

**Cannabis Control Authority
Board of Directors Meeting**

MINUTES

August 27, 2024

1:00-3:00 PM

**Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission
Commissioner's Conference Room (Basement)
333 E. Franklin Street / Richmond, VA 23219**

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Keohane, Chair
Bette Brand
Michael J. Massie [Present for Agenda Items 5-11]
Anthony Williams

LEGAL COUNSEL: James Flaherty, Office of the Attorney General

PRESENTERS: Alison Padon, PhD, Research Scientist, Prevention Policy Group
Jeremy Preiss, Cannabis Control Authority
Shawn Casey, Cannabis Control Authority
Jamie Patten, Cannabis Control Authority
Brianna Bonat, Cannabis Control Authority

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Keohane called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm.

2. DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Mr. Keohane determined the Board had a quorum with three board members present in person. A fourth board member joined the meeting shortly after it started.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Upon motion by Ms. Brand and duly seconded by Mr. Williams, the members voted to approve the meeting's agenda.

4. APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES

Upon motion by Mr. Williams and duly seconded by Ms. Brand, the members voted to approve the draft minutes from the June 26, 2024, Board meeting.

5. "WHAT IS APPEALING TO YOUTH? ADOLESCENT PSYCHOLOGY AND CANNABIS PROMOTIONS"

Mr. Preiss introduced virtual guest speaker, Dr. Alisa Padon, Research Scientist, Prevention Policy Group. The Prevention Policy Group's Cannabis Program is a non-profit, scientific research group focused on identifying and advocating for cannabis policy that advances public health and equity.

Dr. Padon presented her research on cannabis marketing and its effect on adolescents. Her presentation included a discussion of findings related to adolescent exposure to cannabis marketing, the appeal of certain types of cannabis marketing, and adolescents' perception of cannabis advertising. Dr. Padon stated that her research produced the following conclusions about cannabis marketing: (a) youth-appealing features are prevalent in marketing and on packages; (b) marketing regulations do not address most youth-appealing features; and (c) regulations should restrict the use of certain features to avoid increasing youth interest in trying cannabis. The Board thanked Dr. Padon for her informative presentation.

6. APPROVAL OF ELECTRONIC MEETING POLICY

Ms. Casey discussed the need for the Board to approve an updated Electronic Meeting Policy (remote participation policy) due to recent legislative changes. The Policy was last approved in 2022. Ms. Casey noted the recent legislative changes require the Board to re-adopt a remote participation policy annually to continue holding hybrid meetings (meetings featuring remote and in-person participants) or fully remote meetings. Upon motion by Ms. Brand and duly seconded by Mr. Williams, the Board approved the updated Electronic Meeting Policy.

7. PROCUREMENT UPDATE

Ms. Patten provided a procurement update for the CCA. She first reported that the CCA had signed a lease for a new space. The new location will be released to the public shortly. Ms. Patten stated that the CCA is in final negotiations with a selected seed-to-sale vendor. She anticipates a contract being announced at the next board meeting.

She also reported that the CCA recently issued a Request for Proposal for a new licensing software program for the medical cannabis program (MCP). The RFP is scheduled to close on October 15. Ms. Patten stated that the MCP would benefit from a streamlined licensing process that can be integrated with the seed-to-sale program. She noted that the RFP requests an expedited implementation from the vendor.

8. SURVEY UPDATES

Ms. Bonat updated the Board on the CCA's survey activities. She reported on the MCP Patient Survey that closed on August 9. She noted that the Survey was conducted to gain patients' perspectives on the MCP, including suggestions for program improvements. The survey received over 800 responses. Ms. Bonat stated she intends to present a final report

on the survey data at the next board meeting in October.

Ms. Bonat also reported on the re-issuance of the CCA Safe Driving Survey. She explained that the initial Safe Driving Survey was conducted two years ago. The re-issuance of the survey aims to capture changes in attitude and behavior related to cannabis and driving. The Safe Driving Survey runs through September 30. Ms. Bonat noted that the CCA contracted with SSRS, a social science research firm, on both Safe Driving Survey projects. She expects SSRS to provide an analytic report on survey results to the CCA by the next board meeting in October.

9. **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Mr. Keohane invited comments from the public.

Shari Siegel, an Intake Specialist at a Virginia dispensary, shared her concerns about dispensary code violations she had experienced. She also commented that she'd like to see corporate cannabis corporations being held accountable.

Carter T. Whitelow, from Williams Mullen, commented he would like to see more information from the Board on a timetable for selection of the pharmaceutical process or in HSA 1.

Maxwell Cranford, former Director of Cultivation at Beyond Hello, and current owner of Culpeper Hemp Company commented on the HSA 1 application process. He expressed concern about the integrity of the licensing process, particularly as it related to one corporate entity filing multiple applications for the license. He requested that the CCA halt the application process and restart it after all applicants are refunded their application fees. He stated that implementation of this request would ensure the CCA is doing right by Virginia's medical patients.

Kaitlin Chichester, a cannabis consultant, commented on her experience working with two applicants for the HSA 1 license. She voiced concerns that large out-of-state monopolies flooded the application process. She argued the Commonwealth intended to create a cannabis market for Virginians, by Virginians. She proposed that the Board consider: (a) refunding the current application fees; (b) issuing updated rules to ensure an equal playing field for all applicants; and (c) holding a new application process that would limit applicants with common ownership to one application.

10. **CLOSED SESSION**

At 2:14 pm, upon motion of Ms. Brand and duly seconded by Mr. Williams, the members voted to enter closed session under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act to discuss matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements under Virginia Code

section 2.2-3711(A)(8). In addition to the Board members, CCA legal counsel Mr. Flaherty attended the closed session.

After the Board's return from closed session and upon motion of Mr. Williams and duly seconded by Ms. Brand, the members voted to certify that to the best of each member's knowledge only matters falling under Virginia Code section 2.2-3711(A)(8) were discussed in closed session. The closed session ended at 2:49 pm.

After the end of closed session, CCA staff recommended to the Board that the CCA close the investigation related to HSA 1. Upon motion by Mr. Keohane and duly seconded by Mr. Massie to accept the staff recommendation, the Board held a vote. Mr. Keohane and Mr. Massie voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Brand and Mr. Anthony abstained.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned at 2:51 pm.