GAETANO LARDIERI, Future Entheogenic Medicines

16 GIAN LOMBARDI, Molly Ann Farms

17 JUSTIN CROSGILE, Treeotics

18 MAHMOUD ABDUL-RAUF, Flower Medz

19 MICHAEL CICCONE, 3 Buds Holding Company LLC

20 MICHAEL EDELSTEIN

21 SCHERIL MURRAY POWELL, ESQ

22 SEAN M BROWN, MPA

23 TAHRA DACTYL, Canna Cloud

24 TAMEEKA MASON, Zen Franklin LLC

25

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: We welcome back
2 everyone. The time is 2:22, and we will resume the
3 public portion of this meeting now that the executive
4 session has ended, so thank you for your patience. Mr.
5 Said, can you please announce the next agenda item.

6 THE SECRETARY: Next up on the agenda is
7 approving the minutes of both the commissions open and
8 executive sessions held on July 18th and August 18th.
9 The minutes have been shared with -- with the members
10 of the Commission prior to this meeting.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. If there are
12 no changes or, or corrections needed to the minutes,
13 I'll ask for a motion to adopt the meeting minutes for
14 July 18th and August 18th.

15 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Madam Chair, I move
16 that we adopt the meeting minutes of July 18th and
17 August.

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: Moved by Commissioner
19 Barker, is there a second?

20 MS. NASH: I Second.

21 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Go ahead.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Commissioner
23 Nash. Is there any discussion on this motion? Hearing
24 no discussion, all those in favor say, "Aye."

25 MS. NASH: Aye.

1 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

2 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Aye.

3 MS. NASH: Aye.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: All those opposed say,
5 "Nay." Any abstentions? The motion passes.

6 THE SECRETARY: Next on the agenda is the
7 Chair's report.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. So I've -- I
9 have a few items that I want to -- that I want to cover
10 for the today's Chair's report.

11 First, earlier this year I shared that the
12 Commission would be developing rules to expand the
13 types of edible products that are available on -- in
14 the market and so I'm happy to share that that moment
15 has finally come. As noted on our agenda, the board
16 will consider proposed rules that would authorize
17 additional forms of edible products. The proposed
18 rules would only apply to the adult use recreational
19 market. However, today the board is also considering
20 changes to the medicinal cannabis market to make more
21 edible products available for our registered patients
22 as well in furtherance of the commission's commitment
23 to medical patients. So -- and the staff will present
24 further detail on the adult use decisions or adult use
25 actions that are under considerations as well as

1 potential changes to the medicinal market for edible
2 products.

3 Next, I want to remind everyone to submit
4 comments on our proposed rules for clinical
5 registrants. The public comment period ends on Friday,
6 October 6th. If you go to our website nj.gov/cannabis,
7 go to the resources tab and click on cannabis statutes
8 and rules, you are -- you will be able to see the
9 proposed rule and provide written comments to the
10 commission. So we are still collecting comments and
11 welcome your thoughts in shaping what our clinical
12 registrant program will look like for the medicinal
13 industry.

14 Next, I want to note that we have
15 applications opening soon for new licenses at the end
16 of September. The new classes of wholesaler,
17 distributors and delivery services will offer more
18 vertical integration. So if you are interested don't
19 forget to submit an application for each license
20 sought.

21 September 27th at 9:00 a.m. applications
22 will be accepted from social equity businesses only and
23 then on December 27th, diversely owned businesses can
24 also start to submit their applications and on March
25 27th all other applicants can begin submitting

1 applications as well. And I'm not sure if Director
2 Brown will provide more details in his remarks later
3 but the CRC will be holding a webinar on September 14th
4 with important information for applicants. For details
5 and to join the conversation, go to our website
6 nj.gov/cannabis. Well, back up to that (inaudible)
7 resources tab and click on webinars.

8 Now, as Director Brown and staff
9 leadership will report later today, we are meeting our
10 goals and our benchmarks in our application processes.
11 And I want to note that while applicants are
12 encountering challenges on the road to becoming
13 operational in the cannabis -- to become an operational
14 cannabis business, some of those challenges are rooted
15 in state law. Additionally, the greatest challenges
16 faced by applicants are the same ones faced by owners
17 of any kind of business. Accessing capital and getting
18 a location.

19 Now, despite the picture painted by some
20 recent reporting, people who are actively engaged and
21 following the commission's work already know what is
22 and what isn't, and the NJCRC's purview. They also
23 know what this NJCRC is doing to encourage people to
24 participate in the regulated market. Governor Murphy
25 and his administration have championed efforts to

1 prioritize equity and diligent oversight of the
2 cannabis industry. For example, the Murphy
3 administration created a first of its kind financing
4 program to give state (phonetic) dollars to business
5 owners through the NJ Economic Development Authority.
6 Is developing comprehensive mentoring and technical
7 assistance programs through the business action center.
8 And we made it easier than ever to submit an
9 application for a cannabis business license through the
10 commission's low fees and open non-competitive process.

11 When we look at all we've accomplished
12 from launching a new agency to adopting regulations and
13 starting a new industry, the CRC is the first agency to
14 accomplish so much in so little time. So while it may
15 be easy to sit back and criticize the absence of more
16 operational businesses, I encourage stakeholders to be
17 active participants in removing the barriers that are
18 holding the industry back.

19 Engage with law makers and local
20 officials about what changes you want to see in the
21 law, help applicants be prepared for business
22 ownership, connect applicants to financing options that
23 you know are available, work with city officials to
24 address concerns with unlicensed, unregulated
25 businesses, and make prices affordable and welcoming

1 for patients and consumers.

2 Now, to our applicants there is work for
3 some of you to do as well. The Commission currently
4 has a lot of inactive applications just sitting in the
5 application portal and unable to advance to the
6 approval stage because the businesses aren't responding
7 to the NJCRC staff when they try to reach out to fix
8 deficiencies in their application. So please, ensure
9 that your contact information is up to date and
10 correctly listed in your application, check your spam
11 folders, check your voice mail and contact the office
12 of diversity and inclusion, the office of licensing or
13 your assigned investigator if you have questions about
14 how to fix a deficiency in your application.

15 The NJCRC and the broader (phonetic) at
16 Murphy administration continues to offer support for
17 our emerging cannabis industry. We invite everyone to
18 take advantage of those offers or where possible use
19 your talents to create other resources to help cannabis
20 businesses. New Jersey's regulated cannabis market is
21 on the road to be robust and inclusive but we can only
22 get there if both government and the private sector
23 work together to support our cannabis entrepreneurs and
24 the Garden State. That is all I have for today's
25 Chair's report.

1 THE SECRETARY: Next on the agenda is the
2 executive director's report.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Director Brown, you have
4 the floor.

5 MR. BROWN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll
6 try to keep -- this is a long report but I'll try to
7 keep it as brief as possible and I'm gonna be joined by
8 Director McWhite, director of our office of Diversity
9 and Inclusion. First slide, please.

10 So great news, there's now more than 45
11 retailers open serving adult use customers throughout
12 the state, 47 to be exact. Congratulations to our new
13 operators through (inaudible) and there's a list here,
14 Unity Rd., Puffin, Elevated by the CannaBoss Lady and
15 A21 Wellness and then Aunt Mary's in Flemington.

16 I did also want to acknowledge one of our
17 stand-alone adult use for only retailers -- Union
18 Shelf, they tragically lost their founder in a -- in a
19 car accident, so thoughts go out to the team there and
20 what they are going through but thanks to the ongoing
21 commitment to New Jersey's Market.

22 Next, I'm gonna talk through pricing. We
23 have an update on where prices stand in this market and
24 as our Chair mentioned we would still like prices to
25 come down but I have figures to report and we're seeing

1 action there. So what is on the screen is a slide
2 detailing the average price of whole flower in New
3 Jersey's cannabis market, the price per ounce. That is
4 -- the year-to-date price per ounce is \$373. Next
5 slide, please. And actually, there's been -- as there
6 on this slide, in this year alone we've seen 6.43
7 percent reduction in price from \$391 per ounce in
8 January to \$366 per ounce currently.

9 Next slide, please. In the medicinal
10 market, prices are even lower. Currently our year-to-
11 date average is \$323 per ounce, and the July average
12 was \$313 per ounce, so we've also seen a six percent
13 reduction in price. For medicinal flower it is
14 consistently priced lower than adult use but it is
15 still -- it is so high. I do wanna note for new
16 markets this is -- this is good news. A new market
17 like New Jersey -- by contrast when Massachusetts was
18 two years into legalization their average price was
19 \$400 per ounce, we're below that already at \$373 per
20 ounce for adult use and \$323 per ounce for medicinal.

21 Next slide, please. And this just shows
22 the decline. Next slide. Looking at pre-rolls, prices
23 are more consistent there currently at about \$19 per
24 pre-roll. Next -- next slide. Prices are lower in
25 medicinal cannabis at \$18.99. Next slide. Shake -

1 continued Shake and Trim continue to be very low priced
2 at \$8.25 per gram.

3 Next Slide, please. And those are --
4 those prices are even lower in the medicinal market.
5 Next slide. We haven't seen the same reduction in
6 price related to big cartridges. Those have stayed
7 pretty consistent and actually in July there was a 3
8 percent price increase, you can see these prices
9 fluctuate. I would have guess that the 3 percent price
10 increase in July may have been related to July 10th,
11 which is a day that cannabis consumers enjoy
12 concentrates like big cartridges and otherwise.

13 Next slide, please. Prices are lower on
14 those products in the medicinal market and at about \$45
15 a piece. Next slide, please. Looking at concentrates,
16 we have seen a 16 percent reduction in recreation -- in
17 the recreational market in this year alone dropping
18 from -- I think about \$60 per gram to \$50 -- just under
19 \$50 per gram.

20 In the medicinal market, it's -- there's
21 been a 12 percent price production for concentrates
22 coming down from about \$50 to just over \$43. And for
23 anyone watching the slides will be available on our --
24 on our website after this.

25 Looking at edibles, they've stayed pretty

1 consistent, just a 0.8 percent reduction in
2 recreational and in medicinal -- next slide, please. A
3 17 percent reduction, so we are seeing lower prices in
4 medicinal for edibles. And next slide on the pricing.
5 So one thing I did wanna highlight is that when we look
6 at revenue, it's obviously determined by two things.
7 Number one, volume of sales per the prices being
8 charged.

9 So while year to date there's been 25
10 percent increase in revenue growth -- sales revenue in
11 the market. There's actually been a 34 percent
12 increase in purchases, so the actual volume of products
13 being purchased has increased by about 35 percent while
14 the overall revenue has only increased by 25 percent,
15 that's reflective of prices coming down.

16 Again, this will be available on our
17 website and we do have the public public notice for the
18 social equity excise fee, which will be based on the
19 average retail price of whole cannabis flower.

20 Next, I'm gonna give a very brief
21 licensing update before I kick it over to Director
22 McWhite. So this is where we stand. We've approved
23 1,200 conditionals, 135 conversions to annuals, 97
24 annual licenses and over 55 expanded ATC's. In total
25 287 operating licenses have been awarded or issued.

1 Next slide, please. Our office is moving
2 through applications. There is 167 in the Office of
3 Licensing most of those are new. 140 applications in
4 the Office of Compliance and Investigations, most of
5 those are new as well. I expect after October,
6 anything that can be moved forward after the
7 investigation stage will have. And additionally, now
8 the grand total for conditional convergence has risen
9 to 358, so we are seeing those conditional licenses
10 applied to convert to annual.

11 Next slide, and to lead into Director
12 McWhite, good news to reports. Our priority process is
13 working and we're -- have good statistics related to
14 social equity businesses, diversity among majority
15 owners and social equity businesses specifically with
16 past marijuana convictions. So I'm going to turn it
17 over to Director McWhite to start here and probably
18 this slide and move through the presentation.

19 MR. MCWHITE: Sure. Thank you, Executive
20 Director Brown. (Inaudible) Chairman, it's a
21 Chairwoman we knew. And to Vice Chair and members of
22 the Commission, Commissioner Nash and Commissioner
23 Barker. Just really excited again to be with you
24 today, members of the public as well.

25 Just right off the top of social equity

1 businesses overall of our annual awardees end up at 21
2 percent of our annual awardees. Majority owners with
3 past marijuana convictions 16 percent of all our
4 awardees so far. 17.7 percent of majority owners are
5 black owned, 21 percent are Asian owned and those are
6 both higher than the census business ownership of all
7 businesses in New Jersey and also higher than
8 population percentages. And Latino, Hispanic ownership
9 is consistent with census for all businesses. I'm
10 ready to dive into reason. So as the Commission awards
11 more annual licenses, we maintain a strong and
12 diversely -- and inclusive representation on most
13 awardees.

14 So of the 231 annual licenses that we have
15 awarded, 49 or 21 percent out of those 231 annual
16 license awardees are social equity businesses and those
17 include past marijuana -- marijuana convictions or
18 folks who have lived at (inaudible) for 5 of the last
19 10 years. At 157 or 68 percent of the 231 annual
20 licenses awarded by this Commission so far are
21 diversely owned, while 14 hold designations in both.
22 So we continue to encourage current and future
23 applicants to always apply as their highest priority
24 and individuals are doing just that.

25 So we thought it important to show the

1 percentages of the rates of submission versus the rates
2 of approval for both conditional submissions to
3 conditional approvals then annual submission to annual
4 approvals. As you can see there's very little
5 percentage gap on the number of folks that are
6 resubmitting to the number of -- percentage number of
7 folks that are being approved. And so again it
8 reiterates or solidifies that our application process
9 prioritizes social equity as we all know and diversely
10 owned businesses and as you can see applicants from
11 these key priority groups or populations are making it
12 through the process and no one is being left behind and
13 we're committed to that.

14 Then secondly, we're looking at the number
15 of personal of interest, so that key demographic groups
16 are applying and are being approved at a rate similar
17 to their submission. It's always important and
18 important to us to share state wide demographics of
19 majority ownerships since annuals and conditional --
20 conditional to annuals -- the annual conversions. So
21 out of 231 annuals conversions, annual awardees, 81 are
22 majority white-owned, 49 majority Asian owned, 41 are
23 majority black-owned, 22 are majority Latino owned and
24 19 there is no -- no majority, 18 are other or not
25 listed and 1 American Indian or Alaskan native. And so

1 it's 35 percent -- a little over 35 percent of our
2 awardees have gone to majority white-owned, 21 -- over
3 21 percent have gone to majority Asian-owned and 7 --
4 over 17 percent have gone to black African American and
5 over 9 have gone to Latinos.

6 And so we wanted to -- and for comparison
7 sakes, are shown results of the census for all New
8 Jersey business community. So we compare this to our
9 awardees so far, you will notice that 8 percent of all
10 businesses in the state of New Jersey are black-owned.
11 However, 17 percent of our annual licenses are majority
12 black-owned. And so we're also not just beating census
13 track business information for the State, we're also
14 beating population numbers with just above 15 percent
15 of New Jersey population are black or African American
16 -- African American. 10 percent of all businesses in
17 the state are Asian owned. However, 21 percent of New
18 Jersey's CRC's 231 annual licenses are Asian-owned.

19 So we're not only in this category beating
20 population numbers we're also beating the statistic for
21 Asian business ownership across the board in the state.
22 Just further evidencing that we're already showing
23 strong signs of setting up the market that Chairwoman
24 Houenou always likes to mention as a goal that looks
25 just like New Jersey. And so while we still have work

1 to do -- (inaudible) still have work to do, we are
2 consistent with population numbers in business
3 ownership numbers with Latino and American Indian,
4 Alaskan Native percentages, those are more consistent.

5 Overall, the business ownership and
6 population -- but we don't wanna be just consistent
7 here we also want to be better and see better in the
8 cannabis industry for these populations as well.

9 So we wanted to -- also again highlight
10 social equity businesses. So out of the -- all of our
11 conditionals, conversions annuals and annuals of 355 of
12 those are social equity adaptations to -- to mention
13 here that we're seeing far more social equity
14 businesses convert from conditional then come and rise
15 annuals and we're really excited to see what the
16 exclusive period -- the exclusivity period is going to
17 yield for our social equity businesses as well.

18 Important to also show the majority
19 ownership with previous marijuana convictions, so out
20 of the 355 approved conditionals, conversions to
21 annuals and annuals through our social equity, a good
22 number of them -- a majority of them, 259 had past
23 marijuana convictions. And majority of our social
24 equity approvals have had -- because of majority of our
25 social equity approvals have passed marijuana

1 convictions of which means -- this just means that we
2 are reaching those most harmed and impacted by the war
3 on drugs. But again, this is just the beginning and we
4 welcome participation from individuals who have
5 previous marijuana convictions to be more participants
6 in this industry at ownership level as well.

7 We continue to monitor not just
8 demographic diversity but also regional diversity as
9 well. So to have a strong market you need plenty of
10 access points and we're excited to point out that this
11 Commission has awarded annuals in 20 of the New Jerseys
12 21 counties with Burlington, Atlantic and Union County
13 leading here, just working more awardee by
14 distribution. And then for conversion to annual --
15 leading counties for conversions to annuals are
16 Atlantic, Essex and Burlington. Particularly proud of
17 the work leaders in municipalities in these counties
18 are doing.

19 They set up social equitable market
20 places at the local level and the role that they played
21 so far to keeping fees low and allowing businesses in.
22 And just a reminder to this board and to the public
23 that we're in constant conversations with
24 municipalities to lower as many of those obstacles to
25 entry as possible for applicants, particularly small

1 businesses and supporting municipal leaders as a go to
2 resource for those that have not just yet opted in.

3 So our legislative licenses issue
4 benchmarks. There are four and all four are being met
5 and surpassed. That is the benchmark for micro
6 businesses, conditional businesses, minority businesses
7 and women and disabled veteran owned businesses. As
8 you can see here, legislative benchmark is to see no
9 less of the 35 percent of our licenses issued to
10 conditional licenses. We are -- we award 93 percent of
11 our licenses which shows a high demand of this lower
12 barrier license that the Commission has set up, with 93
13 percent of our licenses coming in at conditional
14 exceeding that benchmark by over 58 percent.

15 Micro businesses, our benchmark here is 25
16 percent. We've awarded 36 percent of our licenses to
17 micro businesses exceeding this benchmark by 11
18 percent. And my favorites are minority owned, women
19 and disabled veteran owned, benchmark is 15 percent.
20 We have it memorized, the office of diversity and
21 inclusion for all of our presentations, and we are very
22 happy and excited to report that we are exceeding both
23 of those benchmarks by over 30 percent, with 47 percent
24 of our licenses issued to certify minority owned
25 businesses and 46 percent of our licenses issued to

1 women and disabled veteran owned business. Showing us
2 that we are -- our legislative benchmarks are being met
3 and surpassed by more than 100 percent.

4 I'm really, really proud of the work and
5 the effort that these business owners and applicants
6 have put in to get to this point and then doing
7 everything again to provide the necessary resources to
8 get them operational, but a particular shout out for
9 the women of New Jersey who continue to dominate this
10 industry. I'm really excited about seeing what that
11 looks like in the future.

12 And lastly, we have been reporting on new
13 -- new licenses but we thought it important to make
14 this distinction in diversity when including expanded
15 ATC's. So on the left column you'll see a break, these
16 are new AU licenses and their certifications, then in
17 the blue are ATC's and so then when we look at the
18 percentage of new -- new adult use licenses matched up
19 with whether they're minority business enterprises,
20 women business enterprises, minority and women business
21 enterprises -- enterprises, we're already -- as we
22 stated earlier blowing that benchmark out of the water
23 but we are dramatically beating those singularly. But
24 when accounting for ATC's were not nearly as diverse,
25 we are still outpacing those legislative benchmarks.

1 And so that is all I have, I'll turn it back over to
2 the Chair, anyone has any questions?

3 MR. BROWN: Just -- there's one more slide
4 in there --

5 MR. MCWHITE: Okay.

6 MR. BROWN: Yes. Thank you. Thank you,
7 (inaudible) Director McWhite. Just to note that today
8 there's 51 conditional applications, 21 -- 23
9 conditional annual conversions and 15 annual
10 applications. So thank you, Director McWhite.
11 Excellent report and great to see progress being made -
12 - progress in this particular 2019 RFA award winner
13 start to open up that the ATC co-workers is getting
14 more diversity as well. So thank you and back to you
15 Madam Chair.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Director
17 Brown. Thank you, Director McWhite. And stellar work
18 by CRC staff in getting this granular level of data and
19 -- and being able to turn it into something digestible
20 and meaningful for not just the board but for members
21 of the public as well. So kudos to Director Brown,
22 your team for getting all of this data analyzed and --
23 and provided for dissemination and -- and, and
24 transparency.

25 MR. MCWHITE: Chairwoman.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

2 MR. MCWHITE: We provided the full
3 executive director's report, will be available in our
4 website soon after this meeting.

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: Perfect. Thank you so
6 much. This information will be available on our
7 website and I believe that is also under our resources
8 tab, under Reports. So if you haven't noticed, the
9 resources tab is your friend and is your source of
10 information that will keep you informed and up to date.
11 Any questions from the board on the executive
12 director's report?

13 COMMISSIONER BARKER: I have no question, a
14 couple of comments.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Commissioner Barker.

16 COMMISSIONER BARKER: First and foremost, I
17 wanna thank Director Brown, Director McWhite, great
18 numbers and great progress. This is something we've
19 been asking about for a long time and so it's great to
20 see New Jersey progressing and moving forward and
21 adding on more diverse representation in our cannabis
22 industry.

23 I would only put out there for us to be
24 mindful. The impetus for legalizing with the
25 criminality that certain communities face and so -- and

1 I think the numbers maybe changed by 2023 but I think
2 the latest numbers I was looking at from very
3 institute, 42 percent of black people are in jail, even
4 though they make up 14 percent of the population. 61
5 percent of black people are in prison even though they
6 make up 14 percent of the population. And we can go on
7 for this Hispanic community as well and so I think --
8 and I know our staff is -- is committed to it.

9 I would just ask that we're mindful to
10 compare our progress, and I know now enough to - to --
11 to draw credit with questioning the legislative
12 benchmarks.

13 In my opinion, those don't go far enough
14 for the harms that we need to address and so if we can
15 just be mindful of those statistics, the prison
16 populations and see -- and do our best to just get it
17 as close as possible to that. I just wanted to put
18 that out there, but thank you.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Commissioner
20 Barker. I do want to acknowledge that -- yes, the
21 statistic -- the overall statistics and the racial
22 disparities in the criminal -- throughout the criminal
23 justice system are alarming. I myself having done
24 advocacy work and being involved in trying to address
25 and tackle those disparities and the collateral

1 consequences that follow from them.

2 I do acknowledge that the -- and I
3 recognize the importance of making sure that we're
4 providing opportunities to make people whole. I do
5 want to underscore though the difference between the
6 statistics that you shared, which are overall
7 incarceration statistics versus the statistics when it
8 comes to cannabis legalization. I just don't want
9 folks to misunderstand who is incarcerated and who, who
10 -- and for what offences.

11 So we're -- when we're talking about
12 overall jail and imprison -- imprisoned population
13 that's not you -- that's not just on cannabis -- for
14 cannabis related offenses, that maybe for other
15 offenses, but never the less we the Commission are
16 doing a lot of work to make sure that we aren't boxing
17 people in or rather boxing people out of the industry
18 just because of prior entanglement in the criminal
19 justice system.

20 So that is why when I was -- in a former
21 life I, I wrote part of what is now law to separate
22 those, those two things to make sure that we are -- we
23 the Commission are not arbitrarily using someone's
24 prior entanglement in the CJ system and keeping them
25 outside -- out of opportunities to provide for

1 themselves and provide for their families.

2 So I think those two things go hand in
3 hand and certainly as we continue to -- to work on
4 bridging the gap that may exist between some
5 communities and some individuals and the -- the CRC's
6 regulated market, I'm very heartened by the numbers
7 that we're seeing so far especially when we're looking
8 at those -- the representation from those social equity
9 businesses that or had convictions for prior marijuana
10 related offences.

11 I think that's critically important and
12 that speaks directly to that question that you're
13 talking about Commissioner Barker, about offering
14 equity -- equitable opportunities and offering
15 meaningful pathways so that we restore individuals and
16 give them -- make sure that they're represented in this
17 market. And so I think -- I appreciate you for -- for
18 bringing that -- those points to light and I think the
19 Commission's gonna continue doing what it needs to do
20 to make sure that overall those who are incarcerated or
21 formerly incarcerated know that they still got -- they
22 still have a place here in New Jersey's regulated
23 cannabis space.

24 Any other questions from the board or
25 comments with respect to the executive director's

1 report? All right. Hearing none, Mr. Said, we shall
2 move forward.

3 THE SECRETARY: Next item on the agenda
4 are publications to the New Jersey register.

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: Director Brown, I
6 believe you and -- and or your staff will be presenting
7 some summary remarks about the publications for the New
8 Jersey register?

9 MR. BROWN: Yes.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: So the floor is yours.

11 MR. BROWN: And very exciting, I have a
12 couple of policies up for consideration on -- on edible
13 products, so -- and we have a packed agenda so we're
14 gonna try to breeze through stuff as efficiently as
15 possible and I'm gonna pass it over the Chief Counsel
16 Chris Riggs to -- to cover this one.

17 MR. RIGGS: Thank you, Executive Director
18 Brown, Madam Chair and co-commissioners. We have for
19 today's rule proposals to expand edible products
20 (inaudible) please. That's gonna include chocolates,
21 gummies, baked foods, butters, jams, jellies and
22 single-serve beverages. Some of the key components of
23 this rule proposal and manage the rules is that the
24 products need to be shelf stable and none TCS, which
25 means (inaudible) controls. For safety -- items safety

1 they need to be shelf stable items. There's an
2 expansion of the ingredients that could be used to
3 manufacture these properties to include the ingredients
4 that are on the generally recognized as safe gross
5 (phonetic) Database -- FDA gross database to be used in
6 food.

7 There is requirements that the businesses
8 employees that manufacture these products are trained
9 in food safety and they follow the current regulations
10 regarding the manufacture of cannabis items, including
11 good manufacturing practices. Some of the products
12 that can be made -- that cannot be made under these --
13 these rules that are being proposed are you can't have
14 alcohol beverages goods with cannabis infused them, no
15 tobacco and nicotine.

16 You can't require the consumer to cook or
17 bake, take it home, cook or bake the product. You
18 cannot require storage in sterile conditions and it
19 cannot contain or be mixed in any controlled dangerous
20 substances.

21 Happy to have these provide regulatory
22 framework in place hopefully when we vote on it here
23 and it gets passed it'll be published in the register
24 October 16th and then after that date the 60-day
25 comment period opens and will close December 15th, and

1 then we go through the whole process of rule adoption
2 with the -- with the board. Thank you.

3 MR. BROWN: Back to you.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. So I want to
5 -- actually underscore I don't know if there were --
6 the microphone sounded like maybe it was having some
7 issues but especially on the public comment period if
8 you could -- Chief Counsel Riggs, underscore the -- the
9 dates for the public comment period, that would be
10 helpful. Thank you.

11 MR. RIGGS: Sure. So the rule proposal
12 will be published in the next available date which is
13 October 16, which then goes for the 60-day comment
14 period which will close on December 15th 2023.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Are there
16 any questions from the board with respect to the
17 proposed rule to expand ingestible products in the
18 adult use market? Hearing none, I will ask for a
19 motion in this matter.

20 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Madam Chair, I move
21 that we consider the expansion of edible products to
22 the proposed rule.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: Commissioner Barker, and
24 when you say consider are you moving to approve the
25 rule proposal?

1 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Absolutely.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you for that
3 clarification. So Commissioner Barker has moved to
4 approve the rule proposal regarding extension of
5 personal use cannabis products -- ingestible products,
6 is there a second?

7 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I second.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Vice Chair
9 Delgado. Is there any discussion on this motion?
10 Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call
11 the vote?

12 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

13 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

14 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

15 MS. NASH: Yes.

16 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

17 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

18 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Fervent yes.

20 THE SECRETARY: Regulation succeeded.

21 (Clapping)

22 THE SECRETARY: Next item on the agenda is
23 the social equity exercise fee for 2024.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Director
25 Brown, back over to you for summary remarks on the

1 adjusted social equity excise fee.

2 MR. BROWN: Yes, thank you, Madam Chair.
3 So as regarding earlier, the at -- year-to-date average
4 retail price of cannabis is \$373 per ounce that's down
5 from \$455 per ounce last year. So that corresponds
6 with the -- a reduction in the social equity exercise
7 fee. The rate for the social equity excise fee is set
8 in regulation as one third of one percent of the
9 average retail price.

10 So this is just simply acknowledging the
11 change and putting the public notice in the register
12 reflective of that change. So good news, prices are
13 coming down, the sieve comes down for now and -- yeah,
14 so this is recommended to -- to approve to put the
15 public notice in the (inaudible) sieve. So thank you,
16 Madam Chair.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Director
18 Brown. Are there any questions from the board for
19 Director Brown? All right. And Director -- as
20 Director Brown mentioned, this is -- this adjustment
21 would result in a slight decrease in the social equity
22 excise fee. Notwithstanding, I do think it's important
23 for the Board to be responsive to the market and the --
24 the -- apply the rate that is set via statute and as
25 Director Brown mentioned also in our regulations yearly

1 in a consistent manner.

2 So while I know it might have a -- a
3 negative impact on some of the -- the dollars that we
4 raise under the social equity exercise fee, I do think
5 it's important for us to be consistent and get in the
6 practice of -- of making this adjustment on a year to
7 year basis based on the price in the market. But the
8 good thing is that once we reach a certain benchmark we
9 can increase the fee back up, so that'll be -- that'll
10 be great. If there are no other questions or comments,
11 I will ask for a motion on this matter.

12 MS. NASH: Madam Chair, I move to approve
13 the motion for imposition of social equity excise fees
14 on Class 1 cannabis cultivator -- cultivators for the
15 2024 calendar year.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Moved by Commissioner
17 Nash, is there a second?

18 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Second.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Commissioner
20 Barker. Is there any discussion on this motion?
21 Hearing none, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

22 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

23 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

24 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

25 MS. NASH: Yes.

1 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

2 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

3 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

5 THE SECRETARY: The resolution passes.

6 Next item on the agenda are regulatory requirement
7 waivers.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. And here we
9 have a couple of waivers for consideration that -- one
10 of course including the medicinal cannabis market that
11 was referenced earlier. So Director Brown, I will pass
12 the floor to you.

13 MR. BROWN: Thank you, Madam Chair. And
14 I'll just cover brief overview and then if Chief
15 Counsel Riggs has anything to add he can -- he can jump
16 in. So the board has the authority to either by waiver
17 or board action approve new product types and
18 conditions. And so while the edible rule is making its
19 way through it's process which can take six months,
20 these waivers will allow for some immediate expansion
21 of edible products in both the medicinal market which
22 is critical as well as the adult use market.

23 So this will enable us to start approving
24 some products if -- if approved today, we can start
25 taking submissions next week. So there -- there are

1 three rules. One in medicinal cannabis rules NJAC
2 17:30A-10.7 processing and packaging marijuana and then
3 in recreational 17:30A-11.5 and 11.6. So Chief Counsel
4 Riggs anything to add on those?

5 MR. RIGGS: Only thing to add is that if
6 you have questions, please ask them when manufacturing
7 these products.

8 MR. BROWN: Yes. If waivers -- if
9 approved will be available on the commission's website,
10 available to -- to download and to -- and to read. So
11 thank you, they are both recommended for approval,
12 enthusiastically.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. And very
14 quickly, do -- as follow up question. Just want to
15 offer staff an opportunity to highlight some of the
16 important notes -- some of the important steps that
17 would need to be followed for these manufacturers
18 before they start pushing out these products.

19 MR. BROWN: Yeah, so all products that
20 need to be submitted to the -- to the CRC master
21 formulation record, SOP's essentially detailing how the
22 product is produced, related to these waivers if
23 they're approved. I suspect we'll get a notice out to
24 the industry next week detailing steps and timeline and
25 that sort of thing. So -- but follow similar product

1 approval process but this would enable us to approve or
2 at least receive more product submissions and a lot
3 more of them to be compliant with our rights.

4 MR. RIGGS: And in addition, you have
5 these FDA gross ingredients, the manufacturers and
6 employees need to be trained in food safety and ensure
7 they monitor that training situation and third to
8 secure the terms and conditions of both of these before
9 we approve the regulatory violation. Thank you, Madam
10 Chair.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much.
12 Any questions or comments from the board?

13 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Well, I just want to
14 complement Director Brown and Chief Counsel Riggs on
15 these recommendations. I think this is exactly what
16 the market needs to go forward. So thank you very much
17 and the rest of the staff also.

18 MR. BROWN: Thank you.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. With that --
20 with respect to -- I'll take these -- these waivers one
21 at a time. With respect to and NJAC 17:30A-10.7 for
22 the medicinal cannabis market, is there a motion?

23 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I move that we accept
24 these regulatory requirement waivers for processing and
25 packaging marijuana, prohibiting manufacture

1 authorization forms authorization and ingredients in
2 products.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Move by Vice Chair
4 Delgado. Thank you. Is there a second?

5 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Second.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Commissioner
7 Barker. Is there any discussion on this motion with
8 respect to the medical -- medical market? Hearing
9 none, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote as it
10 relates to the motion to accept the waiver in the
11 medical market?

12 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

13 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

14 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

15 MS. NASH: Yes.

16 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

17 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

18 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

20 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. And Director
22 Brown, do you have any additional notes for the second
23 waiver that is under consideration?

24 MR. BROWN: No. Well, I'll just say this
25 with -- all the -- even with these waivers all products

1 need to be child resistant packaging as (inaudible)
2 rule they have to have the warning labels, the
3 universal symbol. So none of that changes, all the
4 safety provisions are well in place to protect --
5 protect anyone from getting into these products that
6 they shouldn't otherwise do so.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you. So
8 now with respect to the adult use rules, I will ask for
9 a motion.

10 MS. NASH: Madam Chair, I move to approve
11 the resolution for waiver of NJAC 17:30-11.5C2 and NJAC
12 17:30-11.6B and NJAC 17:30-11.8C to allow Class 2
13 cannabis manufacturers to manufacture additional
14 ingestible forms of cannabis products.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Commissioner
16 Nash, is there a second?

17 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I second.

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Vice Chair
19 Delgado. Is there any discussion on this motion?
20 Hearing none, the only comment that I want to -- to add
21 is that the recommendation -- stat recommendations and
22 the boards seeming support for these waivers is relying
23 on businesses following the rules and conditions that
24 our Chief Counsel have outlined the other -- the
25 applicability of the other regulations that Director

1 Brown has outlined.

2 So I'm supportive of adopting this
3 waivers, however, if -- if needed, I'm willing to come
4 back to the table to modify or otherwise revisit the
5 waiver if our regulated businesses are not holding up -
6 - holding their end of the bargain and adhering to
7 these standards. So with that I will say, Mr. Said,
8 can you please call the vote?

9 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

10 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

11 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

12 MS. NASH: Yes.

13 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

14 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

15 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

17 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. Next
18 item on the agenda is the consideration of applications
19 for name changes.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Director Brown, I turn
21 the floor over to you to provide a summary of the
22 applications for permit and license changes that have
23 been received.

24 MR. BROWN: We have five name changes.
25 They've all submitted the relevant documentation and

1 are all recommended for approval. They're listed on
2 the -- on the slide here.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Are there
4 any questions from the board regarding the information
5 provided by Director Brown? Hearing no questions from
6 the board, I'll ask for a motion on this matter.

7 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Madam Chair, I move
8 that we approve the name change request.

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: Moved by Commissioner
10 Barker to approve the name change request. Is there a
11 second?

12 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I second.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Vice Chair
14 Delgado. Is there any discussion on this motion?
15 Hearing none, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

16 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

17 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

18 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

19 MS. NASH: Yes.

20 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

21 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

22 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

24 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. Next
25 item on the agenda is the consideration of applications

1 for location changes.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Director Brown, I will
3 pass the floor over to you.

4 MR. BROWN: Thank you. Madam Chair, we
5 have one location change application currently
6 operating business. MPX in Atlantic City seeks to move
7 essentially to a larger facility, a block away.
8 They've submitted everything required by rule and are
9 recommended for approval.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Are there
11 any questions or comments from the board regarding the
12 information provided? Hearing none, I'll ask for a
13 motion as -- on this matter.

14 MS. NASH: Madam Chair, I move to approve
15 the resolution of application to change locations for
16 MPX New Jersey LLC dispensary.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Moved by Commissioner
18 Nash. Is there a second?

19 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I second.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Vice Chair
21 Delgado. Is there any discussion on this motion?
22 Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call
23 the vote?

24 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

25 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Abstain.

1 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

2 MS. NASH: Yes.

3 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

4 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

5 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

7 THE SECRETARY: The resolution passes.

8 Next item for consideration is the consideration of
9 medicinal cannabis alternative treatment centers
10 requesting a satellite facility.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Director Brown, back to
12 you.

13 THE SECRETARY: Thank you, Madam Chair.
14 This issue also pertains to MPX -- some ATC's notably
15 the first 12 permitted in the medicinal program by
16 statute are authorized to have up to two satellite
17 locations. MPX has applied for a second satellite
18 location, this one to be located in Pennsauken, the
19 address is on the slide. They submitted four plans,
20 all that they need to submit for the regulatory
21 requirements and staff recommend this application for
22 approval.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Are there
24 any questions from -- questions, comments from the
25 Board? Hearing none, I will ask for a motion on this

1 matter.

2 MS. NASH: Madam Chair, I move to approve
3 the resolution for MPX New Jersey LLC to operate a
4 satellite dispensary location for medicinal cannabis.

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: Is there a second?

6 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I second.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Vice Chair
8 Delgado. Is there any discussion on this motion? Very
9 well, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote.

10 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

11 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Sustain.

12 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

13 MS. NASH: Yes.

14 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

15 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

16 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

18 THE SECRETARY: The resolution passes.

19 Next item for consideration is the adult use cannabis
20 conditional license applications.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Director Brown, I'll
22 turn it to you to discuss the process used for -- for
23 reviewing the applications submitted for a conditional
24 license.

25 MR. BROWN: Thank you, Chair Houenou. So

1 I'm gonna cover the application review process with
2 this cohort and then I'll just kind of reiterate it
3 with the next two cohorts as well. When we receive
4 applications, they are assigned a priority based on
5 what they qualify for whether it's social equity
6 business, diversity owned business, impacts owned
7 business, bonus points or just general applicants.
8 Also, whether they're a micro business or not. Their -
9 - that priority is verified, make sure they qualify for
10 that -- that priority designation. Staff then conduct
11 a completeness review, only applications that are
12 deemed complete, that have submitted everything that
13 they're supposed to move forward to scoring.

14 The applications are then scored. Only
15 applications that scored sufficiently high to move
16 forward do. Every application recommended today has
17 both been deemed complete and has scored sufficiently
18 high to be approved by the board.

19 For conditional conversions in annuals,
20 there's also a -- a qualification limitations,
21 financial management agreement review, which is much
22 more in depth, that's handled by our investigations
23 team. This includes everything from review of
24 limitations on ownership to management services
25 agreements, financial source agreements, as well as for

1 conditionals, conditional license holder qualification.

2 Finally for annuals and conversions to
3 annual, there's a criminal history background check and
4 a qualification review. Our staff then conducts
5 quality control and then we make a recommendation to
6 the board.

7 So we have 51 conditional licenses here
8 that have been deemed complete, have scored
9 sufficiently high to be approved by the board and are -
10 - are recommended for approval today.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you and do we
12 have --

13 MR. BROWN: Yes, the --

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: -- the names list.

15 Okay. Fantastic. So are names of the proposed
16 conditional licenses for approval are on the screen.
17 These are also listed on our website at
18 nj.gov/cannabis/meetings. On our meetings page if you
19 look at the agenda you will see several hyperlinks,
20 those hyperlinks will take you to the same list of --
21 of applications that are under consideration today.
22 With that, are there any questions or comments from the
23 board for Director Brown? Hearing none, I'll ask for a
24 motion on this matter as it pertains to conditional
25 license applications.

1 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Madam Chair, I move
2 that we approve the conditional license applications.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Moved by Commissioner
4 Barker, is there a second?

5 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I second.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Vice Chair
7 Delgado. Is there any discussion on this motion?
8 Hearing none, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote.

9 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

10 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

11 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

12 MS. NASH: Yes.

13 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

14 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

15 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

17 THE SECRETARY: The resolution passes.

18 Next item for consideration is the adult use cannabis
19 business conversion license applications.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. So I'll turn
21 it back over to you Director Brown.

22 MR. BROWN: There are 23 conversions to
23 annual applications up for consideration by the
24 Commission. All 23 are recommended for approval.
25 They've been -- their priority designation has been

1 verified and among this cohorts -- there's a -- cohort,
2 there's 8 social equity businesses, there's 13
3 diversely owned businesses and 1 impact owned business.
4 All of them have undergone completeness review, staff
5 have deemed them complete. All have undergone scoring.
6 They have all scored sufficiently high to be approved
7 by the Commission.

8 They have all undergone Qualification
9 Limitation and Financial Management Agreement review
10 and Qualification review and all 23 are recommended for
11 approval, we believe they're all qualified to hold
12 licenses and have met all the regulatory requirements
13 to -- to do so.

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Director
15 Brown. Are there any questions or comments from the
16 board?

17 MS. NASH: Uhm.

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: Commissioner Nash.

19 MS. NASH: Yes, Madam Chair, there is one
20 application that I would like to -- the board to
21 consider separately.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Which application
23 is that?

24 MS. NASH: That is Cannabis Club House.

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: And Commissioner Nash,

1 do you have the application number at hand?

2 MS. NASH: Let me find it. 2583, 2583.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: 2583 -- application
4 number 2583. And so Commissioner Nash, you are moving
5 that we consider this application separately?

6 MS. NASH: That's correct.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Is there a
8 second on this motion to consider application number
9 2583 separately? So we would remove -- so then we
10 would consider -- if approved, we would consider these
11 conditional to annual conversion applications in two
12 sets, one with the larger set of 22 applications, and
13 then consider separately application number 2583. Is
14 there a second on this motion?

15 COMMISSIONER BARKER: I Second.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Commissioner
17 Barker. Is there any discussion on this motion to --
18 to separate the -- this application and consider it
19 separately? All right. Hearing no discussion, Mr.
20 Said, on the motion to consider the application number
21 2583 separately from the remaining 22 conversion
22 applications, can you please call the vote?

23 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

24 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

25 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

1 MS. NASH: Yes.

2 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

3 VICE CHAIRPERSON: No.

4 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

6 THE SECRETARY: The resolution passes.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. So now that
8 that has been separated, we now turn to the group of --
9 the remaining group of 22 applications to convert from
10 -- from a conditional license to an annual license, is
11 there a motion on that matter?

12 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Madam Chair, I move
13 that we approve the remaining applications to convert
14 from conditional -- from conditional to annual.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Commissioner Barker has
16 moved to approve the remaining applications to convert
17 from conditional license to an annual, is there second?

18 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Second.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Vice Chair
20 Delgado. Is there any discussion on this motion?
21 Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call
22 the vote as it relates to the motion to approve the
23 remaining applications to convert from conditional
24 license to an annual license? So this would be the
25 group of 22 applications.

1 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

2 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

3 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

4 MS. NASH: Yes.

5 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

6 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

7 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

9 THE SECRETARY: The resolution passes.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: And so with that we now
11 turn back to application number 2583 for separate
12 consideration. Is there a motion as it relates to
13 application number 2583? Director Brown.

14 MR. BROWN: I just wanna -- thank you,
15 Madam Chair. I just wanted to state for the record
16 that this application followed the exact same process.
17 It's been investigated -- this one investigated twice,
18 I stand wholehearted by the recommendations made by
19 staff and it's recommended for approval today. Thank
20 you.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Any
22 questions from the board. If hearing no questions,
23 then is there a motion on this particular application
24 number 2583?

25 MS. NASH: Yes, madam Chair. I would like

1 to make a motion to reject the application. However,
2 provide an opportunity for applicant to cure with input
3 from the board on what it needs to see.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. So
5 Commissioner Nash has moved to reject the application
6 but provide an opportunity for the applicant to cure
7 the application and -- pardon me, I didn't get the last
8 --

9 MS. NASH: To provide some required
10 information that the board will provide to the
11 applicant.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So to provide
13 additional information at the request of the board?

14 MS. NASH: That's correct.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Is there a
16 second on this motion to reject the application?

17 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Seconded.

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Commissioner
19 Barker. Is there any discussion on this motion?

20 MS. NASH: Yes, Madam Chair, may I have
21 the floor?

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Commissioner Nash, you
23 have the floor.

24 MS. NASH: Every application that comes
25 through this Commission is given a thorough review to

1 ensure that every applicant receives a fair and
2 objective opportunity to participate in the growing
3 cannabis industry here in New Jersey. Men and women
4 from every background, from every corner of this state
5 have received their license to begin their cannabis
6 journey.

7 A critical part of this process is that
8 every applicant notwithstanding their background, race,
9 religion or gender. Every applicant must comply with
10 the very clear rules and regulations set forth in the
11 application process. To allow a deviation upends the
12 integrity of this process that has been created.
13 Allowing deviation creates different rules for
14 different people and that is unfair.

15 One such rule is NJAC 7. -- I'm sorry.
16 NJAC 17:30-7.7 and it is perhaps the most important.
17 It say that, "The statement attested to by the
18 applicant be consistent and truthful and that material
19 facts pertaining to qualification are revealed and that
20 the board is satisfied with those submissions." When
21 the applicant attests to contradictory statements or
22 misstatements, it calls into question the ferocity of
23 the application. In other words, it stands apart from
24 the hundreds of applications that do follow the rules
25 and procedures prescribed by this Commission.

1 In this application, I raised the
2 following concerns. Disclosure statements submitted as
3 part of the application was electronically signed by
4 the majority owner. However, evidence showed that the
5 disclosure did not come from the owner. When
6 questioned by the CRC investigators under oath
7 applicant admitted that she had given mission for
8 others to sign on her behalf because she was
9 unavailable.

10 However, the majority owner submitted a
11 notarized affidavit dated August 9th, just two weeks
12 prior to her meeting with CRC staff stating, "At no
13 time did anyone other than me sign any of the
14 affidavits or other documents filed in connection with
15 this application."

16 Notarized released authorizations
17 contained typed signatures with no electronic
18 identifiers and notary dates on other affidavits
19 predated the signature. I am a notary and these
20 examples I share are not authorized under law.
21 Additionally, the disclosure statement provided
22 contradicted previous information provided in their
23 application about ownership interest in other cannabis
24 businesses.

25 I want to be clear that my vote is based

1 solely on the substance of this application and nothing
2 more. The board graciously provided the applicant with
3 an opportunity to explain concerns raised by the board,
4 but her contradictory response revealed more false or
5 misleading information.

6 I have read the communications staff
7 received from this applicant and I wanna make this
8 clear. I am a woman who has struggled as a single mom,
9 working hard, going to school, raising a child, taking
10 care of my -- an elderly parent all by myself. And I
11 know first-hand that the struggles that women have
12 trying to succeed in business against all odds and to
13 suggest that inquiries and my vote is anything other
14 than a fair and objective review of this application
15 and the significant faults that I found there in is
16 quite frankly an insult to me and other women in this
17 cannabis industry.

18 So I'm not -- I'm not denying this
19 license, I am actually just giving this -- the
20 applicant an opportunity to come back to the table and
21 provide more clear and concise information so that they
22 can move forward. Madam Chair, I cede the floor back
23 to you.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Commissioner
25 Nash. Any other thoughts for discussions?

1 Commissioner Nash, I want to second your emphasis on
2 the -- your emphasis on the information being provided
3 in these application materials and that they be
4 provided fully and accurately.

5 Throughout our applications, throughout
6 the forms there're repeated notices to our applicants
7 that -- that state very clearly that any blank -- any
8 missing information could be deemed -- could result in
9 deeming the application incomplete or even being
10 denied. The Commission under its rules, under 17:30-
11 7.7 may verify the information contained in an
12 application by -- through a number of means, including
13 contacting the license application, conducting an
14 onsite assessment, requiring a face-to-face meeting or
15 requiring submission of additional material.

16 Here, the Commission staff did provide
17 further inquiry into the application as was requested
18 by the Board pursuant to concerns raised. So I thank
19 staff for their diligence and their time to follow up
20 on the Board's concerns. However, I have not been
21 satisfied by the material -- the information that the
22 applicant came back with upon further investigation.
23 So I am not comfortable for -- with this application
24 moving forward because it raises a serious concern for
25 me in the presentation of false or intentionally

1 misleading information in the application process under
2 rule 17:30-7.7.

3 As Commissioner Nash stated there have
4 been not one but numerous questionable, to put it
5 lightly, affidavits that have been signed I -- by my
6 count at least five and commissioner Nash's experience
7 as a notary I do take to heart because if we are not
8 consistent in making sure that people are providing
9 accurate information, properly attesting to documents
10 and consistent in what they are saying to the
11 Commission, that presents a problem.

12 Here the applicant was provided several
13 opportunities to state very clearly and truthfully the
14 circumstances of the application, and the details of
15 who would be involved in the operation of this business
16 and how they would be involved at every turn there seem
17 to be a different answer. And that is concerning to me
18 me, it's deeply concerning.

19 My priority is to make sure that the
20 cannabis regulatory Commission does it's work with
21 integrity and as Commissioner Nash articulated, part of
22 that work involves making sure that people follow the
23 instruction that they are given, clear instructions.
24 'Cause if you're not being truthful and straightforward
25 in the application material, what else are we going to

1 find.

2 So with that, are there any other
3 questions, comments for discussion on this motion to
4 reject and I will underscore for the public that the
5 distinction between a rejection and a denial here, I
6 don't think we really fully flashed that out just yet.
7 So under our rules, a denial is a final decision on an
8 application. However, rejection merely kicks the
9 application back to the applicant and as Commissioner
10 Nash stated while making this motion and if approved --
11 if this motion is approved rejecting the application
12 would send it back to the applicant to correct
13 documents that have been submitted to the commission
14 thus far to the satisfaction of the board and so the
15 board will follow up after the meeting for -- with
16 specified inquiries and directions on how to fix and
17 cure the application as requested by Commissioner Nash.
18 Sounds good. All right.

19 So if there is no further discussion, Mr.
20 Said, can you please call the vote on the motion to
21 reject application number 2583 but provide the
22 applicant an opportunity to cure the application and
23 provide additional information at the request of the
24 board?

25 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

1 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

2 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

3 MS. NASH: Yes.

4 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

5 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

6 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

8 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. Next
9 item for consideration is the adult use cannabis
10 business annual license application.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Director
12 Brown, I'll turn it back over to you.

13 MR. BROWN: Thank you, Madam Chair and I
14 would just ask for timely transmittal of those
15 conditions so that we can get them to the applicant
16 ASAP.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Absolutely.

18 MR. BROWN: So the -- up for
19 consideration, 15 annual licenses. Four cultivators,
20 three manufacturers, eight retailers. They all
21 followed the same process. They have -- their priors
22 have been verified, they've been deemed complete,
23 they've scored sufficiently high to be awarded
24 licenses, they've undergone review for qualification
25 limitations, financial management agreement review,

1 management agreement review. All are deemed --
2 recommended to be deemed qualified to hold licenses and
3 all are recommended for approval by the Commission.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Are there
5 any questions or comments from the Board regarding the
6 information provided -- regarding the information
7 provided by Director Brown? All right. Hearing none,
8 is there a motion on this matter?

9 MS. NASH: Madam Chair, I move to approve
10 the resolution for consideration of annual license
11 applications for Class 1 cultivator and Class 5
12 cannabis retailers.

13 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I second it, Madam
14 Chair.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Moved by Commissioner
16 Nash, seconded by Vice Chair Delgado. Is there any
17 discussion on this motion? Hearing no discussion, Mr.
18 Said, can you please call the vote?

19 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

20 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

21 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

22 MS. NASH: Yes.

23 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

24 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

2 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. Next
3 item for consideration are the expanded alternative
4 Treatment centers certifications.

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: Director Brown, I'll
6 pass the floor to you to provide some remarks.

7 THE SECRETARY: Thank you, Madam Chair.
8 There are five ATC's that have submitted certifications
9 to expand to recreational sales. They're RIPT, Brute's
10 Roots -- RIPT, Yuma Way, downtown FLWR, Eastern Green
11 for retail licenses and then Brute's Roots for
12 cultivation.

13 All of them have demonstrated that they
14 can continue to serve patient need once expanded. All
15 of them have submitted medicinal approval and the other
16 conditions required per the statute regulations
17 required to expand to recreational sales and all of
18 them are recommended for approval today.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any questions or
20 comments from the board?

21 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Are we doing this all
22 together or one at a time, individually?

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: We'll consider these
24 individually, one at a time.

25 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any other questions or
2 comments regarding the information provided by Director
3 Brown?

4 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Just a few comments,
5 Madam Chair. Just ask that the operators and
6 businesses that are proposed for expansion continue to
7 prioritize patients. And again, this was initially on
8 establishing the rules that medicinal ATC operators had
9 to stay in the marketplace for one year to evidence
10 their commitment to the patient and the medicinal
11 community. Definitely trying to understand the balance
12 between businesses trying to stay afloat and also still
13 serving patients in the cannabis community.

14 So I just ask that the commitment to
15 patients remain -- especially if you are an ATC looking
16 to expand. Thank you.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Commissioner
18 Barker. Any other comments or questions? All right.
19 We will dive right in. I believe first up we have
20 RIPT. On the application for RIPT to expand into the
21 adult use market, is there a motion?

22 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Madam Chairwoman, I
23 move to that we accept the certification for
24 alternative treatment center RIPT dispensary LLC to
25 expand operations to the adult personal use cannabis

1 market.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Moved by Vice Chair
3 Delgado, is there a second?

4 MS. NASH: Second.

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Commissioner
6 Nash. Is there any discussion on this motion? Hearing
7 none, Mr. Said, Can you please call the vote?

8 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

9 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

10 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

11 MS. NASH: Yes.

12 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

13 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

14 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

16 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Next, we
18 will vote on the Brute's Roots -- as it relates to
19 Brute's Roots. Request to expand into the adult use
20 market is there a motion?

21 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Madam Chairwoman, I
22 move that we accept the resolution certification for
23 alternative treatment Center Brute's Roots LLC to
24 expand operations to the adult personal cannabis
25 market.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Moved by Vice Chair
2 Delgado, is there a second?

3 MS. NASH: Second.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Commissioner
5 Nash. Is there any discussion on this motion as it
6 relates to Brute's Roots LLC? Hearing no discussion,
7 Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

8 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

9 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

10 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

11 MS. NASH: Yes.

12 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

13 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

14 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

16 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Now, is there a motion
18 due -- yes, is there a motion as it relates to downtown
19 FLWR?

20 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Madam Chairwoman, I
21 move that we accept the resolution to the certification
22 of alternative treatment center, downtown FLWR LLC to
23 expand operations to adult personal cannabis use
24 market.

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: Moved by Vice Chair

1 Delgado, is there a second?

2 MS. NASH: Second.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Commissioner
4 Nash, is there any discussion as it relates to downtown
5 FLWR? Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you please
6 call the vote?

7 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

8 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

9 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

10 MS. NASH: Yes.

11 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

12 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

13 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

15 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Now, is the motion as it
17 relates to Yuma Way?

18 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Madam Chairwoman, I
19 move that we accept the certification for alternative
20 treatment center for Yuma Way New Jersey LLC to extent
21 operations to adult personal use cannabis market.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Is there a second?

23 MS. NASH: Second.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Commissioner
25 Nash. Is there any discussion on the motion as it

1 relates to Yuma Way? Hearing the discussion, Mr. Said,
2 can you please call the vote?

3 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

4 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

5 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

6 MS. NASH: Yes.

7 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

8 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

9 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

11 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: And last but certainly

13 not least, as it relates to Eastern Green, do we have a

14 motion?

15 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Madam Chairwoman, I

16 give the floor to another -- any other commissioners

17 that would like to make the motion.

18 COMMISSIONER BARKER: You're jumping on it

19 so quickly.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: The floor is open.

21 MS. NASH: Madam Chair, I move to accept

22 this certification for Eastern Green Dispensary to

23 expand operations to the AU market.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Moved by Commissioner

25 Nash, is there a second?

1 COMMISSIONER BARKER: I second.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Commissioner
3 Barker. Is there any discussion on this motion as it
4 relates Eastern Green? Hearing no discussion, Mr.
5 Said, can you please call the vote?

6 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

7 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

8 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

9 MS. NASH: Yes.

10 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

11 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

12 THE SECRETARY: Chair Houenou?

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

14 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. Next
15 item for consideration is the consideration of annual
16 license renewals.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Director
18 Brown, you have the floor to discuss the applications
19 to renew the adult use cannabis business license."

20 MR. BAKER: Thank you, Madam Chair. We
21 have three renewals for consideration today. Ascend,
22 which is in Fort Lee, retailer AYR Wellness Third
23 Cultivation in Woodbridge and Curaleaf, Bordentown, a
24 Class five retailer. All entities have submitted the
25 required renewal submissions, including a certification

1 of the ongoing material, accuracy of their original
2 certification, municipal approval. No concerns with
3 any of them, and they're all recommended for renewal.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Are there
5 any questions or concerns for -- sorry, questions or
6 comments regarding the information provided by Director
7 Brown? Hearing none, is there a motion as it pertains
8 to Ascend at the Fort Lee location, any motion?

9 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Madam Chairwoman, I
10 move that we accept the resolution to renew adult use
11 cannabis license for expanded alternative treatment
12 center, Ascend, New Jersey, LLC, Fort Lee.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Vice Chair Delgado moves
14 to accept the resolution to renew the license. Is
15 there a second?

16 MS. NASH: Second.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Commissioner
18 Nash. Is there any discussion on this motion as it
19 pertains to Ascend at their Fort Lee location? Hearing
20 none, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote.

21 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

22 MR. BARKER: Abstain.

23 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

24 MS. NASH: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

1 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

2 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

4 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: Now, as it relates to
6 AYR, at their Woodbridge location, is there a motion?

7 MS. NASH: Madam Chair, I move to approve
8 the renewal of adult use cannabis business for ATC, AYR
9 Wellness, NJ, LLC.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Commissioner Nash moves
11 to approve the renewal. Is there second?

12 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Madam Chairwoman, I
13 second that motion.

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Vice Chair
15 Delgado. Is there any discussion on the motion as it
16 pertains to AYR at their Woodbridge location? Hearing
17 none, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote.

18 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

19 MR. BARKER: Aye.

20 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

21 MS. NASH: Yes.

22 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

23 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

24 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

1 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: And now, we'll turn to
3 Curaleaf at their -- in their Bordentown location. Is
4 there a motion?

5 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes. Madam Chairwoman,
6 I move that we renew the adult use cannabis business
7 license for expanded treatment centers, Curaleaf, New
8 Jersey, LLC -- oh, excuse me, not LLC, Incorporated at
9 their Bordentown location.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Vice Chair
11 Delgado. A motion has -- he has moved to renew the
12 license. Is there a second? I will second the motion.
13 Is there any discussion on this motion as it relates to
14 Curaleaf, the renewal of the license of Curaleaf at
15 their Bordentown location? Hearing no discussion, Mr.
16 Said, can you please call the vote?

17 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

18 MR. BARKER: Abstain.

19 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

21 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

22 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

23 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. Next

1 item for consideration are the notices of enforcement
2 actions.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. We have now
4 two Notices of Enforcement Action before us. So I will
5 turn it to Director Brown to provide summary remarks on
6 the first one, NOV-03-2023.

7 MR. BAKER: Thank you, Madam Chair. And
8 just a note for this agenda and future agendas. When
9 you see NOV capitalized with dashes and numbers, it
10 does not refer to November. It refers to notice of
11 violation. So just for folks watching, that's the
12 deal. So the first -- the first one is a notice for
13 TerrAscend. This relates to five infractions related
14 to patient access violations.

15 We've received complaints that patients
16 were being told they needed to purchase off the
17 recreational menu and not purchase medicinal products.
18 These staff estimates these are category five
19 violations, which by regulation, the recommended civil
20 penalty is up to \$5,000 per violation. I think a
21 couple mitigating factors to note here, they did submit
22 a corrective action plan. There were some -- there was
23 a complaint received after that, which would be
24 potentially dealt with at a later date.

25 But largely, did correct their actions,

1 created new SOPs, retrained their staff. They
2 submitted documentation to the CRC that that occurred.
3 Additionally, this is all relatively new, still not
4 only for businesses, but for consumers. And so we
5 certainly don't recommend going above the maximum
6 penalty there and would ask the board to consider, you
7 know, other factors in the entity's compliance at this
8 time. Thank you.

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Director
10 Brown. Are there any questions or comments from the
11 board?

12 MR. BARKER: Just a quick question. I
13 just wanna make sure I heard Director Brown.

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Commissioner Barker.

15 MR. BARKER: Did you say that there is
16 another violation or another potential violation since
17 there --

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: -- Can you speak --
19 Commissioner Barker speak into the microphone. Thank
20 you.

21 MR. BARKER: Okay. Is there another --
22 did you say another violation after the corrective
23 action plan or another potential plan?

24 MR. BAKER: We had issued another notice
25 of violation, which is not under consideration today.

1 MR. BARKER: Okay.

2 MR. BAKER: So that --

3 MR. BARKER: -- Well, this is after these
4 violations, the violations?

5 MR. BAKER: It was shared with the
6 Commissioner.

7 MR. BARKER: It what?

8 MR. BAKER: It was shared with the
9 Commissioner when it was issued. But I can report that
10 they've implemented their corrective action plan and
11 that we have not been receiving complaints.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. If there are
13 no other questions or comments for -- with respect to
14 the information provided by Director Brown, is -- I'll
15 ask for a motion on this matter. Okay. I will make
16 the, the first motion. I move that the board impose a
17 penalty on TerrAscend in response to the notice of
18 violation NOV-03-2023 in the amount of \$100,000.

19 And I believe that this amount reflects
20 the serious nature that the board considers
21 prioritizing patients. And I'm happy to share with my
22 colleagues how I came to that number in, in discussion.
23 But that is my motion to impose a penalty on TerrAscend
24 and in the amount of \$100,000.

25 MR. BARKER: Madam Chair, could you

1 explain that, how you came to that number, please?

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Sure. So the assigned
3 investigator to this particular case wrote a detailed
4 report, articulating five separate violations by
5 TerrAscend that occurred at not just at one dispensary,
6 but across all three of TerrAscend's dispensaries. And
7 in particular, the report notes, all -- all cases
8 mentioned above have been submitted to the NJ CRC
9 recently.

10 However, this is after another string of
11 medical patient complaints from back in January of 2023
12 that were all related to the same identical issue of
13 imbalances found of medicinal products on the
14 dispensary menus. And the investigator in a thorough,
15 very thorough report pointed out that there still seems
16 to be a rampant issue with TerrAscend, New Jersey and
17 their staff.

18 That they are simply not offering all
19 advertised cannabis products to medicinal patients and
20 making it purchasable as a medical -- medicinal
21 purchase that is tax free, as per their requirement in
22 the ATCs final agency decision that allowed them to
23 expand into the adult use market. Turn out TerrAscend
24 was made aware of its failures to its patients back in
25 January through informal means. And I believe staff's

1 response to those complaints is reasonable.

2 And it seems that in response to being
3 made aware of those complaints that were received by
4 the CRC, TerrAscend adopted a standard operating
5 procedure on February 8th, that provides a very
6 detailed step-by-step instructions for how its staff
7 should make products available to medical patients.
8 But despite what having -- what looks to me like a
9 really great helpful resource, TerrAscend's staff
10 failed to accommodate patients as required at all three
11 of their facilities. To me, this demonstrates that
12 TerrAscend's problem is not an isolated event, nor is
13 it a simple mistake made by one employee.

14 As the signed investigator stated, this is
15 clearly a rampant problem throughout TerrAscend's
16 operations in New Jersey. What's more? Upon my
17 request, TerrAscend did not produce training records
18 that it is required to maintain under both the
19 recreational and medical regulations that would have
20 allowed, I think, this board to better ascertain
21 exactly where the gaps exist in TerrAscend's training
22 to prevent these kinds of disruptions to patients.

23 So for instance, NJ AC 17:130 - 9.7 I --
24 Paragraph I in Subsection 8, as well as 30 -- 17:30 A -
25 9.4, both require businesses to maintain training

1 records for each employee that indicate the time, date,
2 and place that the employee received any required
3 trainings. However, here, TerrAscend provided a list
4 of employees, yeah, provided the names of employees who
5 have been trained for their respective duties.

6 But there's no evidence to -- that speaks
7 to whether those individuals were trained, what they
8 were trained on, or when. And so while the matter
9 before us is not related to a record keeping violation,
10 I wanna make that clear, I do believe that failing to
11 provide a detailed record of employee training leaves
12 me no choice but to believe that the purported
13 corrective actions taken by TerrAscend thus far are
14 unlikely to prevent recurrence of this mistreatment of
15 our registered patients.

16 Now, our regulations, specifically Rule
17 20.5 and 20.6, give the commission significant
18 discretion in determining how to levy sanctions,
19 including the type of penalty. Whether we issue
20 penalties concurrently or successively issue one flat
21 fee or issue penalties per day. And consideration of,
22 for lack of a better term, aggravating or mitigating
23 factors.

24 And I understand staff's reasonings for
25 their recommendation. However, I believe the nature of

1 the violations and the additional considerations in
2 Rule 20.6F warrant imposing a greater penalty. And so
3 I believe a reasonable penalty under the regulations
4 would be a penalty of \$20,000 per violation. There are
5 five violations for a total of \$100,000. That is how I
6 came up with the -- my proposed motion here.

7 MR. BARKER: Madam Chair, thank you very
8 much for that detailed explanation. And I do agree, I
9 do agree. I think the penalty should be increased. So
10 thank you for that.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Mm-hm. So I will
12 reiterate the -- I've made -- I have moved to issue a
13 penalty on TerrAscend, New Jersey in the amount of a
14 fine of \$100,000. Is there a second on this motion?

15 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Madam Chairwoman, may I
16 have the floor?

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Vice Chair Delgado.

18 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I have to say,
19 honestly, that I find it shocking, extremely shocking
20 of the amount that you prescribed TerrAscend for the
21 violation. I think it's onerous. I think it's going
22 to send shock waves throughout the marketplace, here in
23 New Jersey. And I disagree with you. I'm not going to
24 argue with you. That's your opinion. My opinion is
25 that that amount is extremely onerous and shocking.

1 That's all I have to say.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Vice Chair
3 Delgado. Are there any -- well, is there -- there
4 still has not been a second on the motion to impose a
5 penalty of \$100,000. So --

6 MR. BARKER: I Second that.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Commissioner
8 Barker. Is there any discussion on this motion to
9 impose a penalty of \$100,000 on TerrAscend?

10 MS. NASH: Madam Chair, may I have the
11 floor for a moment?

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, commissioner Nash.

13 MS. NASH: I Support your decision and the
14 monetary penalty. I think that if it's shocking,
15 people need to take a look at this and see that we are
16 still prioritizing medicinal patients. And maybe
17 people will revisit their training and prioritize their
18 patients, providing options from their adult menu and
19 complying with their FADs. So I am in support of this.

20 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Madam Chairwoman, can I
21 -- may I have the floor?

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, vice Chair Delgado.

23 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I know I'm outvoted.
24 However, I think about what's going to happen now. I
25 believe people will lose their jobs at TerrAscend.

1 Those responsible will lose their job. I think that --
2 and the people that will lose their jobs are not the
3 higher ups, but rather the folks in the field, their
4 workers, the managers.

5 I think there will be a disinvestment in
6 the state with this fine that we are imposing, this
7 violation fine, that we're imposing. And I think we're
8 -- you're being shortsighted. We have to look at all
9 the entire industry here. And a hundred thousand
10 dollars is just onerous. We're basically dealing in
11 the retail industry. I'm lost for words. I really am.
12 I haven't given up my floor yet.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Mm-hm.

14 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I'm pausing because I
15 want to control myself. I think this is a new
16 industry, and we as chair -- as commissioners have to
17 be responsible. I think we'd be irresponsible in this,
18 in imposing this amount. I understand the medical
19 patients. I've never heard of a pharmacy being fined
20 \$100,000 for such an infraction. I just think that
21 what we -- the vote that we're gonna take is gonna have
22 severe repercussions on the industry here. There's
23 going to be dis-investments.

24 People will lose jobs. And I want you to
25 think about it. Who's going to lose the jobs? It's

1 not going to be the president of TerrAscend. It's not
2 going to be members of the board of TerrAscend. It's
3 going to be the workers in these retail establishments.
4 It's gonna be people that are making 17, 18 dollars an
5 hour. It's gonna be middle management that's making
6 90, 80, 90,000 dollars an hour that's just gonna lose
7 their jobs.

8 The unions are gonna get hurt. They're
9 not gonna hire more people. They'll find ways of not
10 staffing to save money. I think you ought to -- before
11 you take the vote, you ought to think about who's going
12 to get hurt. That's all I have to say.

13 MR. BARKER: Can I say something on that?

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Vice Chair
15 Delgado. Commissioner Barker.

16 MR. BARKER: I hear you, Vice chair.
17 Respectfully, everything you said doesn't have to
18 happen. It may happen, it may not happen. But it
19 doesn't have to happen at the end of the day. You
20 mentioned this is a new industry. It is. But these
21 are not new players.

22 These are players that have been in state,
23 after state, after state, after state. They know the
24 rules. They're also not your average small business,
25 hundreds of millions of dollars, billions of dollars.

1 And so does -- to say that all of this is going to
2 definitely happen. It doesn't necessarily have to be.

3 TerrAscend doesn't have to fire anybody.
4 They don't. And again, I don't know that this is an
5 egregious fine comparative to the business that they
6 are. And so it is wholly within the entity to make
7 those decisions, but they don't have to be made.

8 Right? This could be a course correction. This can
9 signal to the marketplace that we take stuff serious.
10 And this could be the impetus to ensuring that New
11 Jersey is one of the premier cannabis industries.

12 So I hear what you're saying -- I don't
13 agree fully though. And it will -- it is gonna be a
14 eye opener to see how the market responds to this. But
15 I'm not gonna put out there that it's gonna definitely
16 be negative. And it doesn't have to be. It does not
17 have to be. And I'll leave it there.

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Commissioner
19 Barker. I will also add that there are people who have
20 already been heard by the actions of TerrAscend. And
21 those are the patients who complained to us, who were
22 courageous enough to at least come forward, talk to the
23 CRC staff and shed light on this issue. 'Cause These
24 patients were refused service as medical patients.

25 Some of them turned away, told to make a

1 purchase as an adult use purchase, which meant they're
2 paying higher prices, which meant they're paying taxes
3 on that. And we even have some complaints that these
4 individuals lost their ability to use discounts that
5 otherwise would've been available to them, further
6 reducing the price for their access to their medicine.
7 TerrAscend alone bears responsibility for their
8 actions.

9 And yes, I absolutely believe in making
10 sure that we provide an opportunity for our business
11 owners or for our businesses, rather, to become aware
12 of issues and to correct them. That is why -- that is
13 exactly what staff have done months ago. And yet, here
14 we are several months after a -- I think, a very
15 detailed, and, you know, frankly a good standard
16 operating procedure was adopted.

17 But who was trained on it, if here we are
18 months later with multiple violations, again, across
19 their New Jersey operations. So I believe that we have
20 a responsibility to the patients who have, who have
21 highlighted this issue. And I believe that TerrAscend
22 has a responsibility to their patients as well and that
23 is why they are required to prioritize patients.

24 It doesn't matter what time of day it is,
25 patients are prioritized by these -- in these expanded

1 ATCs. That is the requirement and that is the
2 condition that TerrAscend and other expanded ATCs
3 agreed to when they sought to expand into the adult use
4 market.

5 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Can I have the floor?

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

7 VICE CHAIRPERSON: You know, when I hear
8 about the patients and I, I sympathize with the
9 patient. I often think of myself. When my brother was
10 dying last year, and I was at the nurse's station and I
11 was asking for his medication. He was dying of kidney
12 cancer.

13 He was yelling in pain in his bed and I
14 had to wait close to an hour for his medicine to come
15 up from the pharmacy downstairs. The man was yelling,
16 he was yelling from the pain. I never heard of the
17 hospital getting fined \$100,000 for that. And I'm sure
18 that happens all the time.

19 When I go to Walgreens in Perth Amboy, or
20 Rite Aid in Perth Amboy and I have to wait in a long
21 line, especially after a payday. You know, I don't
22 hear that Walgreens or the Rite Aid getting fined
23 because I have to wait on a long line or people
24 complaining they have to wait on a long line.

25 What about when you wait on that long

1 line, you finally get to the counter and the pharmacist
2 says, hey, you gotta come back to tomorrow 'cause we
3 don't have the medicine available for you today. I
4 don't hear the Walgreens or the Rite Aid getting fined
5 a \$100,000. And that happens all the time. I'm sure
6 it's happened to plenty of people in this room.

7 You get to the counter and the pharmacist
8 says, come back tomorrow. I don't hear Rite Aid or
9 Walgreens getting fined a hundred thousand dollars.
10 'Cause if they did, they'd be out of business in the
11 state, they'd be out of business anywhere. Just
12 saying. Just saying. Or when you have -- when you
13 prescribe one medicine and you get to the pharmacist
14 and they tell you, hey, that medicine's not available
15 right now, but I have a generic, it's just as good as
16 that medicine. I don't hear complaints about that.

17 Well, I do hear complaints about that, but
18 I don't hear them getting -- a pharmacist getting fined
19 because they have to substitute the medicine that
20 you're prescribed with a generic medicine. So again, I
21 find it shocking. I find it onerous. I'm gonna lose
22 this vote.

23 But I think the repercussions -- and
24 Commissioner Barker, can I tell you something, yes,
25 people will lose their jobs. There won't be a

1 Christmas bonus in these stores this holiday season.
2 That's all I have to say.

3 MR. BARKER: Company choice.

4 VICE CHAIRPERSON: That's all I have to
5 say.

6 MS. NASH: Can I interject. I would like
7 to interject by saying that is why we -- it is so
8 important that we have labor protections to protect
9 workers if this were to happen.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Vice Chair
11 Delgado. Thank you, Commissioner Nash. And Vice Chair
12 Delgado, I do want to especially thank you for sharing
13 your personal experiences. I know you've --

14 VICE CHAIRPERSON: -- Yeah, no, it's, it's
15 fine. You know, I think we are creating a separate
16 class. And I honestly believe this. I think by doing
17 this, you're creating a separate class of medical
18 patients. I could think of people with diabetes,
19 people suffering from cancer. They don't get the same
20 -- they're not getting the same protection that a
21 cannabis patient's getting. Think about it.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: The New Jersey Cannabis
23 Regulatory Commission does not regulate hospitals. We
24 do not regulate pharmaceutical companies, and we do not
25 regulate pharmacies. Maybe if we did, things would be

1 different, but here we are. And so we have a
2 responsibility to our patients that are registered
3 under New Jersey Law in accordance with the New Jersey
4 Regulations for Medicinal cannabis. Any further
5 discussion on this motion? Hearing none, Mr. Said, can
6 you please call the vote?

7 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Bark?

8 MR. BARKER: Aye.

9 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

10 MS. NASH: Yes.

11 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair, Delgado?

12 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Absolutely not.

13 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

15 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: I believe we now turned
17 our attention to NOV-04-2023. So for summary remarks
18 on that notice of violation, I'll turn it back over to
19 Director Brown.

20 MR. BAKER: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I
21 don't think we have to worry about anybody giving us
22 authority over hospitals or pharmacies.

23 (Laughter)

24 MR. BAKER: So the next violation is to
25 Columbia Care. Their labor peace agreement, which is

1 required by law and regulation lapsed for a couple
2 days. It was quickly rectified before they were up for
3 renewal. This is again category five. So maximum
4 penalty of \$5,000 per violation. There was one
5 violation.

6 They rectified it quickly. They corrected
7 it. So you know, I certainly -- I don't think I would
8 even recommend going up to the \$5,000, unless they have
9 a labor peace agreement in place. But you know, it's
10 up to the board. And the staff made the
11 recommendation.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: And Director Brown, I
13 just want to clarify, 'cause I think I misheard you.
14 Talking about the maximum amounts for non-major
15 violations. I think you said \$5,000, but I think you
16 meant \$50,000.

17 MR. BAKER: No, it's -- so the
18 recommendation includes that it's a Category 5.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

20 MR. BAKER: One violation, which is
21 maximum \$5,000. Chief Counsel?

22 MR. RIGGS: I just (inaudible) Category 5
23 (inaudible).

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: And to be clear, the
25 matrix is a consideration for the board, it's not

1 binding. And so in accordance with the regulations,
2 the board can certainly go up, go down as well. But I
3 wanna make sure that the -- we are clear on what the --
4 that the maximum amount under our regulations for a
5 violation, even if it is Category 5, as it is a non-
6 major violation, is \$50,000 with the understanding that
7 staff are recommending five, no more than \$5,000.

8 MR. BAKER: That's accurate.

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

10 MS. NASH: Excuse me. I guess Director
11 Brown, or --

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Can you speak into the
13 microphone?

14 MS. NASH: Yes. So isn't a Labor peace
15 agreement a mandatory requirement for licensure?

16 MR. BAKER: It is. And as I stated, they
17 had a labor peace agreement when they were approved for
18 certification, they've elapsed as they were in the
19 renewal process. I think it lapsed for a matter of a
20 week or so.

21 MS. NASH: 13 days.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Three days.

23 MR. BAKER: Three days and then they --
24 they've submitted a new updated labor peace agreement.
25 So they're currently in compliance with that part of

1 the regulations and statute.

2 MS. NASH: Did you say three days or 13?

3 MR. BARKER: 13.

4 MR. BAKER: Three days.

5 MR. BARKER: I think it was 13.

6 MR. BAKER: We will check.

7 MR. BARKER: I got this down.

8 MR. BAKER: Sorry, it was rectified in
9 three days from when we issued the notice.

10 MR. BARKER: Oh, okay.

11 MR. BAKER: I believe it expired at the
12 end of June and then was -- they submitted the updated
13 labor peace agreement on July. Or the corrective
14 action plan came in on July 16th. It was 13 days.

15 MR. BARKER: Okay.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Any other
17 questions or comments in response to the information
18 provided by Director Brown?

19 MS. NASH: Madam Chair, I --

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: -- Commissioner Nash.

21 MS. NASH: I am aware that there is a
22 section in the rules where the board can impose a daily
23 sanction and I cannot find it.

24 MR. BARKER: 20.6C.

25 MS. NASH: What is it, 20.?

1 MR. BARKER: 20.6C.

2 MS. NASH: Okay. I am, for the reasons
3 that Commissioner Delgado stated about possibly, you
4 know, the potentially -- potential layoffs as a result
5 of our sanction against TerrAscend, I would say that we
6 need to -- we need to place a high importance on labor
7 peace agreements. And it is a mandatory requirement of
8 licensure. Regardless of whether this applicant lapsed
9 for three days or 10 days or 13, they're not taking it
10 as seriously it appears, in my opinion, as we are.
11 Because if they had, they would've been on it.

12 And I believe that they've been operating
13 for a long time here in New Jersey. And, you know,
14 they haven't even achieved a CBA. So my suggestion is
15 to look at possibly compounding the sanction each day
16 for 10 days, \$50,000.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Is, is that a motion?

18 MS. NASH: Yes.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So Commissioner
20 Nash is moving to impose a penalty of \$50,000?

21 MS. NASH: Yes.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Is that correct? Is
23 there a second on this motion?

24 MR. BARKER: We have discussion. I second
25 that.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Seconded by Commissioner
2 Barker. Is there any discussion on this motion to
3 impose a penalty of \$50,000?

4 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, Madam Chairwoman.
5 Can I have the
6 Floor?

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, Vice Chair Delgado.

8 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I would say I was
9 shocked, but I've already been shocked. You know,
10 there's many ways for companies that are doing business
11 to cut back. They don't need -- they don't have to
12 fire anybody. All they have to do is not backfill as
13 employees leave the business. And employees do leave
14 the business every day. They don't have to invest in
15 their operation knowing they're going to receive these
16 kinds of fines. They don't have to purchase from local
17 vendors. They don't have to expand.

18 So there's different ways that the
19 marketplace is going to be hurt, and I see it. You
20 know, the law says we may issue violations, monetary
21 violations. It doesn't say we have to or we shall, it
22 says we may. I think that again, Commission Nash, you
23 ought to reconsider the \$50,000 that you just mentioned
24 and think about the future of this marketplace. Yes,
25 you're kicking them in the butt. I get it. But at the

1 end of the day, this marketplace in Jersey will not
2 expand the way you think it's going to expand.

3 I think would be in onerous. I think it's
4 shocking the amount that we are issuing, the amount of
5 violations, the dollar amount that we are issuing to
6 this. And I'm sure -- and on top of that, we are not --
7 -- we had -- we have the staff here. Give us a
8 recommendation. They worked hard, they looked at it.
9 And we're not accepting their recommendation. So I
10 think we should all reconsider and take a step back
11 and, and look at this. I don't think they did this on
12 purpose. I think once staff brought it to their
13 attention, they, they corrected it. That's all I have
14 to say right now.

15 MS. NASH: I would like to respond.

16 VICE CHAIRPERSON: You got -- yeah, sure.
17 Go ahead. Respond.

18 MS. NASH: If I knew that my license was
19 riding on having -- being compliant with the New Jersey
20 Cannabis Regulatory Commission's requirements, you
21 better be sure that I would make sure that I had an LPA
22 and that it didn't expire. Again, back to Commissioner
23 Barker's point, these are not new players. They've
24 been here for a long time and they've been operating in
25 other states.

1 We just have to, to rightfully place a
2 strong emphasis on labor. And I think people need to
3 get that here. If they want to do business in New
4 Jersey. We're serious about it. Just like we're
5 serious about making sure that patients have their
6 medicine.

7 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Look, some of my best
8 friends are members of the labor community. Some of my
9 best friends are, you know, labor presidents. I get
10 it. I'm not anti-labor, all right? But I am for a
11 fair process. I think when it was brought out, they
12 took corrective action. Am I correct, Director Brown?

13 MR. BAKER: Yeah.

14 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I don't think \$50,000
15 is an amount that is warranted. I don't. I really
16 don't.

17 MS. NASH: Do we --

18 VICE CHAIRPERSON: -- Again, I don't have
19 to vote. I'm sure I don't have to vote for this, I'm
20 gonna lose on the vote, but I think you're wrong. I
21 think I -- I really believe that you are wrong. And
22 that's all I have to say.

23 MS. NASH: We should not have to bring it
24 to a multimillion dollar company's attention that
25 they're out of compliance. Respectfully.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: I'd liked to add that on
2 the whole, I agree with you, Vice Chair Delgado, that
3 this is, unlike the TerrAscend example. This is a
4 situation in which the entity here did move swiftly to
5 create -- to correct non-compliance. I'm satisfied
6 with the corrective measures that they did take. And
7 so I'm of the mind -- I tend to lean towards a lower
8 end of the -- lower end of the scale for a fine for,
9 for Columbia Care in accordance with our regulations
10 and in accordance with the additional factors that are
11 -- that we are permitted to consider under NJ AC 17:30-
12 20.7 F. Because here the corrective
13 of actions were, I think reasonable. I think the
14 likelihood -- as a result of those corrective actions,
15 the likelihood of recurrence for this particular
16 violation is very small. And so those would lead me
17 to, to prefer something on the smaller end and for
18 fines as opposed to a larger end.

19 But I think these are -- this is a very
20 different situation than the notice of -- notice of
21 violation that we had previously considered. However,
22 the board has expressed time and time again its
23 emphasis and demonstrated willingness to hold
24 businesses accountable to the labor standards that are
25 written into the CREAMM Act and into our regulations.

1 And so if having an LPA in place is a
2 mandatory -- is a material condition of their
3 licensure, I think Commissioner Nash raises a good
4 point. And as, as simple of a mistake as this might
5 be, which I can -- I certainly can understand, it is a
6 material condition of their licensure.

7 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Does every medical and
8 adult use business in New Jersey, do they -- does
9 everyone currently have an -- a labor peace agreement
10 currently?

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: That would be for staff
12 to provide a response.

13 MR. BAKER: So I can say on the AU side,
14 for sure. But I think we're going into medicinal
15 renewals and we'll have a full update for the board at
16 -- once that's, you know, process is complete.

17 VICE CHAIRPERSON: And what would happen
18 if we issued a violation and one of the entities did
19 not -- we issue the violation to Columbia Care, and
20 come to find out we've -- found out that some other
21 business that did not have a Labor peace agreement,
22 what would happen then, Chief Counsel, are we liable?

23 MR. BAKER: I think it depends on the
24 facts and circumstances, Vice Chairman.

25 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I'm sorry, I can't hear

1 you.

2 MR. BAKER: It would depend on the facts
3 and circumstances of that violation. You have to treat
4 for those conditional circumstances the same with the
5 law.

6 VICE CHAIRPERSON: So I moved it. We -- I
7 still have the floor?

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, the motion. You do
9 have the floor.

10 VICE CHAIRPERSON: So I have the floor?

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah.

12 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. I move that we
13 table this violation till we investigate further.
14 That's what I move. That's my motion.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Vice Chair
16 Delgado --

17 VICE CHAIRPERSON: -- But I think her
18 motion goes first, right?

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Well, you've (inaudible)
20 a motion to table.

21 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, okay. Oh, that
22 again, yeah. Thank you.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: So Vice Chair Delgado
24 has moved to table Commissioner Nash's motion or
25 consideration of the -- sorry, not to table

1 Commissioner Nash's motion, but to table consideration
2 of this violation.

3 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Right. I moved to
4 table the entire violation for Columbia Care until we
5 have further discussion and investigate further.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Is there a
7 second on this Motion to table? Again, is there a
8 second on this motion to table?

9 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I don't think there is.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: And I don't think there
11 is. So unfortunately, Vice Chair Delgado, your motion
12 to table does not advance. So we are back to the
13 motion to impose a penalty of \$50,000 on Columbia Care
14 for NOV 04 2023. Is there any additional discussion,
15 Vice Chair Delgado?

16 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Well, I moved -- well
17 we -- can I table -- move to table the \$50,000? Am I
18 allowed today? Is there a (inaudible)?

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: You'd like to table
20 exactly what consideration of the fine?

21 VICE CHAIRPERSON: 50,000 -- no, not the -
22 - well, my first motion was to table the entire
23 enforcement action.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Mm-hm.

25 VICE CHAIRPERSON: That was my first

1 motion. My second motion is to table Commissioner
2 Nash's amount of \$50,000.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Do you mean to amend it?

4 VICE CHAIRPERSON: To -- Oh, thank you.
5 That's what I meant. To amend it.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: You would like to amend
7 it to, to what?

8 VICE CHAIRPERSON: What was the staff's
9 recommendation?

10 MR. BAKER: I said under 5,000.

11 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Say again?

12 MR. BAKER: I said under 5,000.

13 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I move to amend it to
14 \$1000.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: So Vice Chair Delgado is
16 moving to amend the motion made by Commissioner Nash,
17 so that instead of imposing a penalty of \$50,000, the
18 commission would be imposing a penalty of 5,000, is
19 that correct?

20 VICE CHAIRPERSON: No, I said \$1000.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, a thousand dollars.
22 Apologies.

23 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Made dollars.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: I mean dollar. Is there
25 a second on this motion to amend Commissioner Nash's

1 motion such that the CRC would be imposing a penalty --
2 would be considering to impose a penalty of \$1,000?
3 Again, is there a second on the motion to amend the
4 previous motion? All right. There is no second. So
5 that motion fails to advance. So we are again back at
6 --

7 VICE CHAIRPERSON: -- I knew that.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: -- back to the original
9 motion to impose a penalty of \$50,000. Any further
10 discussion on this motion?

11 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah, I have another
12 motion.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Vice Chair has another
14 motion.

15 VICE CHAIRPERSON: They go home and think
16 about me tonight. I want all -- I want everyone to go
17 home and think about me tonight. Executive Director
18 Brown, just remind me again because I'm a liberal arts
19 major, you know, what was the category in the amount --

20 MR. BAKER: Category 5, one in the penalty
21 matrix --

22 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah.

23 MR. BAKER: Which is up to \$5,000.

24 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Up to \$5,000, okay. So
25 why don't we amend the motion to the maximum \$5,000,

1 the recommendation from staff. That's staff's
2 recommendation.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Vice Chair
4 Delgado is making a motion to amend the earlier motion
5 from Commissioner Nash, such that the commission would
6 impose a penalty of \$5,000; is that correct?

7 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Correct. That's
8 staff's recommendation. That's the category matrix
9 that staff recommended, max.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: So there is a motion to
11 amend the earlier motion such that the commission would
12 impose a penalty of \$5,000. Is there a second on this
13 motion? Once again, I'll ask for a second on the
14 motion to amend the earlier motion by Commissioner
15 Nash, such that the commission would impose a penalty
16 of \$5,000.

17 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I bet if I would've
18 said \$49,000, I would've gotten it.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: I've got more paper
20 here, Vice Chair, though. All right. That motion has
21 failed to get a second. So that motion fails. So we
22 are back at the original motion to impose a penalty of
23 \$50,000. Is there any further discussion on this
24 motion?

25 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Can I have the floor,

1 discussion?

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Only if you speak into
3 the microphone.

4 VICE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Yes. Yes,
5 ma'am. All right. So let's throw it back to the
6 chairwoman. You said that, I think -- I believe you
7 mentioned that you're amenable to something less than
8 \$50,000. So I turn -- I give up my floor and turn it
9 back to you, Madam Chairwoman, for discussion

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: I've got no -- nothing
11 to add to discussion.

12 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, okay. Then \$50,000
13 it is.

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Is there any further
15 discussion on the motion to impose a penalty of
16 \$50,000? Hearing no further discussion, Mr. Said, can
17 you please call the vote?

18 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Barker?

19 MR. BARKER: Aye.

20 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

21 MS. NASH: Yes.

22 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado.

23 VICE CHAIRPERSON: No.

24 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

1 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. Next
2 item on the agenda, we have the open public comment
3 period.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. So we've
5 finally come to the public comment period. It's been
6 quite a lengthy meeting today. Now, members of the
7 public can submit comments to the commission in writing
8 by going to our website, nj.gov/cannabisfirstsmeetings.
9 There you'll find a link to submit written comments.
10 The deadline for submitting written comments for
11 today's meeting is 5 o'clock, tomorrow -- nope, that's
12 not right. 5 o'clock Monday. Apologies. And I
13 believe Monday is September 11th. 10th or 11th?

14 THE SECRETARY: The 11th.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Which one?

16 THE SECRETARY: Yeah.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: The 11th, all right. So
18 5 o'clock, Monday, September 11 is the deadline to
19 submit written comments to the commission. Mr. Said
20 will speak -- will read out the names of our registered
21 speakers. Speakers will be limited to three minutes.
22 When you're -- when you hear your name called, please
23 come to the front. Make sure to push the button on the
24 microphone where it says push. And you'll see a green
25 light illuminate and when you see that green light, the

1 microphone is on and you will be allowed to speak. Mr.
2 Said, I'll turn it to you to call on the first set of
3 speakers.

4 THE SECRETARY: Thank you, Chairwoman. As
5 a reminder, public speakers during this afternoon's
6 public comment period will be limited to three minutes.
7 Please be respectful and concise during your comments.
8 I'm gonna call three names at a time. Al Jenkins,
9 Chandler Parsons, and Chereese Tulino. Since I don't
10 see anyone, I'll go on to the next three. Chris
11 Caruso, Chris Wood, and Christopher Aponte. All right.
12 I don't see any of those. Cynthia Vasquez, David Feder
13 and Dereece Ward.

14 MS. VASQUEZ: Good afternoon, everybody.
15 (Inaudible) into the mic?

16 THE SECRETARY: Oh, yeah.

17 VICE CHAIRPERSON: It's the mic for you.
18 Make sure it's in green.

19 MR. BARKER: Just continue.

20 MS. VASQUEZ: Hi everybody. Thank you.

21 MR. BARKER: Hold the mic closer to you.
22 There you go.

23 MS. VASQUEZ: I think the battery is dead
24 on this one.

25 MR. BARKER: No, it's not.

1 MS. VASQUEZ: Okay. Because it's not
2 turning green. Okay. Hi everyone. Good afternoon.
3 How are you? As I mentioned, my name is Cynthia and
4 I'm speaking on behalf of Cloud Nine dispensary. For
5 more information, I am a co-owner. We are a social
6 equity business in North Plainfield, right off of Route
7 22 West. Thankfully, we did receive the final approval
8 from our inspector, Mr. Anthony Garlington, this past
9 summer in July, to open. And we are ready to basically
10 start to serve our local community.

11 Just to basically give some more insight
12 on Mr. Garlington. He was incredibly helpful
13 throughout our process and definitely helped us get to
14 where we are today, which is, in other words, ready to
15 do business, thankfully. It goes without saying that
16 establishing any business is incredibly labor intensive
17 for all team members involved because it was definitely
18 a group effort to get us here. And just one more time,
19 we really can't wait to just be available to the local
20 community. You know, aside from getting into business,
21 because it's obviously something lucrative.

22 We also want to give back to the local
23 North Plainfield community. We intend to work with the
24 local food bank. We want to make sure that we are
25 giving back to the community that's basically gonna be

1 feeding us. And another way of saying it, we plan to
2 also host onsite expungements on a monthly basis. We
3 have a lawyer who actually volunteered his time to be
4 able to do that for us since, as mentioned, you know,
5 this is an industry that of course a lot of people who
6 are still in jail for it, are not able to profit off of
7 just with the way that it has worked out. Aside from
8 basically us supporting ourselves, supporting others,
9 we just hope to basically see ourselves be able to open
10 our doors once we receive the final approval from the
11 state. So once again, I'm just speaking on our behalf
12 to let everybody know that we are ready whenever we
13 receive that final notion from the CRC. Okay?

14 THE SECRETARY: Yeah.

15 MS. VASQUEZ: Thank you.

16 THE SECRETARY: All right. The next three
17 are Elizabeth Ciccone, Michael Ciccone, and Gabriella
18 Wilday. And could you please state your name as well.

19 MS. CICCONE: I'm Elizabeth Ciccone.

20 THE SECRETARY: Sorry, Ciccone.

21 MS. CICCONE: Ciccone. Director,
22 Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, members of the
23 commission and honored guests, thank you for allowing
24 us to speak. We're here to discuss two issues related
25 to our Class 1 cultivator micro business conditional

1 license and to offer a potential solution for each to
2 foster a dialogue on future amendments to the laws
3 governing cannabis in New Jersey. To briefly introduce
4 our three-person firm, 3 Buds Holding Company LLC, 3
5 BHC, I'm Vice President and CFO Elizabeth Ciccone.

6 I have 20-plus years of financial
7 experience in public higher education, culminating in
8 my role as a business manager of a large school. Our
9 president, Ronnette Henry has 20 plus years of business
10 and research development experience in higher Ed. Our
11 vice president and COO, Michael Ciccone has over 12
12 years of operations and quality control experience in
13 biopharma, working under the strictest FDA guidelines
14 related to biologics. We have an excellent combined
15 portfolio of experience for maintaining quality and
16 compliance within the burgeoning cannabis industry.

17 And we're proud to report that we were
18 awarded our Class 1 cultivator micro business
19 conditional license. Beyond our skill set, the three
20 principles of 3 BHC have the following combined
21 demographics, we're 70 percent women owned. Myself and
22 Ms. Henry are certified with the women in business
23 enterprise through March of 2025. We also have
24 achieved our small business Enterprise certification.
25 We're 40 percent minority owned by Ms. Henry. We are

1 100 percent impact zone resident, 60 percent living in
2 economically disadvantaged area, myself and Mr.
3 Ciccone.

4 30 percent ownership with Legacy Cannabis
5 Convictions, Mr. Ciccone. Yet somehow, all of that
6 combined does not entitle us to the coveted social
7 equity designation. Without it, we were not qualified
8 to apply for the NJ EDA 150,000 seed equity brand
9 program. Also, it means that we don't have the highest
10 level of priority in processing our license application
11 and inquiries. We feel a simple solution to having
12 more applicants qualify as social equity would be to
13 institute a system of points for various elements of
14 demographics.

15 In a similar vein, the NJ Motor Vehicle
16 Commission gives points for different types of IDs.
17 Living in an impact zone and/or economically
18 disadvantaged area could accrue points, the women in
19 business designation, military veteran designation,
20 minority owned business, small business would accrue
21 points and so on. People with legacy cannabis
22 commissions should be considered whether they own more
23 than 50 percent of the firm or not, though for a lower
24 number of points.

25 In fact, points should be awarded for any

1 owner that is in a designated category and not just for
2 those holding majority ownership percentage. Once a
3 targeted number of points is achieved, the social
4 equity designation can be granted. We hope you will
5 consider this approach for updates to the laws that
6 govern cannabis licensing in New Jersey. Due to this
7 time constraint, I'm going to ask my partner to
8 complete.

9 MR. CICCONI: My name is Michael Ciccone.
10 3 Bud holding would like to just comment some of the
11 difficulties we found securing real estate for cannabis
12 cultivation. We were awarded our conditional license
13 and immediately began searching for site control and
14 impact zones. We have been searching for a location
15 ever since. Because we haven't found anything, we
16 appreciate the gracious opportunity for an extension
17 that the board gave us. But while approximately two-
18 thirds of the state population approved New Jersey
19 recreational cannabis, there's a limited numbers of
20 municipalities that have actually opted in.

21 And among those, many of them have additional
22 restrictions. Some municipalities only approve one
23 type of license other municipalities have capped the
24 amount of licenses and this have really proved
25 significantly difficult. Examples are City of New

1 Brunswick has limited numbers and have already sold
2 out. Other municipalities have exorbitant licensing
3 fees that we basically can't afford. So what we're
4 asking is that the -- I mean what we've notice is that
5 many of the municipalities also have limited areas of
6 industrial zones and many real estate owners don't even
7 want cannabis businesses in their buildings.

8 And some landlords are only taking applications or
9 showing locations to large operators. Not micro
10 business and this have also proved difficult. We, we
11 expected to locate our facility in an impact zone or an
12 economic disadvantage location which is part of our
13 mission and we're also aware that's part of the NJCRC
14 admission -- NJCRC mission and part of the intent of
15 the people in New Jersey. And what we found is that
16 all of these aspects of a systemic and widespread
17 condition have made contracting for site control
18 extremely difficult. So difficult that we're likely to
19 ask for another extension. Many municipalities in the
20 state of New Jersey are missing out on tax revenue
21 opportunities, mainly because so many folks have opted
22 out and that's kind of given the industry in our state
23 a bad image.

24 And with so many folks not opting in, we have a
25 suggestion. I think this suggestion is to ameliorate

1 by fostering a vigorous marketing education campaign at
2 convincing municipalities to go another vote and opt-
3 in. Our solution also included maybe some subsidies
4 that can help municipalities and assist them with
5 creating ordinances and procedures for licensing
6 enforcement in their town. And just wanna just ask for
7 help in this matter. Thank you for your time.

8 THE SECRETARY: The next three on the list
9 are -- so sorry.

10 MS. WILDAY: (Inaudible).

11 THE SECRETARY: So sorry.

12 MS. WILDAY: Before you set the timer,
13 it's freezing in here. Maybe there's a thermostat.

14 COMMISSIONER BROWN: I'm hot.

15 MS. WILDAY: That's because you're talking
16 a lot up there.

17 COMMISSIONER BROWN: No, that's because my
18 head's exploding.

19 MS. WILDAY: Okay. I don't see a green
20 light.

21 COMMISSIONER BROWN: That'll be
22 (inaudible), New Jersey (inaudible).

23 MS. WILDAY: Good afternoon. My name is
24 Gabriella Wilday and I'm the CEO of Molly Ann Farms
25 which holds an annual Class 5 retailer license for a

1 business at 265 Belmont Avenue in Haledon. So today
2 marks 50 days from our final inspection by our CRC
3 field investigator and we're still waiting for
4 authorization to operate. NJAC17:30, Section 7.14J has
5 a very hard regulatory requirement for 30 days from the
6 time of inspection to an official authorization to
7 operate. We're three weeks past the date of the CRC
8 regulation required for authorization. I'm in the
9 business of creating jobs and more importantly I'm in
10 the business of creating careers. We've hired several
11 dozen people.

12 Minorities, women, individual with prior
13 entanglements with the law and many single mothers.
14 And we can't even give them start dates. Many gave
15 notice to their former employers based on the 30-day
16 timeline which we trusted would be honored and it's
17 heartbreaking. It's killing us. The Haledon Police
18 officers are eager to earn extra income by providing
19 security services during off-duty hours and the
20 municipalities of Haledon anxiously awaits tax revenue.
21 We have been patient.

22 We waited 159 days for determination on
23 our conditional license application with no request for
24 cure. We waited 115 days for determination on our
25 conversion to annual application with no request for

1 cure. For the CRC -- I'm sorry. And now, we're
2 waiting on Day 50 for our final authorization to
3 operate. For the CRC regulations, the total wait time
4 for all three phases should have been 150 days, but
5 instead, we've been patiently waiting 324 days. The
6 extra 174 days of unanticipated wait time had nothing
7 to do with municipal approval, site control or access
8 to capital.

9 The delay was entirely attributed to CRC.
10 When the new regs came out in February, it was in the
11 CRC purview to modify the timeline that the CRC
12 establish, but that didn't happen. While we've been
13 waiting on the CRC, two small shops within few hundred
14 yards of our location, unlicensed to sale cannabis are
15 happily filling the void for cannabis consumers. That
16 means no tax revenue to Haledon, no income for our
17 employees, who are patiently waiting for us to open.
18 And no safe tested cannabis for the people of Haledon
19 and the surrounding towns. I've called the CRC three
20 times during the last seven days and each time I was
21 told someone would call me back.

22 I'm still waiting. I know my time is up.
23 However, maybe you would consider a motion to take the
24 \$50,000 dollars that was imposed for a 13 day without a
25 labor peace agreement and divided that across my

1 employees who have had 20 days with zero income. Thank
2 you. Oh, and my application number is RV000173.

3 THE SECRETARY: The next three on the list
4 are Gaetano Lardieri, Gian Lombardi and Justin
5 Crosgile.

6 MR. CROSGILE: Hello. How you doing?
7 Good evening, CRC and everyone in attendance. My name
8 is Justin Crosgile, founder of Treeotics LLC. The
9 proposed location is in north New Jersey. What, this
10 one?

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah.

12 MR. CROSGILE: Our purposed location is in
13 north New Jersey. We're 100 percent certified and
14 minority owned company. We are in an impact zone and
15 have resolution and support from the city of North
16 Danbury. We have resolution for our floor plans.
17 We've submitted our provision application and is
18 currently in the process of buildup. You know, if you
19 ask me what we're to describe this opportunity for
20 myself, my family and our company. You know, I would
21 say, everything.

22 It's a real shot at a better living. A
23 real shot at true ownership. A real shot at, you know,
24 helping those in the community that was affected the
25 most with the war on drugs and those that are being

1 affected today. Me, myself was arrested a few years
2 ago for cannabis. I'm grateful, extremely, extremely
3 grateful to be here today to turn my life around with
4 this opportunity and also help the (inaudible) as well.

5 It's been a long, long journey but we
6 don't complain. We knew when we started what it would
7 be. We just take the punches, take it day by day.
8 Like me and my family, we've tried -- my mom's tried
9 used to try to open it, didn't really get approved, we
10 lost money.

11 Like I said, we just stayed committed to
12 it and put our blood, our sweat, and tears into it.
13 You know, everyday is a new challenge. We stick to it.
14 We're committed to bringing changes. We're committed
15 to service in the community. And Treeotics, we just
16 don't talk the talk but we walk the walk, with our
17 committed effort to service the community in need of
18 resources, in need of capital, but also in need of a
19 true opportunities for ownership a better living.
20 Treeotics is -- we're a community. Treeotics is
21 perseverance.

22 Treeotics, we display strength. With this
23 opportunity we will be able not only to spend tax
24 revenue, dollars into the city of North, but also to
25 create job opportunities, education. And also,

1 opportunities to put the capital and resources back
2 into the communities with the people that were affected
3 by it most. I like to say this quote, "everyday just
4 keep it grounded. I always say, well, just keep it
5 moving. I say, just believe in you. Believe in it.
6 Believe in you. It's already done. Just believe in
7 it. It's just, you know, trust your vision. Don't
8 limit yourself and trust that your vision will be
9 reality. Believe in you. Trust yourself, or don't
10 doubt yourself.

11 And trust that it's a matter of the power
12 within. It's already done. It's just basics, claim
13 it, own it. You know, speak as if the blessing is
14 already received. Like I said, thank you. I know my
15 time is up. Thank you, to the commissioner, Jeff
16 Brown, the whole CRC committee, for this continue
17 support throughout this process and for being able to
18 allow me to be heard today.

19 We look forward to the next steps
20 (inaudible) help on being finalized for our conversion,
21 from conditional to annual. With that being said, have
22 a wonderful weekend. My name is Justin Crosgile,
23 founder of Treeotics LLC in (inaudible). Thank you.

24 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Justin, where in North?

25 MR. CROSGILE: Lion's Plaza. Right next

1 to Rent-A-Center. We're in a parking lot right next to
2 78, with all these Popeye's, Rent-A-Center, Pizza Hut.
3 We have over couple 100 parking spaces.

4 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Is that the south
5 Floor?

6 MR. CROSGILE: South Floor.

7 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

8 MR. CROSGILE: (Inaudible).

9 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Good luck.

10 MR. CROSGILE: Thank you so much. Have a
11 great weekend.

12 THE SECRETARY: The next group on this
13 list Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf, Michael Edelstein, Scheril
14 Murray Powell.

15 MS. MURRAY POWELL: Good afternoon.

16 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Good afternoon.

17 MS. MURRAY POWELL: All right. My name is
18 Sheril Murray Powell, Esq. I'm a Cannabis agricultural
19 dietary supplementary and (inaudible) attorney. This
20 is my first in-person meeting so it's great to see
21 everyone in person. I also run the Justice Foundation,
22 which is an organization which helps license operators
23 get into the legal cannabis space. I want to speak
24 today, one, to commend CRC for your consistent focus on
25 those diversity numbers. It's very impressive that you

1 have over, over a year and a half consistently held
2 true to making sure that you're committed to repairing
3 the harm that was done by the criminalization of
4 Cannabis.

5 So thank you for that work. It's not easy
6 work, but you have your eye on the prize with regards
7 to diversity. You are also leading the nation in being
8 a catalyst for change. So I do wanna recognize
9 Director Brown, and Director McWhite for their
10 presentations at CAMRA, the cannabis regulatory
11 association in June of this year. I was fortunate and
12 (inaudible) to be present as well when they gave
13 directions to the rest of the country, every regulator
14 in the country with regards to how it can be consistent
15 and engaged with our -- not only our social (inaudible)
16 to the community, but our legacy community as well.

17 So I thank you for that work. And it's
18 good to be marching arm to arm with you with regards to
19 making sure that we're not losing any of our legacy
20 community behind. In addition to that, I do wanna
21 highlight the community impact focus as well. I wanna
22 highlight Harmony dispensary and Mr. Caucus (phonetic).

23 They partnered with the Justice Foundation
24 and did a justice jumpin. They allow us to come in and
25 do a justice jumpin and educate their customers about

1 legacy (inaudible), what legacy operatives are and how
2 they've contributed and they've done a round-off for
3 the month of July and August to support our efforts.

4 So I did wanna make sure they got
5 commended for being so engaged in the community. With
6 that said, my final point is I'm looking forward to
7 working with you as far as engaging the Rastafari
8 community. I am Rastafari as well. Across the
9 country, there is a lack of participation from the
10 Rastafari community.

11 And I look forward to working with you to
12 make sure that we engage, help these individuals to
13 surface so they can be a part of the new emerging legal
14 industry in the same way that they have been a part of
15 the existing market that looks (inaudible). So keep up
16 the great work with regards to diversity. And I forgot
17 to mention also, chirographic diversity is very present
18 in this market and (inaudible). Thank you so much.

19 THE SECRETARY: The last group on the list
20 are Sean Brown and Tameeka Mason.

21 MR. BROWN: Good afternoon, Madam Chair,
22 commissioners and staff and the public. Sean Brown,
23 I'm from Camden. First, Madam Chair, I sat here
24 several months ago and made some comments. I connected
25 with your staff as with the public. Thank Mr. McWhite

1 and Mr. Rodriguez for meeting, and Mr. Barker. I hope
2 he was able to -- would have been able to join us at
3 that meeting but he had an unexpected situation which
4 prevented that.

5 But Mr. Barker, I just wanna say to your
6 face what I would have said on the phone which is that
7 I appreciate your continued advocacy for every
8 reminders of how we got into this situation. And I
9 know that as we heard today, that sometimes there's
10 disagreement among you guys but as a person who's been
11 going to public meeting -- I know (inaudible) 20 years,
12 it's (inaudible).

13 But it's really refreshing to see public
14 dialogue and discussion and even debate among things,
15 to let us know that you take these issues seriously and
16 that you understand the complexities within
17 (inaudible). (Inaudible) to Mr. Brown (inaudible). I
18 just wanted to just -- I don't think --

19 VICE CHAIRPERSON: But there's.
20 (Laughter)

21 MR. BROWN: There's two things really
22 quick and none of these things will be a surprise.
23 One, I have a technical question. I'm not sure who can
24 answer it or how. I know someone (inaudible)
25 information, but if somebody could explain what the

1 vertical license process looks like. I just been
2 dealing with municipality who limited a -- one of their
3 zones, one of the zoning meds, with five licenses.

4 And what I told them is that when two
5 licenses is open up, what you're doing is you're
6 preventing a company from growing, packing and
7 wholesale. But then as I said that, I'm not sure if
8 I'm correct in saying what -- how many licenses can one
9 company have basically under one roof, what does that
10 look like? And then what guidance the municipalities
11 have now with the new licenses opening up to understand
12 those things?

13 In the (inaudible) the last point that I
14 wanna make in a very general sense is this thing of
15 (inaudible). So Chairwoman at the beginning of the
16 meeting, I think, did a great job of explaining why
17 there are delays on applicant side. Obviously, some
18 things that have to do with municipality. Somethings
19 have to do with the applicants themselves.

20 However, what I hear today is, is that
21 there seems to be still misunderstanding if I've done
22 everything right, if I followed through with all my
23 cures, if I did everything my investigator told me to
24 is there anything he could have done to shrink the
25 amount of time for approval? Because I know for a fact

1 there are companies who are paying \$5,000 dollars or
2 more in rent every month just waiting for this time to
3 occur. And while that goes on, that (inaudible) we are
4 still being sold and 36 days is grown. Thank you.

5 MS. MASON: Well, I said from the
6 beginning that I was gonna be the last person and I
7 wanted that so.

8 (Laughter)

9 MS. MASON: I don't know if I manifested
10 that or not. My name is Tameeka Mason. Good
11 afternoon, Madam Chair, ladies and gentlemen of the New
12 Jersey Cannabis Commission. Thank you so much for
13 affording me this opportunity to stand before you
14 today.

15 Again, my name is Tameeka Mason and I
16 stand before you not only as a native and current
17 resident who proudly hails from the great city of
18 Camden but an inspiring minority entrepreneur. Like
19 many of my peers, I share a deep commitment and
20 investment to the community that has shaped me, and I
21 aim to be one of the city's forefront advocate towards
22 its growth and prosperity.

23 I've worked tirelessly for the past three
24 years. I've lobbied to my city council and
25 administration to even consider adopting the business

1 marketplace from the state which led me to then to be a
2 part of the Camden City's Cannabis Ad hoc Commission,
3 where I served as secretary. I participated in round
4 table with MJEDA, around social equity. I've been
5 afforded the opportunity to even serve as an ambassador
6 for the city, where I traveled to different states --

7 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Hmm.

8 MS. MASON: -- that would be different
9 processes as far as legalizing adult use marijuana.
10 Overall, I've been a leading influence on the subject
11 of cannabis for my city, Camden. Today, I come before
12 you to share my story, my struggles, and my hopes as
13 the minority owner and president of a cannabis company,
14 Zen Franklin, LLC. We all know the heavy legacy of
15 cannabis.

16 In fact, I would like to praise the
17 commission for creating one of the most inclusive
18 regulations in all aspects of the industry. It's like
19 no other across the nation. So I must give you guys
20 all credit. The prioritization model is most certainly
21 a unique and impressive framework that you, the
22 commission should most certainly take pride in.

23 It affords opportunity for someone who
24 looks like with my background, someone who inspires to
25 be a successful entrepreneur in the industry. And I

1 really hope that New Jersey's model becomes one in
2 which other states could follow. I find myself right
3 now in a unique position as the majority own of Zen
4 Franklin, I am to my knowledge, out of seven municipal
5 approvals, currently the only African-American female
6 in Camden city pursuing a license in the cannabis
7 industry.

8 I embarked on this journey with a vision
9 to not only uplift myself, but to be a beacon of hope
10 for others in my community. I wanna show that the
11 legal route is the best path forward. And it is our
12 duty to lead by example. It is a challenging path, but
13 one I mostly navigate to create opportunity for others
14 who have faced justice for the war on drugs.

15 But respectfully, the path to obtaining a
16 license in this bargaining industry has been fought
17 with challenges. And this is where I believe the
18 mission of the commission comes into play. I
19 wholeheartedly embrace the commission aid to provide
20 access --

21 MS. NASH: Just wrap up.

22 MS. MASON: Okay. So again, just over
23 all, I've faced numerous setbacks, particularly, in the
24 terms of capital. The state's lengthy uncertain
25 process has left potential investors hesitant, casting

1 doubt on the viability of my company and overall the
2 timeline for a successful application has just been
3 difficult. And so I am just asking as you deliberate
4 the allocation of licenses, consider the future of
5 cannabis industry in' New Jersey.

6 I employ you to keep in mind the struggles
7 communities, the legacy of injustice and a promise for
8 a better, brighter, and an equitable future. Thank you
9 for your time. And I eagerly await for your
10 consideration of my journey in the future of Zen
11 Franklin. Thank you.

12 VICE CHAIRPERSON: By chance, are you
13 closer to Ben Franklin bridge?

14 MS. MASON: I am.

15 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I figured.`

16 MS. MASON: That's right, Zen Franklin,
17 Zen (inaudible) Franklin.

18 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I caught that.

19 THE SECRETARY: I'm just going to go
20 through the names (inaudible) doing it quickly. AL
21 Jenkins, Chandler Parsons, Chereese Tulino, Chris
22 Caruso, Chris Wood, Christopher Aponte, David Feder,
23 Dereece Ward, Gaetano Lardieri, Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf,
24 Michael Edelstein. This won't include registered
25 speakers, we have (inaudible).

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Mr. Said and
2 thank you to everybody who shared their thought and
3 experiences with the commission, and concerns and the
4 questions with the commission today. This concludes
5 the business that we have before us. Is there any new
6 business for the board to consider? Hearing none I
7 will ask for the motion to adjourn.

8 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Madam Chairman, I move
9 that we adjourn.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: The vice chair, who so
11 desperately wanted to amend the amendment five times --
12 six times --

13 VICE CHAIRPERSON: I would've amended six
14 times, but it would have been useless.

15 THE SECRETARY: -- moves to adjourn, Vice
16 Chair Delgado moves to adjourn. Is there a second?

17 MR. BARKER: Second.

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: Second by Commissioner
19 Barker. Is there any discussion on the motion to
20 adjourn? Hearing none, all those in favor of
21 adjourning say, aye.

22 TOGETHER: Aye.

23 VICE CHAIRPERSON: Aye.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: All those opposed say,
25 Nay. Any abstentions? All right. The motion passes.

1 The time is now 5:07 p.m. and we are adjourned. Thank
2 you so much everyone for joining us this evening. Have
3 a great evening.

4 (Meeting concluded)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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I, Avi Noam Taub, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of the testimonies at the time, place and on the date hereinbefore set forth, to the best of my ability.

I do further certify that the transcriber and editor who worked on this transcript are neither a relative nor employee nor attorney nor counsel of any of the parties to this action, and none are a relative or employee of such attorney or counsel, and that I'm not financially interested in the action.

AVI NOAM TAUB

Date: September 21, 2023

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