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MARIA DEL CID-KOSSO, *Commissioner*
SAMUEL DELGADO, *Commissioner*
CHARLES BARKER, *Commissioner*
JEFF BROWN, *Executive Director*

NEW JERSEY CANNABIS REGULATORY COMMISSION

44 South Clinton Avenue Trenton, NJ 08626

October 19, 2023

Appearances for the Board:

Dianna Houenou, Chair

Samuel Delgado, Vice Chair

Charles Barker, Commissioner

Krista G. Nash, Commissioner

Appearances for the Administration:

Jeff Brown, Executive Director

Kelly Anderson-Thomas, Deputy Executive Director

Wesley McWhite, III, Director, Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Christopher Riggs, Chief Counsel

Daniel Said, Board Secretary

1 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Good morning, everyone.
2 Thank you for joining us. The time is 11:05 and I am
3 calling this meeting to order. Mr. Said, can you
4 please read the notice of the public meeting?

5 MR. SAID: Chairwoman, this is a regularly
6 scheduled meeting of the New Jersey Cannabis
7 Regulatory Commission's 2023 annual meeting schedule.
8 Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in
9 accordance with the Senator Byron M. Baer Open Public
10 Meetings Act.

11 Notice of the meeting was provided to the
12 Asbury Park Press, Atlantic City Express, Bergen
13 Record, Courier Post, Star Ledger and the Trenton
14 Times on January 11, 2023. The agenda and information
15 regarding the virtual nature of this meeting was also
16 posted on the CRC website. The meeting time and
17 location has also been posted on the website of the
18 New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission and with the
19 Office of the Secretary of the State.

20 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you. Mr. Said,
21 can you please take roll call?

22 MR. SAID: Commissioner Barker?

23 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Present.

24

MR. SAID: Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso is

25

absent. Commissioner Nash?

1 COMMISSIONER NASH: Present.

2 MR. SAID: Vice Chair Delgado?

3 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Present.

4 MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou?

5 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Present.

6 MR. SAID: We now have a quorum. The first

7 order of business is for the commission to go into

8 executive session to discuss legal matters and

9 litigation updates. These are discussions that are

10 not shared with the public. We believe the executive

11 session should take about 45 minutes.

12 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you. So I will

13 ask for a motion for the board to go into executive

14 session.

15 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Madam Chair, I move

16 that we go into executive session.

17 COMMISSIONER NASH: Second.

18 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Moved by Commissioner

19 Barker. Seconded by Commissioner Nash. Is there any

20 discussion on this motion? Hearing none, all those in

21 favor, say aye.

22 (Board responds aye.)

23 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: All those opposed say

24 nay. Are there any abstentions? Hearing none, motion

25 passes.

1 As Mr. Said mentioned, we expect the
2 executive session to last approximately 45 minutes.

3 A note for our agenda. In executive
4 session, we do expect to discuss item number 9A on the
5 agenda, ATC identification card, but due to the nature
6 of that item, those are discussions that will take
7 place in executive session. But once we get to that
8 item -- once we resume the public session and we get
9 to that item, the board will take formal action in
10 public session on that item. But I must note that the
11 board does expect to discuss that item in particular
12 in executive session.

13 So with that, we expect to resume our public
14 session at, math time, 11 -- somebody help me out
15 here.

16 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: 53. It's 11:10 right
17 now.

18 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: What's that?

19 MR. RIGGS: 11:55.

20 MS. ANDERSON-THOMAS: Give or take.

21 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Give or take. 11:55.

22 All right. Counsel Riggs, I'm holding you to it.

23 11:55 a.m. We'll leave the livestream running during
24 that time for folks in the room.

The staff who do remain in the room will not

1 be able to answer questions about the items that are
2 under consideration during today's board meeting. So
3 if you need to use the restroom, please do, and we
4 will see you all soon. Thank you.

5 (Board enters executive session.)

6 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: All right. Welcome
7 back. Thank you for your patience, everyone. The
8 time is 11:58, and we will resume the public portion
9 of today's meeting.

10 Mr. Said, if you can please announce the
11 next agenda item.

12 MR. SAID: Next up on the agenda is
13 approving the minutes of both the commission's open
14 and executive sessions held on September 8th. The
15 minutes have been shared with the members of the
16 commission prior to this meeting.

17 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: I'll ask my board
18 members if there is any edit that needs to be made to
19 the meeting minutes. If none, then I will ask for a
20 motion to approve the meeting minutes for
21 September 8th.

22 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Madam Chair, I move
23 that we approve the meeting minutes for September 8th.

24

COMMISSIONER NASH: Second.

25

CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Seconded. Moved by

1 Commissioner Barker, seconded by Commissioner Nash.

2 Is there any discussion on this motion? Hearing none,

3 all those in favor of approving the meeting minutes

4 for September 8, 2023, say aye.

5 (Board responds aye.)

6 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: All those opposed say

7 nay. Are there any abstentions? Hearing none, the

8 motion passes.

9 MR. SAID: The next item on the agenda is

10 the chair's report.

11 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you. So for

12 today's chair's report, I want to remind folks that

13 the Cannabis Regulatory Commission's rule proposal to

14 expand edible products in the adult-use cannabis

15 market has been published in the New Jersey Register.

16 The public comment period is open through

17 December 15th.

18 If you go to our website, on the navigation

19 bar, you go to the resources tab and click on cannabis

20 statutes and rules. There you'll find a copy of the

21 rule proposal and a link to submit your written

22 comments.

23 Also, I want to note that applications are

24 open for our social equity businesses to apply for

25 wholesaler, distributor, and delivery services

1 licenses. The new classes do allow for more vertical
2 integration. So if you are interested in vertically
3 integrating your business in accordance with the
4 statutes, please be sure to submit an application for
5 each and every license that you would like.

6 December 27th, the new classes of licenses
7 will be open for our diversely-owned businesses to
8 apply for, and then beginning on March 27th, all other
9 applicants can begin submitting their applications for
10 those licenses.

11 If you missed our webinar, the CRC conducted
12 a webinar on September 14th. It does have some
13 important information for our applicants, so go to our
14 website to check that out. Nj.gov/cannabis. Again,
15 on the resources tab, at the bottom, you will see a
16 link for our webinars.

17 And lastly, I do want to reiterate a couple
18 of reminders for our industry. So I want to encourage
19 stakeholders to be active participants in removing
20 barriers that are holding the industry back. So
21 engage with your lawmakers and local officials about
22 what changes you want to see in the law. Help
23 applicants be prepared for business ownership.

24 Connect applicants to financing options that you know

25 are available. Work with your city officials to

1 address concerns with unlicensed, unregulated
2 businesses, and make prices affordable and welcoming
3 for patients and consumers.

4 Now, to our applicants. The reminder is
5 that the commission currently has a lot of
6 applications that are in inactive status that are just
7 sitting in our application portal and unable to move
8 through the approval process because businesses are
9 not responding to our commission staff when they reach
10 out to fix the deficiencies in their applications.

11 So to our applicants, make sure that your
12 contact information is up-to-date and correctly listed
13 in your application. Please check your email spam
14 folders, and your voicemail, and contact the Office of
15 Diversity and Inclusion, the Office of Licensing, or
16 your assigned investigator if you have questions about
17 how to fix a deficiency in your application.

18 New Jersey's regulated cannabis market has
19 great potential. I think everybody here can support
20 that. But we can only live up to that potential if
21 both government and the private sector work together
22 to support cannabis business entrepreneurs. And with
23 that, that's all I have for today's chair's report.

24

MR. SAID: The next item on the agenda is

25

the executive director's report.

1 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Director Brown, you
2 have the floor.

3 MR. BROWN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm
4 going to keep it short and sweet today. I have some
5 important milestones to run through, though. So I'm
6 happy to announce that there are now more than 60
7 retail sites open across New Jersey, spread across 18
8 counties, and we have a list of some of the newer
9 openings on the slide here. We have both new
10 recreational-only retailers as well as expansions into
11 recreational from medicinal. This is -- you know,
12 we're less than two years since we announced the
13 opening of applications, and we already have 60 retail
14 sites.

15 I can tell you, while not on this slide, we
16 also have several AU-only cultivators that are up and
17 running as well as adult-use-only manufacturers, so
18 product diversity is coming to this market.

19 Next slide, please. Looking at a licensing
20 update. As far as what has been issued, the
21 commission's now issued over 1,250 conditional
22 licenses, 157 conversions to annual license from
23 conditionals, and 112 annuals, as well as 60 expanded

24 ATC licenses. In total, there are over 300 operating
25 licenses awarded or issued at this time in New Jersey.

1 In total, there have been 1,588 licenses either
2 awarded or issued by this commission. So we're still
3 making great progress there.

4 Next slide, please. And this is out of a
5 total of 2,276 applications submitted. Again, 15 --
6 it should be 1,588. 1,588 have been approved. We
7 still have some under review in licensing and under
8 review in our Office of Compliance and Investigations.
9 They are, by far and large, mostly newer applications
10 or applications that have some deficiency that need to
11 be cured.

12 As our chair mentioned, there are a number
13 that have been rejected and are just pending
14 resubmission following a cure. There's about 350 of
15 those applications in the system right now. Those
16 applicants, you know, once they resubmit, could move
17 forward if though so choose.

18 Also encouraging is we're seeing -- we
19 continue to see more conditional license holders apply
20 to convert to annual licenses. So we've now received,
21 we're inching towards close to 400 conditional
22 conversion applications, and those are coming in still
23 consistently.

24 For today, before the board, there are 40

25 conditional applications, 52 conditional to annual

1 conversion applications, and 20 annual applications.

2 And with that, back to you, Madam Chair.

3 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you, Director

4 Brown. Are there any questions from the board for

5 Director Brown? All right. Hearing none, thank you.

6 And we will move on.

7 MR. SAID: The next item on the agenda is

8 the permitting and licensing committee report.

9 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you. I'll be

10 giving today's report for the permitting and licensing

11 committee. In total, we've had nearly 100 businesses

12 granted extensions from July through September. And

13 in total, since the committee began granting

14 extensions, nearly 650 conditional license extensions

15 have been granted.

16 In the past, I've noted the top reasons why

17 individuals -- or sorry, why businesses have been

18 requesting extensions of their conditional license.

19 This time, we have been able to quantify those

20 reasons. So 64 percent of those requesting extensions

21 have cited municipal approval delays as a reason for

22 needing extra time, and we see nearly 60 percent also

23 still struggling with site control.

24 Funding issues, I am pleased to report that

25 funding issues has decreased as a cited reason for the

1 need for extensions. It does still continue to be a
2 problem faced by many of our business owners, but we
3 are seeing that those numbers decrease a little bit
4 there.

5 But I do want to note that with the
6 municipal approval delays, you know, this is a
7 fairly -- I think this is a pretty high number when we
8 have 64 percent of our conditional license holders
9 that need -- I'm sorry, that need extensions due to
10 municipal approval delays. And we find that the
11 delays are particularly prevalent among -- in those
12 municipalities that have a local cannabis advisory
13 board of some sort or otherwise institute a very rigid
14 sequential process at the local level.

15 I want to remind all of our municipal
16 partners that there is no need to recreate the wheel.
17 The CRC does a lot of the heavy lifting when it comes
18 to investigations and vetting of cannabis businesses.
19 So we do encourage our municipalities to keep things
20 as simple as possible so that our cannabis businesses
21 do not find themselves stuck in a holding pattern or
22 experiencing significant delays that can further
23 exacerbate the costs that our cannabis businesses are

24 incurring while waiting for the green light to move
25 forward.

1 Because again, municipal approval and site
2 control are requirements under the statute for
3 businesses to have in place and secured before they
4 can even apply to the commission for their annual
5 license. So if we have so many -- if we have so many
6 of our conditional license holders that are not able
7 to submit a conversion application, you know, this
8 will continue to be a problem, in particular for those
9 businesses that our statute really was meant to help
10 with the conditional license process.

11 If you are in need of an extension, go to
12 our website. If you go to the next slide, please. On
13 our cannabis business page, right there on the right
14 hand side are the instructions and the form that is
15 needed to fill out -- that you need to fill out to
16 request an extension. We do still see some businesses
17 not submitting requests and the appropriate form or by
18 the required deadline, so I really encourage everyone
19 to read the instructions there, follow those
20 instructions to make sure that you are setting
21 yourself up for success.

22 Some of the other issues that -- next slide,
23 please. Some of the other issues that the committee

24 has come across are, you know, some awardees are

25 failing to pay their fees. Especially these are the

1 application approval fees. If you have not paid your
2 fee, you need to do so immediately. As stipulated in
3 final agency decisions that are sent to our award
4 winners, there is a -- there's a time limit for you to
5 submit your application approval fee. If you do not
6 submit your application approval fees, then you risk
7 having that award being rescinded or other adverse
8 action being taken.

9 We also have noted that there are several
10 businesses that had been awarded an annual license
11 about a year ago and they are now coming up on their
12 one year deadline to become operational. This is a
13 requirement that is in our regulations. As you see
14 here, we have 15 businesses that have an operational
15 deadline this month. If you are -- and I believe
16 we've only received a couple of extension requests
17 from businesses that fall under this category.

18 So if you have an operational deadline that
19 is coming up in the near future and you are not ready
20 to request an on-site assessment as required by our
21 regulations, contact the CRC. Make sure that we are
22 informed about what issues you're facing. And if you
23 need to request an extension, please do so as soon as

24 possible. Don't wait until the last minute.

25 We want to make sure that our businesses are

1 in communication with their assigned investigators so
2 that our investigators and compliance officers know
3 what's happening and can assist our businesses where
4 needed. So again, keep track of your deadlines.

5 If you are one of the 15 who have
6 operational deadlines coming up in October, we've got
7 11 coming up in December and 12 in January. Please be
8 mindful of those deadlines, especially with the
9 holidays coming around, the winter holidays coming up.
10 We don't want you to get caught there.

11 And I want to give a special thank you to
12 our office of licensing, and in particular, Megan,
13 Shameem and Terry for their assistance in pulling the
14 data and helping the committee get these extensions
15 across the finish line.

16 And that is all I have for today's
17 permitting and licensing committee report.

18 COMMISSIONER NASH: Madam Chair, I have a
19 question or a request.

20 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER NASH: First of all, I'm
22 pleasantly surprised to see that the funding, a delay
23 or request for extensions for funding is only at

24 19 percent. I'm interested to see, the next time you
25 report out, a breakdown in social equity businesses,

1 like who is requesting these extensions. If we could
2 do that.

3 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes, I'll have to work
4 with the Office of Licensing, the staff there that
5 assist in the process for these extensions to see what
6 is possible. It might -- because our form does not --
7 only requests for certain information, right. In
8 accordance with the resolution that delegated
9 authority to the committee, we want to make sure that
10 we're not inadvertently giving preference to those --
11 to certain businesses over others that do need
12 extensions. But I will certainly work with the staff
13 on the committee to see what we can do to provide
14 further detailed information about the requests that
15 are coming in.

16 COMMISSIONER NASH: Thank you.

17 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Any other questions
18 from the board? All right. Thank you.

19 MR. SAID: The next item on the agenda is
20 the public engagement and education committee report.

21 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: I'll turn the floor
22 over to Commissioner Barker who will give the
23 committee report from his committee.

24 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Thank you, Madam

25 Chairwoman. And good afternoon to everyone joining us

1 today, in person and virtually. And our committee and
2 our team are grateful, and we're humbled to be charged
3 with educating and communicating with the public on
4 different initiatives. Whether continuing our duty to
5 keep the public informed of cannabis updates or
6 hosting public hearings to listen to your guidance and
7 ideas, know that it is truly an honor to serve you and
8 come before you to help shape this industry together.

9 Briefly, I just want to thank the PEEC
10 committee team, I want to thank Commissioner Nash, I
11 want to thank Executive Director Brown, staff, the
12 state code, there's the advocates who helped shape
13 this campaign. You know, our state agencies and our
14 organizational partners, for profit and nonprofit, and
15 the vendor contractor Princeton Partners.

16 Commissioner Nash and I are just going to
17 take a few minutes to share updates on the safe-use
18 campaign and what this public can expect as we aim to
19 encourage smart and safe cannabis use.

20 Many of you may have heard Director Brown
21 last week at our press conference when he shared that
22 the CREAMM Act stipulates that the commission provide
23 this information for safe and responsible use, as well

24 as initiative to deter youth consumption. And so we

25 hope this campaign evidences our commitment to

1 achieving those goals. You know, it's no secret
2 equity and safety are the pillars of our commission,
3 and so we take this responsibility serious and provide
4 fair, credible and continuing education.

5 Next slide, please. So the Cannabis Smart.
6 Cannabis Safe campaign will provide educational
7 content and media rooted in science, history, and
8 fairness. We hope to not create the refer madness
9 campaigns of the past that stigmatize and criminalize
10 the plan. No, we hope to offer impartial information
11 that allows the public to learn and mature their
12 understanding. We want to ensure that the content,
13 that the ads, the audience, that they are diverse and
14 reflect the CRC's values and the state's values.

15 To this extent, we're happy to report that
16 Princeton Partners will team up with URL Media, a
17 network of BIPOC media organizations to amplify
18 inclusive awareness and content. And we hope that
19 this increase in cannabis knowledge will help the
20 public feel more confident with how cannabis can be
21 used and can be stored.

22 We are intentionally offering multiple
23 languages. I want to highlight that. I believe we're

24 going to kick it off, Commissioner Nash, primarily in
25 English and Spanish, but the campaign is flexible and

1 can provide additional languages or additional
2 language interpretations if necessary. A lot of the
3 content is going to be common, everyday language and
4 tone. Attractive imagery that will resonate with the
5 public and make the messages simple to understand.

6 And they're going to be amplified throughout the state
7 from signage and outdoor advertising to, I believe,
8 digital ads, websites and streaming services, social
9 media posts and other outlets.

10 Some of the central messages and themes are
11 listed on the slide before you. We know primarily
12 cannabis is for adults, and there are circumstances
13 where children, for medical reasons, may use, but we
14 want to encourage and express that cannabis is for
15 adults primarily. It impairs driving, we can't stress
16 that enough and Commissioner Nash is go to touch on
17 that.

18 Cannabis use should be approached carefully.
19 You know, as we stated earlier, you want to learn
20 about the ingredients in a product. You want to be
21 able to understand how to read the labels. You want
22 to be familiar with the different product types and
23 their effects, the potency levels, how to safely

24 storage. And so we hope these kind of messages can

25 help certain users avoid unpleasant experiences.

1 Something I want to touch on because it is
2 important is buying from a licensed dispensary. We
3 know that, and we've heard it time and time again, the
4 legacy market has existed far before the legal market.
5 And we know that people still trust and respect the
6 legacy market. So we want to educate the public even
7 more about the regulated market and the safety and
8 protections that it offers so you can avoid the
9 dangers of potentially untested or contaminated
10 products.

11 You can have a product that has a label with
12 ingredients. You can have a method of finding out
13 what those ingredients mean or where that product was
14 tested, and what was the results of that test -- what
15 were the results of the tests. Also, very
16 importantly, God forbid, we hope that nothing happens,
17 but if something does happen, you have a legal
18 recourse. There's a method that you can address that
19 issue.

20 So we do hope that the messages resonate and
21 encourages more of the public, and I think Chairwoman
22 Houenou touched on this earlier, and it's something
23 that's not here but what I do hope will -- I think

24 what we hope is that as the public becomes more
25 educated, we see more municipalities out there, right.

1 We hear that a lot of concerns are from parents and
2 elected officials. So we hope that this campaign can
3 iron out some of those concerns, can ease some of
4 those concerns, and spark up a change where
5 municipalities allow cannabis.

6 Next slide, please. And as we said, we aim
7 to spread our campaign throughout New Jersey. Ample
8 resources will be shared with the public, with
9 cannabis businesses, with noncannabis businesses, with
10 advocates, with university partners, with
11 organizations and stakeholder groups. We want this to
12 be amplified in as many areas as possible so that we
13 hit our target audience as you can see before you.

14 School-age children and teenagers, who are
15 very vulnerable, should be informed and knowledgeable
16 about how to stay away from cannabis use unless
17 medically necessary. Parents, parents, parents. We
18 hear so much from parents and we want to give them the
19 tools that they need to feel comfortable to talk to
20 their children, to understand the signs if they think
21 that use is happening in their household.

22 And so another big topic, health impacted
23 individuals. You know, individuals have certain

24 health conditions and they may not know that cannabis

25 can be consumed in different methods to help their

1 particular situation, and so we want to get that
2 information out there.

3 I believe Commissioner Nash, would you want
4 to touch on something with the drivers?

5 COMMISSIONER NASH: I do. I want to
6 actually touch on a couple things. Thank you,
7 Commissioner Barker.

8 So some people might roll their eyes when
9 you're discussing cannabis use and pregnancy. For
10 some, that's a hard no, but in the second slide, we
11 are coming from an unbiased nonjudgmental place here.

12 And I want to review this because I feel that peer
13 journal -- peer-reviewed journals are really important
14 and they state facts.

15 So not everyone is -- people have to rely on
16 certain medicines to make the pain go away, and some
17 can be highly addictive, and also dangerous to a baby.

18 So currently, up to 90 percent of opioid patients in
19 state-level medical cannabis registries list chronic
20 pain as their qualifying condition for the medical
21 program.

22 In an exhaustive review, the National
23 Academy of Science and Medicine recently confirmed the

24 efficacy of cannabis for chronic pain in adults. When
25 given access to cannabis, individuals currently using

1 opioids for chronic pain decreased their use of
2 opioids by 40 to 60 percent. So I mention that
3 because we have to reduce the stigma of cannabis use
4 in both medical and adult-use, but particularly, for
5 mothers who may need to rely on cannabis instead of
6 more highly addictive substances.

7 The other thing I wanted to add is impaired
8 driving. We have delivery, it's available.

9 Dispensaries can deliver their products to you at home
10 so, you know, host a party, have -- just be at home.
11 Stay off the road. It's not difficult.

12 The other one thing I wanted to add and then
13 I'm going to turn it back to Commissioner Barker is we
14 have inexperienced cannabis users. When edibles are
15 available, and I'm talking a delicious chocolate bar,
16 and I think that my colleagues can attest that I have
17 a sweet tooth. I can eat a whole Hershey's bar. And
18 each of those squares is one serving. So someone that
19 doesn't know that may eat ten servings and they're
20 going to be very sick if they're not used to that
21 amount of THC in their body, and we certainly don't
22 want that.

23 So this campaign seeks to educate everyone,

24 including those who might harm themselves or others.

25 Commissioner Barker.

1 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Thank you,
2 Commissioner Nash. And so again, want to just thank
3 our partners we mentioned earlier for all of their
4 support and hard work helping us put this campaign
5 together. This is, hopefully, the first of many
6 educational campaigns at the CRC.

7 And what is dynamic, as we said earlier, is
8 that the campaign is flexible. So please, if there
9 are any suggestions as we roll this out, feel free to
10 reach out to the CRC so we can review the feedback and
11 look into any necessary changes to improve what we're
12 doing. Thank you. And with that, I'll turn it back
13 over to you.

14 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you, Commissioner
15 Barker and Commissioner Nash. Any questions from the
16 board regarding the public engagement education
17 committee report? Hearing none, I thank the committee
18 again for their remarks and their work to advance the
19 safe-use campaign, public messaging campaign.

20 With that, Mr. Said, can you please announce
21 the next agenda item?

22 MR. SAID: The next item on the agenda is
23 the consideration of applications for name changes.

24

CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: With that, I will turn

25

it over to Director Brown to provide a summary of the

1 request for name changes that have been received.

2 MR. BROWN: Absolutely. Thank you, Madam
3 Chair. And you know, I did want to thank both the
4 committees for the work that they've done. You know,
5 really appreciate it. And also on the safe-use
6 campaign, our comms team which has done tremendous
7 work. And all the messages are going to be
8 science-based as would any health messaging would be
9 consistent with CDC guidelines. You know, NIDA,
10 SAMHSA, New Jersey Department of Health, so people
11 will be able to have confidence with the messages and
12 everything coming out of that campaign.

13 On the name changes, we have a number of
14 name change applications before us. They're listed up
15 here on the slide. They have all filed with the
16 Secretary of State, filed with us, and therefore, are
17 recommended for approval.

18 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you. Any
19 questions from the board? Hearing none, I will ask is
20 there a motion on this matter?

21 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Madam Chair, I move
22 that we consider the name change requests. I move
23 that we approve the consideration for the name change

24 requests.

25 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Commissioner Barker has

1 moved to approve the name change request. Is there a
2 second?

3 COMMISSIONER NASH: Second.

4 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Seconded by
5 Commissioner Nash. Is there any discussion on this
6 motion? Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you
7 please call the vote?

8 MR. SAID: Commissioner Barker?

9 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

10 MR. SAID: Commissioner Nash?

11 COMMISSIONER NASH: Yes.

12 MR. SAID: Vice Chair Delgado?

13 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Yes.

14 MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou?

15 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes.

16 MR. SAID: The motion passes. The next item
17 on the agenda is the consideration for applications
18 for location changes.

19 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you. Director
20 Brown, the floor is yours.

21 MR. BROWN: Thank you, Madam Chair. We have
22 one application for location change. It's GTI.
23 They're a Class 2 manufacturer license, as well as the

24 corresponding medical permit. A change from 2-62 Wood
25 Avenue in Paterson to Hackettstown. Hackettstown is

1 their new cultivation facility. Their second
2 cultivation facility that was approved by the board.
3 So they've submitted everything they need, floor
4 plans, everything that our team looks at. Our office
5 of compliance and investigations have reviewed the
6 request and it is staff's recommendation that the
7 location change be approved.

8 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Are there any questions
9 from the board? All right. Hearing no questions, is
10 there a motion on this matter?

11 COMMISSIONER NASH: Madam Chair, I move to
12 approve the change of location for GTI New Jersey.

13 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Moved by Commissioner
14 Nash. Is there a second? Is there a second on this
15 motion to approve the location change?

16 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Madam Chairwoman, I
17 second.

18 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Seconded by Vice Chair
19 Delgado. Is there any discussion on this motion to
20 approve the location change of GTI New Jersey?

21 The only thing that I will want to throw out
22 for consideration for the board is that given the
23 desire to move its manufacturing -- both manufacturing

24 permits to this new location, that it be clear in the
25 final agency decision issued to the business that no

1 manufacturing -- no manufacturing is authorized to
2 occur at the new location until staff have issued the
3 permits and the licenses for the new location. After
4 all of the equipment and necessary accommodations have
5 been executed.

6 Any other discussion? Hearing no further
7 discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

8 MR. SAID: Commissioner Barker?

9 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Abstain.

10 MR. SAID: Commissioner Nash?

11 COMMISSIONER NASH: Yes.

12 MR. SAID: Vice Chair Delgado?

13 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Yes.

14 MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou?

15 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes.

16 MR. SAID: The motion passes. The next item

17 on the agenda is the consideration of applications for
18 ownership changes.

19 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Director Brown, can you
20 please provide a summary of the ownership change
21 request that has been received?

22 MR. BROWN: Absolutely. Thank you, Madam
23 Chair. So before the commission is an application for

24 an ownership change of New Jersey Cannalytics, which
25 was one of our licensed testing laboratories. The new

1 owner would be Thymer Analytics and BCUSC,
2 Incorporated. The BCUSC, Incorporated, is the parent
3 company there.

4 In your board packet, you have a list of all
5 the individuals involved in this transaction. It
6 lists an outline of the new corporate structure,
7 everybody has been appropriately vetted in accordance
8 with our regulations. You know, the structure has
9 been reviewed, and it is -- this ownership change is
10 recommended for approval by the board.

11 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you. Is are
12 there any questions from the board for Director Brown
13 about the information provided? Hearing no questions,
14 I will ask for a motion on this matter.

15 COMMISSIONER NASH: Madam Chair, I move to
16 approve the transfer of ownership for New Jersey
17 Cannalytics.

18 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Moved by Commissioner
19 Nash. Is there a second?

20 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: I second.

21 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Seconded by Vice Chair
22 Delgado. Is there any discussion on this motion?
23 Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call

24 the vote?

25 MR. SAID: Commissioner Barker?

1 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Nay.

2 MR. SAID: Commissioner Nash?

3 COMMISSIONER NASH: Yes.

4 MR. SAID: Vice Chair Delgado?

5 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Yes.

6 MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou?

7 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes.

8 MR. SAID: The motion passes. The next item
9 for consideration is the adult-use cannabis business
10 conditional license applications.

11 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Director Brown, the
12 floor's yours.

13 MR. BROWN: Thank you very much. So before
14 the commission are 40 conditional licenses, eight
15 cultivators, 11 manufacturers, 21 retailers. They
16 have all gone through a licensing process which once
17 they submit, they're assigned a priority based on the
18 qualifications in the application. That priority
19 designation is then verified. Staff conducts a
20 completeness review. These applications have been
21 deemed complete.

22 They are then scored and if they score
23 sufficiently high, they move forward to a

- 24 qualification review. These have all scored
- 25 sufficiently high. And for conditional licenses

1 there's initial just, you know, quick look assessment
2 for qualification. Not as involved as with annual
3 applications, but these have all gone through that
4 quality control and they're recommended for approval
5 by the CRC Board of Commissioners.

6 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you. And I
7 believe we have the list of conditional license
8 applications. Thank you. And this list of
9 applications that is under consideration is also
10 available on our website, nj.gov/cannabis. If you go
11 to our meetings page, in the agenda you will see
12 hyperlinks to these lists of applications that are up
13 for consideration today.

14 With that, are there any questions from the
15 board for Director Brown regarding the conditional
16 license applications? Hearing no questions, is there
17 a motion on this matter?

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

20 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Moved by Commissioner
21 Barker. Is there a second?

22 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: I second.

23 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Seconded by Vice Chair

24 Delgado. Is there any discussion on this motion?

25 Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call

1 the vote?

2 MR. SAID: Commissioner Barker?

3 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

4 MR. SAID: Commissioner Nash?

5 COMMISSIONER NASH: Yes.

6 MR. SAID: Vice Chair Delgado?

7 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Yes.

8 MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou?

9 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes.

10 MR. SAID: The motion passes. The next item

11 for consideration is the adult-use cannabis business

12 conversion license applications.

13 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you. Director

14 Brown.

15 MR. BROWN: Thank you, Chairwoman Houenou.

16 Before the commission there's 52 conversion

17 applications. On both the conversion applications,

18 you know, number one, credit to the applicants who

19 have gone through this process, stuck with it, and

20 then credit to our staff and the office of licensing

21 and office of compliance and investigations. We've

22 really seen, you know, these conversions and annuals

23 increase at these meetings which is great to see. We

24 want to get more businesses approved and operational.

24 that we approve the conditional to annual license

25 conversions.

1 COMMISSIONER NASH: Second.

2 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Moved by Commissioner

3 Barker, and seconded by Commissioner Nash. Is there

4 any discussion on this motion? Hearing no discussion,

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

6 MR. SAID: Commissioner Barker?

7 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

8 MR. SAID: Commissioner Nash?

9 COMMISSIONER NASH: Yes.

10 MR. SAID: Vice Chair Delgado?

11 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Yes.

12 MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou?

13 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes.

14 MR. SAID: The motion passes. The next item

15 for consideration is the adult-use cannabis business

16 annual license applications.

17 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Director Brown, the

18 floor's yours.

19 MR. BROWN: Thank you, Madam Chair. The

20 annual applications went through the exact same

21 process I just outlined for the conditional conversion

22 applications. The difference is that they applied

23 directly for an annual license versus getting a

24 conditional license first. But the priority

25 designation was verified, they were deemed complete,

1 scored sufficiently high, and underwent a background
2 investigation and qualification review. We did a
3 quality control review, and these 20 annual license
4 applications are now recommended for approval by the
5 CRC Board of Commissioners.

6 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you. Any
7 questions from the board for Director Brown regarding
8 the 20 applications for an annual license? No
9 questions. Is there a motion on this matter?

10 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Madam Chair, I move
11 that we approve the annual license applications.

12 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Moved by Commissioner
13 Barker. Is there a second?

14 COMMISSIONER NASH: Second.

15 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Seconded by
16 Commissioner Nash. Is there any discussion on this
17 motion? Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you
18 please call the vote?

19 MR. SAID: Commissioner Barker?

20 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

21 MR. SAID: Commissioner Nash?

22 COMMISSIONER NASH: Yes.

23 MR. SAID: Vice Chair Delgado?

24

VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Yes.

25

MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou?

1 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes.

2 MR. SAID: The motion passes. The next item
3 for consideration are the expanded alternative
4 treatment center certifications.

5 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Director Brown, if you
6 can, please provide us a summary of the certification
7 materials provided by the ATCs.

8 MR. BROWN: Absolutely. Thank you. We have
9 four ATC expansion certifications up for consideration
10 today. They are BLOC, which is a Class 5 retailer.
11 That's in Waretown in Ocean County. Garden State
12 Botanicals, also a Class 5 retailer, that's in North
13 Brunswick. GTI New Jersey, a Class 1 cultivator which
14 is in Hackettstown. HoneyGrove South, Corp., which is
15 in Gloucester Township.

16 Expanded ATCs, they have to submit a number
17 of things as part of their certification; municipal
18 approval, a letter of intent noting their intent to
19 expand, certification that they have sufficient
20 quantity, certification that they can operationally
21 continue to meet the needs of patients as well as
22 serve recreational customers. As well as the standard
23 things we require for entities, you know, submitting

24 application, list of owners, any changes to the
25 previously submitted application, as well as, you

1 know, verification of labor peace agreements.

2 All of these -- all four entities have
3 submitted the required materials, they've been
4 assessed against the regulatory factors that we look
5 at for expanded ATCs and they're all recommended for
6 expansion today.

7 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you, Director
8 Brown. Are there any questions from the board
9 regarding these certification materials? All right.
10 Hearing none, with respect to the first ATC wishing to
11 expand, which I believe is BLOC, is that right? Yes,
12 it is, thank you. Is there a motion on this matter as
13 it pertains to BLOC?

14 COMMISSIONER NASH: Madam Chair, I move to
15 approve BLOC's resolution to expand operations to
16 adult personal use.

17 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Moved by Commissioner
18 Nash. Is there a second?

19 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: I second.

20 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Seconded by Vice Chair

21 Delgado. Is there any discussion on this motion as it
22 pertains to BLOC? Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said,
23 can you please call the vote?

24

MR. SAID: Commissioner Barker?

25

COMMISSIONER BARKER: Abstain.

1 MR. SAID: Commissioner Nash?

2 COMMISSIONER NASH: Yes.

3 MR. SAID: Vice Chair Delgado?

4 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Yes.

5 MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou?

6 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes.

7 MR. SAID: The motion passes.

8 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Now we'll move on to

9 Garden State Botanicals. Is there a motion as it

10 relates to Garden State Botanicals?

11 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Madam Chairwoman, I

12 move that we expand Garden State Botanicals.

13 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: That we approve?

14 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: That we approve, thank

15 you. Thank you.

16 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: All right. Vice Chair

17 Delgado has moved to approve the expansion of Garden

18 State Botanicals. Is there a second?

19 COMMISSIONER NASH: I'll second.

20 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Seconded by

21 Commissioner Nash. Is there any discussion on this

22 motion as it relates to Garden State Botanicals?

23 Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call

24 the vote?

MR. SAID: Commissioner Barker?

1 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Abstain.

2 MR. SAID: Commissioner Nash?

3 COMMISSIONER NASH: Yes.

4 MR. SAID: Vice Chair Delgado?

5 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Yes.

6 MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou?

7 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes.

8 MR. SAID: The motion passes.

9 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Now we'll move on to
10 GTI New Jersey. Is there a motion as it relates to
11 GTI New Jersey's certification to expand?

12 COMMISSIONER NASH: Madam Chair, I move to
13 approve GTI's request, a motion to expand to adult-use
14 for Hackettstown.

15 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Is there a second?

16 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: I second.

17 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Seconded by Vice Chair
18 Delgado. Is there any discussion on this motion
19 related to GTI New Jersey? Hearing no discussion,
20 Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

21 MR. SAID: Commissioner Barker?

22 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Abstain.

23 MR. SAID: Commissioner Nash?

24

COMMISSIONER NASH: Yes.

25

MR. SAID: Vice Chair Delgado?

1 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Yes.

2 MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou?

3 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes.

4 MR. SAID: The motion passes.

5 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: All right. And

6 finally, we have HoneyGrove South Corporation. Is

7 there a motion as it pertains to HoneyGrove South

8 Corporation?

9 COMMISSIONER NASH: Madam Chair, I move to
10 approve the motion for HoneyGrove to expand operations

11 to adult personal use cannabis market.

12 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Moved by Commissioner
13 Nash. Is there a second?

14 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: I second.

15 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Seconded by Vice Chair

16 Delgado. Is there any discussion on this motion?

17 Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call

18 the vote?

19 MR. SAID: Commissioner Barker?

20 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Abstain.

21 MR. SAID: Commissioner Nash?

22 COMMISSIONER NASH: Yes.

23 MR. SAID: Vice Chair Delgado?

24

VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Yes.

25

MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou?

1 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes.

2 MR. SAID: The motion passes. The next item
3 up for consideration is the consideration of annual
4 license renewals.

5 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: We have a couple of
6 applications to renew annual license. Director Brown,
7 the floor is yours.

8 MR. BROWN: Thank you, Chair Houenou. As
9 you said, we have two testings laboratories that are
10 up for renewal. This would be for calendar year 2024.
11 When a testing laboratory renews a license, they have
12 to submit -- they may have to submit any updates to
13 the original application, they have to submit a most
14 recent assessment from the ISO 17025 accreditation
15 body, and you know, appropriate fees. Both of these
16 have submitted the documentation required by the
17 commission's regulations, both are recommended for
18 renewal for calendar year '24.

19 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you. Are there
20 any questions from the board regarding information
21 provided by Director Brown? Hearing no questions,
22 we'll start with New Jersey Cannalytics. Is there a
23 motion on this matter?

24

COMMISSIONER NASH: Madam Chair, I move to

25

approve the motion for New Jersey Cannalytics'

1 renewal.

2 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Commissioner Nash has
3 moved to approve the application for license renewal.

4 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: I second.

5 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Seconded by Vice Chair
6 Delgado. Is there any discussion on this motion?

7 Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call
8 the vote?

9 MR. SAID: Commissioner Barker?

10 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Nay.

11 MR. SAID: Commissioner Nash?

12 COMMISSIONER NASH: Yes.

13 MR. SAID: Vice Chair Delgado?

14 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Yes.

15 MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou?

16 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes.

17 MR. SAID: The motion passes.

18 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: And we'll now move to

19 Sriven Labs, pardon to the laboratories if I'm

20 mispronouncing their name. Is there a motion on this

21 matter?

22 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Madam Chairwoman, I

23 move that we approve Sriven Labs.

24

COMMISSIONER NASH: I second.

25

CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Vice Chair Delgado has

1 moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Nash. Is
2 there any discussion on this motion? Hearing no
3 discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

4 MR. SAID: Commissioner Barker?

5 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Nay.

6 MR. SAID: Commissioner Nash?

7 COMMISSIONER NASH: Yes.

8 MR. SAID: Vice Chair Delgado?

9 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Yes.

10 MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou?

11 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes.

12 MR. SAID: The motion passes. The next item
13 on the agenda, we have cases, claims and petitions.

14 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: I'll and turn it over
15 to Director Brown for discussion of the ATC
16 identification card cases, claims, and petitions.

17 MR. BROWN: Thank you, Chair Houenou, and
18 I'm actually going to pass it down the line here to
19 Chief Counsel Riggs to cover this topic. Thank you.

20 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Hot potato.

21 MR. RIGGS: Thank you, Executive Director
22 Brown, Chairwoman Houenou, Commissioners. Before I
23 get into the agenda, I just want to remind everyone

24 that cannabis business identification cards are
25 required to be received by all employees and anyone

1 that has access to the secure areas of the cannabis
2 business, this includes security personnel and other
3 types of assistance that is being provided at that
4 cannabis business. It is the responsibility of that
5 business to make sure that folks that have access to
6 the secure areas, to make sure that those folks are
7 given a background check, that they secure cannabis
8 business identification cards from the commission.

9 The agenda item before you today, there are
10 ten individuals that have submitted a request for
11 rehabilitation under the statute. Those individuals
12 all were background checked by the commission, they
13 were fingerprinted, they received their background
14 check results, and if a qualifying conviction was
15 uncovered. Those ten individuals have been -- all the
16 information that those ten individuals have submitted
17 for rehabilitation, there are eight statutory-required
18 conditions to consider and factors to consider. We
19 have considered that at the staff level and we are
20 recommending that these folks are considered
21 rehabilitated and allowed to work in the cannabis
22 industry. Thank you.

23 CHAIRWOMAN
 HOUENOU:

 Thank you, Chief

24 Counsel Riggs. Are there any questions from the board

25 regarding this matter? This is, again, for the

1 benefit of the public and those watching. The
2 discussion happened -- the detailed discussion of this
3 particular agenda item did take place in executive
4 session in accordance with the Open Public Meetings
5 Act, but are there any questions from the board before
6 I ask for a motion? Hearing none, I will ask for a
7 motion on this matter.

8 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Madam Chair -- do you
9 want to go?

10 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Seniority. You got
11 it.

12 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Thank you. Madam
13 Chairwoman, I move that we approve the request for the
14 determination of rehabilitation by the ten alternative
15 treatment center employees.

16 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Seconded.

17 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Moved by Vice Chair
18 Delgado.

19 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Second.

20 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Seconded by
21 Commissioner Barker. Is there any discussion on this
22 motion? Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you
23 please call the vote?

24

MR. SAID: Commissioner Barker?

25

COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

1 MR. SAID: Commissioner Nash?

2 COMMISSIONER NASH: Yes.

3 MR. SAID: Vice Chair Delgado?

4 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Yes.

5 MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou?

6 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes.

7 MR. SAID: The motion passes. The next item

8 for consideration are the notices of enforcement

9 actions.

10 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: We have one notice of

11 enforcement action pending before us today. I'll turn

12 it over to Director Brown for a summary of the

13 enforcement action.

14 MR. BROWN: Thank you, Madam Chair, Members

15 of the Commission. So this is related to a notice of

16 violation issued to TerrAscend, New Jersey. At the

17 last meeting, there was a notice of violation related

18 to certain instances where TerrAscend was asking

19 medical patients to purchase products that would be

20 available medically and to recreational customers to

21 purchase off the adult-use menu.

22 After that violation was issued, TerrAscend

23 submitted a corrective action plan, began correcting

24 those practices. There was another violation after
25 that happened, and so our office of compliance and

1 investigations issued an additional notice of
2 violation following that initial NOV. So this is a
3 second NOV.

4 You know, based on review of the situation,
5 I can tell you that TerrAscend -- aside from this
6 instance, TerrAscend has been in compliance following
7 those first -- you know, I think there were five
8 instances on the initial NOV. There's one additional
9 here. Otherwise, they've been in compliance and, you
10 know, and have adhered to their corrective action
11 plan.

12 Under the commission's regs, this would be a
13 category 5. In staff's estimation, a category 5
14 instance 2, so that would be a maximum penalty,
15 according to the regs, under that fining matrix of
16 \$10,000.

17 Based on the track record of compliance
18 following those corrective action plans, both, you
19 know, primarily for this NOV, we're not recommending a
20 fine on this one instance. But if the commission does
21 decide to issue a fine here, we recommend following
22 the fining matrix in the rules.

23 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you, Director

24 Brown. Are there any questions from the board?

25 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Can you just repeat the

1 final recommendation, Director Brown?

2 MR. BROWN: We're not recommending a fine on
3 this instance, but if the board decides to issue a
4 fine, we recommend that it be within that fining
5 matrix which would be a category 5 instance 2.

6 VICE CHAIR DELGADO Thank you.

:

7 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU I do have a question,

:

8 Director Brown. A request was made for TerrAscend to
9 provide training records for the staff at this
10 particular facility in Lodi, New Jersey. And in
11 accordance with the record -- our regulations that
12 require the maintenance of detailed training records,
13 was any record provided -- was any subsequent
14 information provided?

15 MR. BROWN: Yes, they did provide signed
16 documentation for employees at that facility. It
17 should have been uploaded to the commissioner's
18 folders today along with, you know, some responses.
19 So they did provide, you know, what was requested.

20 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: That information was
21 uploaded today?

22 MR. BROWN: We are verifying. Yeah, we
23 received a request, communicated that, and then they

24 submitted additional documentation.

25 COMMISSIONER NASH: Can I ask a question

1 while you're looking?

2 MR. BROWN: Yes.

3 COMMISSIONER NASH: So the investigator's
4 report, his words strongly encouraged the commission
5 to consider sanctions. And I'm wondering, taking that
6 into account, why would you not recommend any type of
7 sanction?

8 MR. BROWN: I mean our goal here is
9 compliance, and you know, aside from this one
10 particular instance, you know, since that initial
11 round of activity, they have largely been compliant.
12 As I said, this is my recommendation, staff's
13 recommendation based on what has transpired since
14 those incidents.

15 You know, it's perfectly within the purview
16 of the board to consider sanctions, and you know, if
17 the board does consider sanctions, I recommend just
18 adhering to that -- that fining matrix that's in the
19 rules.

20 COMMISSIONER NASH: Thank you.

21 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Any other questions
22 from the board?

23 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Can you just confirm

24 for me -- I'm sorry.

25 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes. Commissioner

1 Barker.

2 COMMISSIONER BARKER: I believe in your
3 remarks, you said another violation occurred after
4 TerrAscend submitted their corrective action plan, is
5 that accurate?

6 MR. BROWN: So what's before the commission
7 is an additional violation that happened after those
8 first group of violations that was considered at the
9 last meeting. They had submitted a corrective action
10 plan for the first set of violations, and they
11 submitted, you know, kind of additional materials
12 after in accordance with our rules confirming that
13 they were following their corrective action plan and,
14 you know, any additional measures that they were
15 following on top of that.

16 I can confirm, you know, that since they put
17 those measures into place, they have been compliant on
18 this -- on this factor. And that's really what's
19 factoring into my recommendation. I want to see
20 businesses that are compliant here going forward and
21 they've, you know, demonstrated the ability to correct
22 actions, and so I think that's a good thing.

23 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Okay. But did the

24 complaint come in after the corrective action plan was

25 submitted?

1 MR. BROWN: No, because there was a new --
2 yes.

3 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Okay.

4 MR. BROWN: There was an upload failure. I
5 can confirm they did submit on October 18th, and if
6 any of you want to see, I'll just ask Deputy Executive
7 Director to open the file and bring it up to the dais.

8 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: I would like to see
9 those records, and so -- but understanding technology
10 sometimes doesn't like to see us succeed or achieve
11 our goals. I understand that the technology failed us
12 in this instance.

13 If there aren't any other questions for
14 Director Brown in the immediate sense, I will actually
15 make a motion to table this matter so that the board
16 members do have the time to review the information
17 that was provided by TerrAscend pursuant to the
18 request, and that the board take up this matter at its
19 next board meeting.

20 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Sounds good.

21 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Are there any other
22 questions from the board before I officially make that
23 motion? All right. Hearing none, Deputy Anderson,

24 hopefully you are spared with providing that.

25 So with that, I will move to table this

1 motion -- sorry, table consideration of this matter so
2 that the board has the time to review the information
3 that was provided by TerrAscend and ask staff any
4 follow-up questions accordingly, and have the board
5 consider this item at its next board meeting.

6 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Second that.

7 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Seconded by
8 Commissioner Barker. Is there any discussion on this
9 motion to table? Hearing none, on the motion to table
10 this matter and take it up again at the next board
11 meeting, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

12 MR. SAID: Commissioner Barker?

13 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Aye.

14 MR. SAID: Commissioner Nash?

15 COMMISSIONER NASH: Yes.

16 MR. SAID: Vice Chair Delgado?

17 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Yes.

18 MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou?

19 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Yes.

20 MR. SAID: The motion passes. The next item
21 up for consideration we have the open public comment
22 period.

23 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: So we've now come to

24 the part in our board meeting where we hear from you
25 all. Members of the comment -- I'm sorry. Members of

1 the public can provide written comments to the
2 commission on our website. You can do so during this
3 meeting or after this meeting. The deadline for
4 submitting written comments will be 5:00 p.m.
5 tomorrow, Friday, October 20th. Written comments will
6 be shared with the commission members and will be made
7 public.

8 Our speakers today are limited to three
9 minutes each. The timer here will be set to three
10 minutes. Be mindful of your time that you have so
11 that you don't get cut off.

12 I'll note that the public comment period is
13 meant to give folks an opportunity to address the
14 commission matters that the board should be aware of.
15 It's not a place for people to market or advertise
16 private businesses.

17 Mr. Said will call out the names of our
18 registered speakers. When it is your turn to speak,
19 please come to the front. And when you sit down,
20 you'll see a button on the microphone. Just tap that
21 button until you see a green light, and then you may
22 proceed.

23 Mr. Said, can you please call our first

24 speakers?

25 MR. SAID: Thank you, Chairwoman. As a

1 reminder, public speakers during this afternoon's
2 public comment period will be limited to three
3 minutes. Please be respectful and concise during your
4 comments.

5 So I'm going to call people three at a time.

6 Scheril Murray Powell, Abigail Perl, and John
7 De Los Santos. The next three are David Feder,
8 Cynthia Vasquez and Atul Jain. The next three are
9 Charles Greelensky. I'll just wait for Charles.

10 GREELENSKY CHARLES: Esteemed and honorable
11 members of the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory
12 Commission. My name is Greelensky Charles, I am the
13 CEO and founder of CannAbyss Dispensary, a social
14 equity and diversely-owned dispensary in Elizabeth,
15 New Jersey.

16 I'm here to share my experiences as a social
17 equity owner navigating the legal licensing process in
18 New Jersey's emerging cannabis industry. While I
19 appreciate the state's efforts to promote social
20 equity and diversity within the industry, I must
21 express my concerns about the challenges I, and many
22 like me, continue to encounter.

23 The reason why a lot of the municipalities

24 are at 64 percent as a reason for [indiscernible]

25 entry into this industry. It's very disheartening to

1 observe that some municipalities do not adhere to
2 their own ordinances when it comes to cannabis
3 licensing. This inconsistency creates confusion, and
4 undermines fairness of the process. What is supposed
5 to be an objective evaluation often feels highly
6 subjective, leaving many social equity and
7 diversely-owned applicants feeling disillusioned.

8 It pains me to say, as a minority
9 entrepreneur, I sometimes feel like the state has
10 catfished us. The promise of a more inclusive
11 industry seems elusive when faced with the harsh
12 reality of local authorities practicing cronyism to
13 where many -- actually, some members of the planning
14 boards and zoning boards, issue themselves resolutions
15 and block the rest of us out, political maneuvering,
16 and even to the extent of extortion.

17 These actions are not in line with the
18 mission, vision, and values of the CRC. Going to
19 legal route was a choice, and I often feel like going
20 back into the legacy market, but choose not to and
21 hold strong, believing in the state's promises. To
22 the local authorities, I hope -- I'd like to say, hope
23 is never silent.

24 To address these issues, I propose the
25 following solutions: Standardized evaluation

1 criterias where municipalities must implement and
2 adhere to a clear and standardized evaluation criteria
3 for all applicants, ensuring that the selection
4 process is objective and transparent. This will help
5 level the playing field for social equity and
6 diversely-owned applicants.

7 Most importantly, oversight and
8 accountability. The legislature must establish
9 oversight mechanisms to ensure municipalities comply
10 with their own ordinances and adhere to state
11 regulations. Hold those who engage in unethical
12 practices accountable for their actions. The CRC may
13 not be able to enforce on the municipalities, but this
14 honorable body can enforce on the companies that take
15 part in pay-to-play schemes, or local
16 cannabis-permitting authorities that issue their
17 governing members, family members and friends
18 resolutions without properly completed applications or
19 due process.

20 The New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory,
21 Enforcement Assistance, and Marketplace Modernization
22 Act gives this body the authority to enforce in the
23 same way as the ABC. Section C.24:61-32, findings,

24 declarations -- oh, sorry.

25 I'm more than happy to submit this to the

1 body. I mean it's just a couple more suggestions.

2 And just say thank you for your time.

3 MR. SAID: The next three are Ziad Ghanem,
4 Lynn Gefen, and Chantelle Elsner.

5 ZIAD GHANEM: Good morning, or good
6 afternoon, and thank you for letting me speak with you
7 on behalf of TerrAscend, whom you reach a decision
8 against last month that called into question the
9 commitment to our medical patients due to five or
10 six --

11 CHAIRWOMAN Sorry, if you can state
12 HOUENOU: your name for the record.

13 ZIAD GHANEM: My name is Ziad Ghanem. I am
14 the CEO of TerrAscend. So the commitment was
15 questioned about our commitment to our medical
16 patients due to five or six unfortunate incidents
17 where those patients did not see their medications on
18 the medical menu.

19 None of those honest, human mistakes were
20 committed for any financial benefits to TerrAscend,
21 and all of those patients ended up getting their
22 medications. We have provided detailed solution that
23 we have already started to implement to ensure that

24 the same mistake does not repeat. TerrAscend is

25 respectfully appealing the decision that the

1 commissioners reached.

2 Today, I am here so you can hear directly
3 from me, as I represent all 300 employees in New
4 Jersey. My name is Ziad, and I am the CEO for
5 TerrAscend. I am here today as a registered
6 pharmacist who took an oath, in August 2004 when I
7 received my doctorate degree in pharmacy, to do no
8 harm to patients, and to protect every single patient
9 against any unfair treatment. That is an oath I will
10 never violate. And it's an oath I will never break
11 for any price, reward, or gain.

12 I joined TerrAscend almost two years ago
13 because they shared the same clinical guiding
14 principle that I practiced for 17 years in the highly
15 regulated pharmacy industry. I am proud to lead a
16 group of outstanding team members who have worked with
17 the CRC here in New Jersey since 2018 and have not
18 received any violation, but instead had a perfect
19 record of compliance.

20 Our compliance, community involvement, and
21 SOPs were recognized by the CRC and recommended as
22 best practices in the state. Working with the
23 regulators has always been an essential part of my job

24 throughout my professional career. And I'm a big

25 believer that authentic, honest, good corporate

1 citizens like us paired with fair regulators will
2 always result in strong partnerships that benefits all
3 patients. And we feel we have not been treated fairly
4 on our first offense.

5 Right is never wrong, and wrong will never
6 be right. That is why I'm confident we can repair our
7 relationship when we prove to you, beyond any
8 reasonable doubt, that those were just honest, human
9 mistakes.

10 I came here today to make sure that this
11 commission heard from me directly that we are here to
12 comply, be industry leaders, and be your best
13 community partner just as we have been for the last
14 several years. We share the CRC's commitment to
15 ensure New Jersey medical patients are prioritized,
16 and you have my word that we are determined to work
17 alongside the CRC in the pursuit of providing New
18 Jersey patients with world class cannabis products and
19 retail experience. Thank you for allowing me to speak
20 to you.

21 MR. SAID: Please state your name.

22 CHANTELLE ELSNER: Good afternoon, my name
23 Chantelle Elsner, and I am the president of
24 TerrAscend's northeast division. I have led retail in

25 the state of New Jersey for the last three years

1 working hand-in-hand with CRC staff to open and
2 successfully operate our three Apothecarium locations.

3 As many of you know, we are one of the
4 state's first vertically integrated operators. We own
5 and operate 140,000 square foot cultivation and
6 processing facility, along with three dispensaries.
7 We're honored to consider ourselves industry leaders
8 in this state, employing almost 300 New Jersey
9 residents. We take great pride in the communities
10 that we serve. We focus on sustainable practices, we
11 celebrate diverse holidays, we participate in industry
12 educational meet-ups.

13 Educating our medical patients and adult-use
14 consumers on who we are and the value of cannabis in
15 their daily lives is an important pillar of who I am
16 as a leader and how we operate here at TerrAscend.
17 This year alone, we proudly sponsored almost 30 events
18 and financially contributed nearly \$100,000 to
19 organizations bettering the community.

20 In our recent Q3 social equity report filed
21 the CRC, we showed how we engaged multiple expungement
22 clinics, sponsored various social equity and local
23 charity events, including the NJ Reentry Corporation

24 in which we contributed to their training and

25 development program.

1 Ensuring that our team consists of a
2 diversion group of talented individuals is also a top
3 priority for us. Of our almost 300 employees, 100 of
4 them identify as female, and 137 of them are of a
5 nonCaucasian race. These numbers are something that
6 I'm proud of and continue to improve upon.

7 As Ziad mentioned, we take great pride in
8 our relationship with the CRC and the fact that the
9 CRC staff plan to roll out our internal equity
10 reporting template as the standard for all New Jersey
11 operators.

12 I was disappointed at the commission's
13 decision to impose violations and fines in the
14 September CRC meeting. I have worked diligently with
15 all levels of leadership to understand and to quickly
16 remediate these violations, and I'm proud to say that
17 we're in full compliance. It's hard not to take them
18 personally, as I pride myself and we hold ourselves to
19 high standards around regulatory compliance and
20 patient care. We will continue to collaborate with
21 the CRC and other industry leaders as we continue to
22 navigate new processes and regulations. It is
23 essential to all of us that TerrAscend remain a

24 valued, reliable partner and in good standing your

25 organization.

1 It continues to be my strong belief that
2 this industry has great potential to impact our
3 communities and those we serve. Thank you again for
4 allowing me to speak on behalf of TerrAscend as we
5 seek resolution on our appeal.

6 LYNN GEFEN: Good afternoon. My name is
7 Lynn Gefen, I'm the chief legal officer at TerrAscend.
8 I've spent more than two decades working at large,
9 global, highly regulated industries, so I have the
10 benefit of a significant amount of perspective when I
11 say that TerrAscend's commitment to compliance is
12 unparalleled.

13 It has been a badge of honor for us to
14 proudly say that in the more than four years we've
15 been operating in New Jersey, TerrAscend has not
16 received a violation with the CRC. Unfortunately,
17 this changed last month, a result that I took very
18 seriously.

19 The company that this commission talked
20 about on September 8th is not a company I recognized.
21 The commission implied that we were ambivalent to
22 compliance and our patients. I am here to tell you,
23 in no uncertain terms, that that is not true. Not

24 only is the implication inaccurate, but the words used

25 by this commission were unnecessarily inflammatory and

1 simply based on false assumptions. It is on this
2 basis, among others, that we have appealed the
3 decision.

4 I want to thank Executive Director Brown and
5 staff for the remarks today acknowledging the
6 commitment to compliance by TerrAscend, and for
7 recognizing the significant actions we've taken to fix
8 the issues promptly. Thank you.

9 It may help this commission to know that the
10 issues that are the subject of the violations only
11 began when the CRC itself required all industry
12 leaders to implement the metric system for inventory
13 tracking. Staff is well aware that the rollout was
14 difficult, and that the entire industry had issues, so
15 that is not solely a TerrAscend issue.

16 In June, we were informed that the CRC had
17 received five similar patient complaints regarding
18 menu imbalances. We immediately refined our
19 procedures, including IT improvement and employee
20 training to ensure full compliance with these
21 requirements. Importantly, the solutions were
22 implemented quickly and before the decision was
23 reached by the commission on September 8th. And we

24 are now, and have been for a month -- for months fully

25 complying with all CRC regulations. To repeat, as

1 Executive Brown said, we are now, and have been for
2 months, fully complying with all CRC regulations.

3 TerrAscend is committed to continuing to be
4 a good partner to the commission, but we submit that
5 such partnership requires mutual respect, fairness,
6 and due process. Nothing is more important to me,
7 Ziad, and the entire management team than maintaining
8 compliance and prioritizing patients. You have my
9 word on that.

10 Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to
11 speak passionately before you today.

12 MR. SAID: The next three are Jeroen
13 DeBeijer, Patrick Grega, and Danielle Zill-Barry.

14 JEROEN DeBEIJER: Good afternoon. My name
15 is Jeroen DeBeijer, and I'm the chief people and
16 culture officer at TerrAscend. While my accent is not
17 native to New Jersey, my family and I have proudly
18 called New Jersey home for six and a half years.

19 Thank you for allowing me to speak on behalf of
20 TerrAscend.

21 How we work together across every position
22 at our company is crucial to delivering unparalleled
23 quality in the service and products provided to our

24 patients and consumers. We thrive on being inclusive

25 and collaborative, and living by the core value where

1 each employee is respected and accountable to one
2 another.

3 This is crucial, especially in our retail
4 dispensaries. Having highly trained staff who can
5 provide expert product education is essential to
6 ensure we give excellent experiences in every
7 engagement. Our budtenders are the lifeline between
8 TerrAscend and our patients and customers. Their
9 education, confirming they know protocols and follow
10 those standards, and providing them with the right
11 tools are daily focuses for me and my team.

12 A critical aspect of the employee experience
13 are labor unions. It has been suggested by a guest
14 speaker in a previous CRC meeting that we are breaking
15 the law, and by doing so, spit in the face of the
16 committee. I personally take offense at that as it
17 could not be further from the truth.

18 In New Jersey, we have an existing labor
19 peace agreement with a bona fide union that complies
20 with CRC standards. We have allowed union access to
21 our facilities more than ten times in the last six
22 months so this union can engage with our employees.
23 On top of this, even in states where an LPA is not

24 required, we actively work with labor unions.

25 In Pennsylvania, for example, no LPA is

1 required, yet we have recently successfully negotiated
2 a CBA with the union in one of our facilities and have
3 an LPA with another union, and are beginning the
4 bargaining process.

5 TerrAscend values its patients, customers,
6 and employees, and values the role that labor unions
7 play. Our employees are getting every opportunity to
8 inform themselves if they want to be organized or not.

9 TerrAscend strives to be an excellent
10 partner for the CRC as we all navigate the different
11 challenges the cannabis industry has to offer. Thank
12 you for your time.

13 MR. SAID: The next three are Raylan Givens,
14 Mariam Kure and Amina Kure. The next three are Robert
15 Durbano, Richard C., and Brenda Hill-Riggins. The
16 next three are Steven Weiss, Janna Williams.

17 JANNA WILLIAMS: Janna Williams. My name is
18 Janna Williams. I'm the proud owner of Roll Models
19 which is a disabled veteran, woman owned and minority
20 own 100 percent cannabis dispensary. First off, I
21 want to thank you for the opportunity to come and
22 speak with you guys. I just want to share a little
23 bit of my struggle in getting here to this point.

24

I want to thank you for approving my license

25

today. I really appreciate that, but as a woman of

1 color, it hasn't been easy tapping into the cannabis
2 industry. Not taking away from our men of color,
3 because they need help as well, but also, I just want
4 to stand here as a voice of women of color. We need
5 help.

6 We don't have a lot of individuals banging
7 down our door for funding. Unfortunately, when the
8 state opened up their grant that day, I was giving
9 back to the community, as I do. I was hosting a 420
10 expungement clinic which was well attended. I had 480
11 individuals there to expunge their records, but it
12 turned around and hurt me because when I hit submit on
13 the cannabis side for my grant application, it was
14 already closed, the portal.

15 I'm not here to attack the CRC. I'm here to
16 continue to support you guys and just ask if we can
17 seek more funding for women of color. I'm here to
18 volunteer myself and my services in the community if
19 you need me to be a voice of women of color, disabled
20 veterans. I'm here to host webinars, to share my
21 experience.

22 I was lucky as far as an attorney. I had a
23 wonderful attorney that took my case on pro bono,

24 Chirali Patel. Because I'm not only a woman of color,

25 I'm also a single mom of three that I'm proud of. So

1 I face different barriers that other individuals may
2 not face. And that's it.

3 I don't want to take any more of your time
4 or stop anything, but I'm here to help you continue to
5 raise resources for individuals like myself. Thank
6 you.

7 HUGH GIORDANO: Chairwoman, Vice Chair, and
8 Commissioners of the CRC, and of course all the hard
9 working people of the CRC. My name is Hugh Giordano,
10 I am a union rep for the UFCW. As folks know, the
11 UFCW is the official labor union under the partnership
12 of the AFL-CIO of cannabis workers from seed to sale.
13 And we're proud to be here in New Jersey and fight for
14 workers and workers' rights, and we'll always stand by
15 workers.

16 I have some good news. I first want to say
17 that NJ Leaf in Freehold has officially joined the
18 UFCW. I had to thank NJ Leaf for standing by what the
19 law is supposed to do of equity and justice for the
20 working class here in New Jersey. Equity and justice
21 is not just a legal term for applications. We believe
22 it's more than that and will continue to stand by
23 that, and we are proud to stand by that.

24

Ritesh Shah is an excellent owner and is the

25

type of person we want to see in New Jersey. A small

1 business owner, a pharmacist, owns a local pharmacy,
2 cares about workers, cares about community, and we are
3 proud to have him as part of our union.

4 Also I want to say that MPX in Gloucester
5 Township has organized with the UFCW. I want to thank
6 Andrew Ryan, who is your general counsel. I think
7 good people have to be called out for what they do and
8 he's an excellent attorney.

9 Curaleaf, Winslow workers, cultivation
10 workers have organized with the UFCW and we're very
11 proud. I want to thank Danielle, who is HR for
12 Curaleaf, who has done a great job of standing by and
13 doing what's right. There are good people in these
14 organizations, so I don't want folks to think that
15 every MSO is horrible, because they're not. There are
16 good folks in organizations and we're proud to work
17 with them.

18 I also want to make it clear that I want
19 to -- what Mr. Greelensky said in regards to social
20 equity applicants, the UFCW supports that idea. Local
21 municipalities have been a real issue for a lot of
22 folks who are trying to open a business. I've seen
23 firsthand where they throw applications out after they

24 do an application process. It's disheartening,
25 especially when you see people of color, and women,

1 and immigrants being thrown to the side like that, and
2 we'll continue to fight our best to stand by those
3 people.

4 UFCW is doing -- I think is doing a great
5 job of being out there and will continue to do so, and
6 I want to thank the CRC for their help as well in
7 enforcing the law. That's it. That's all we're
8 asking is for folks to follow the law.

9 And while we're here, I would love to speak
10 to TerrAscend more in depth, and I hope that
11 TerrAscend's open to really speak to the UFCW. I'm
12 proud that they have a collective bargaining agreement
13 in Pennsylvania with the UFCW. They sure do not have
14 an LPA with us here in New Jersey. The workers have
15 asked us to visit, and we are not given equal access
16 and I'm going to ask that they would do that. Thank
17 you.)

18 TISHA ADAMS: Good afternoon to the members
19 of the commission. My name is attorney Tisha Adams of
20 the Law Offices of Tisha Adams. I am counsel to
21 Garden Greenz LLC, a minority-owned Class 5 retail
22 microbusiness. The first in Jersey City. They are
23 located at 190 Newark Avenue in Jersey City, and they

24 were awarded their annual license on June 1, 2023.

25 And they're scheduled to open October 31st on

1 Halloween.

2 The CREAMM Act requires applicants to comply
3 with local ordinances and restrictions. So on behalf
4 of Garden Greenz LLC, we are requesting that the
5 commission consider rescinding their approval of
6 application number 2626 and application number 3029,
7 and they should be rescinded and not awarded an annual
8 license because they are in violation of Jersey City
9 Municipal Ordinance 21-053, Article 5, zoning and
10 design standards, subsection 345-60.5, number four of
11 subsection D, subsection B, subsection C which
12 provides that the main entry door of any cannabis
13 establishment subject to a Class 5 license, including
14 microbusinesses, shall be separated from one another
15 by a distance of at least 600 feet.

16 Application 3029's proposed operating
17 location is 528.96 feet from Garden Greenz, LLC.
18 Application 2626 is 322.58 feet from Garden Greenz,
19 LLC. Garden Greenz notified Jersey City of the
20 violation prior to its issuance of a resolution of
21 local support for each of these applicants.

22 Now, despite Executive Director Brown's
23 December 10, 2021 memorandum, which provides guidance

- 24 to the municipalities about issuing proof of local
- 25 support, the Jersey City municipal council continues

1 to provide resolutions of local support to applicants
2 who are in violation of its local ordinances. And
3 failure of Jersey City to enforce the local ordinances
4 will also leave microbusinesses like Garden Greenz,
5 LLC, vulnerable to large retailers and MSOs.

6 Now the CRC's website says that they will
7 not issue a license that will be in violation of the
8 local ordinance, so the CRC is now on notice of the
9 violation of the ordinance, and a copy of the
10 municipal ordinance, as well as two individual land
11 surveys evidencing these violations have been
12 submitted to the commission through its website.

13 The website also further states that the
14 compliance team investigates complaints made against
15 cannabis businesses and these investigations can
16 include a physical inspection. So a physical
17 inspection, as well as a land survey by the compliance
18 team will corroborate that they are, in fact, in
19 violation of the local ordinance. Thank you.

20 JUSTIN KEMP: Thank you for your time. Can
21 you hear me okay? There we go. My name is Justin
22 Kemp. I worked at Columbia Care, started in July of
23 2022. I started a union campaign in October of 2022.
24 There were many safety issues that we workers faced,

25 we were met with resistance from management. When a

1 sulfuric acid based cleaner was introduced into the
2 garden, we spoke up about what the process was and
3 what PPE we needed.

4 We asked for more PPE, and we were met with
5 not required to produce more PPE, and then
6 ever-changing processes to what the company was going
7 to do. We were essentially the guinea pigs using the
8 sulfuric acid agent.

9 We had a company meeting and we were told we
10 were pissing and moaning about safety issues. In that
11 same meeting, I advised management with the heat event
12 we had just experienced of 100 plus degrees within the
13 garden, that the ZeroTol could be denatured and
14 ineffective. I was told I was being a troublemaker.

15 Because we raised these issues, we felt we
16 were being selectively target. We joked that each
17 worker targeted was on the punishment tour. We felt
18 that as much as we tried, that no one in power would
19 take us seriously. We were told we were being
20 negative and damaging morale for speaking out.

21 We agreed to form a union to protect us. A
22 union would help us find accountability. I was
23 Employee of the Month this past June. On October 6,

24 2023, we were certified as a union by the New Jersey

25 Board of Mediation. I was disciplined October 11th

1 for disparaging comments raising constant issues. I
2 raised my Weingarten rights and was told no, clock out
3 and go home or sit in this disciplinary meeting.

4 Friday, October 13th, this past week, my
5 manager asked to talk with me. I asked if it was
6 disciplinary or investigatory and was told no. I
7 asked if I needed to invoke me Weingarten rights. No.
8 I asked if I was going to be fired. No. I was fired
9 a minute later.

10 I just wanted to grow cannabis, quality
11 cannabis. I just wanted to have fun with my
12 coworkers, and I really wanted to learn. Instead, I
13 worried almost constantly about my safety, my
14 coworkers' safety, and the quality of the product we
15 were producing. We were met with value engineering
16 and other corporate doublespeak. Dissent was
17 seemingly almost always silenced through write-ups or
18 meetings that were later used in write-ups, such as in
19 my case.

20 I hope that the CRC does something,
21 anything, to assist cannabis workers in this state.
22 Thank you all for your time.

23 MR. SAID: Chairwoman Houenou, this will
24 conclude the registered speakers we have for today's

1 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Thank you, Mr. Said.

2 And thank you to everyone who shared their comments
3 with the board this afternoon.

4 Just a couple of notes before we adjourn.

5 When it comes to grant funding, I want to make a note
6 that the grants that were -- the cannabis grants that
7 were issued were not issued by the CRC. Those are --
8 that grant program is administered by the New Jersey
9 Economic Development Authority. The CRC does partner
10 with the New Jersey EDA to make sure that the
11 information that -- and the challenges that are
12 facing -- that our cannabis entrepreneurs are facing
13 is shared with the EDA. For anybody who has questions
14 about the grant funding by the EDA, I encourage you to
15 contact the EDA directly.

16 And also, I want to note if anyone has any
17 evidence or documentation of wrongdoing by our
18 regulated entities, please report that to the Cannabis
19 Regulatory Commission. Each complaint is to be taken
20 seriously and to be thoroughly investigated, and we
21 want to make sure that members of the public know and
22 understand how they can report wrongdoing or any
23 violations of our regulations or the CREAMM Act and

24 the requirements therein.

25 So please, don't hesitate to reach out to

1 the commission. You can go to our contact us page,
2 email our general information box -- sorry, our
3 general information inbox, contact your assigned
4 investigator, whatever the case may be. But we do
5 want to hear from you because I know there were some
6 folks who want to share information about what's
7 happening, and we just need that information to be
8 relayed to us so that we can conduct our
9 investigations and act accordingly.

10 With that, that concludes our business that
11 we have before us today. Is there any new business
12 for the board to consider? Hearing none, we will now
13 move to adjourn and I will ask for a motion for
14 adjournment.

15 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Madam Chairwoman, I
16 move that we adjourn today's meeting.

17 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Moved by Vice Chair
18 Delgado. Is there a second?

19 COMMISSIONER BARKER: Second, Madam Chair.

20 CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: Seconded by
21 Commissioner Barker. Is there any discussion on this
22 motion to adjourn? Hearing done, all those in favor
23 of adjourning, say aye.

24

(Board responds aye.)

25

CHAIRWOMAN HOUENOU: All those opposed say

- 1 nay. Any abstentions? Hearing none, the motion
- 2 passes. The time is 1:34, and we are adjourned.
- 3 Thank you everyone for your time this evening.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes represent a true and complete summary of the public meeting held by the Cannabis Regulatory Commission on **October 19, 2023**.



Daniel Said

Christopher Riggs
Chief Counsel

Daniel Said
Board Secretary

Date: October 24, 2023

Date: October 24, 2023