

**Cannabis Control Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
MINUTES**

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April 13th, 2023

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Conference Room A & B

Library of Virginia

800 E. Broad St.

Richmond, VA 23219

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Keohane, Chair
Michael Jerome Massie
Bette Brand
Rasheeda N. Creighton

MEMBERS ABSENT: Neil Amin, Vice-Chair

LEGAL COUNSEL: Liz Myers, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General

PRESENTERS: Jake Shuford, Cannabis Control Authority
Jess Seier, Cannabis Control Authority
Jeremy Preiss, Cannabis Control Authority
Jamie Patten, Cannabis Control Authority
Brianna Bonat, Cannabis Control Authority
Shawn Casey, Cannabis Control Authority

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Keohane called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM.

2. DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Mr. Keohane determined that, with four members present in person, the Board had a quorum.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES

Upon a motion by Ms. Brand, and duly seconded by Ms. Creighton, the members unanimously

voted to approve the draft minutes from the March 1, 2023, Cannabis Control Authority (CCA) Board meeting.

5. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Mr. Shuford presented the Governor's suggested changes to bills of interest to the CCA from the 2023 Virginia General Assembly's regular session.

Mr. Shuford commented on the Governor's minor technical fixes to Senate Bill 788 and House Bill 1598, which transition regulatory authority of the medical cannabis program to the CCA.

Mr. Shuford discussed Senate Bill 1337, House Bill 1846, and House Bill 2368, which modify reporting, labeling, and other operating requirements. These bills saw larger changes, including the elimination of onsite telemedicine registration and changes in stability testing requirements.

Mr. Shuford also mentioned changes to Senate Bill 1533, which now permits pharmaceutical processors in all health service areas to operate an additional location for cultivating cannabis plants and clarifies the need for the CCA Board of Directors to authorize these processors and additional locations.

Finally, Mr. Shuford acknowledged Senate Bill 1233 and House Bill 2428, which impose advertising restrictions for marijuana, marijuana products, or substances containing synthetic THC or synthetic THC derivatives. The Governor has signed both bills, and the CCA is tasked with adopting regulations, giving written notice of corrective action under certain circumstances, and granting permits for variances.

6. SAFE DRIVING UPDATE

Ms. Seier provided a summary of the CCA's safe driving campaign. As of the end of March 2023, the campaign has seen over fifteen million impressions on the CCA's digital public messages. The use of roadside billboards will continue until the end of April. Ms. Seier estimated the billboards will generate around thirty million impressions by the end of April. Lastly, Ms. Seier informed the Board that the CCA recently awarded their Request for Proposal (RFP) to Reingold to complete the next phase of the safe driving campaign.

7. TOWN HALL UPDATE

Mr. Preiss presented on the Virginia Beach town hall. This first town hall of 2023 had 100 attendees in person and online, with 16 public comments. The CCA collected feedback from the public in a post-event survey and received an overall satisfaction rating of 3.65 out of 5. Mr. Preiss shared that the feedback was examined and used to prepare for the upcoming town halls. Mr. Preiss then provided the locations and dates of the upcoming town halls: Roanoke on April 19, Abingdon on April 20, Fairfax on May 4, and Chester on June 13.

8. FINANCE AND BUDGET UPDATE

Ms. Patten gave a finance and budget update. She informed the Board that the CCA expects an increase in expenditures due to the RFP contract awarded to Reingold. Ms. Patten then touched on the potential budget cuts proposed in the General Assembly. These potential cuts remain in limbo.

9. PLANNING FOR CCA OVERSIGHT OF THE MEDICAL CANNABIS PROGRAM

Ms. Bonat presented a brief overview of the CCA's medical cannabis transition plan and its timeline. She described five categories of focus: information technology, staffing, regulations, communications, and data collection.

Ms. Patten discussed the plan to acquire information technology for the Medical Cannabis Program. The plan includes staff training on acquired software, the digitization of records, and the development of a Seed-to-Sale tracking system.

Ms. Casey discussed the staffing and regulation pieces of the transition plan. The CCA has a job posting open for the Medical Cannabis Program manager. Ms. Casey stated that the CCA aims to hire a total of nine staff members dedicated to the Medical Cannabis Program before January 1, 2024. These staff members will focus on licensing, enforcement, and disciplinary actions and hearings. Ms. Casey also discussed the regulations process, noting that the CCA plans to adopt rules that mirror the Board of Pharmacy's existing medical cannabis regulations.

Ms. Seier provided an overview of the communications strategies of the transition plan. The CCA's communications plan utilizes current partnerships and resources to effectively maintain communication with patients, providers/practitioners, processors, and dispensaries during the transition period.

Ms. Bonat informed the Board of the analytics plan in development. The CCA intends to provide public-facing data through consistent reporting.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

At 1:47 PM, Mr. Keohane invited comments from the public. Ms. Hobman thanked the Board and CCA staff for their work on developing a smooth transition plan. Ms. Hobman asked for cannabis labs to be included in future communications regarding the transition. Mr. Chipless asked the Board about the possibility of making dispensaries into non-profit businesses. He expressed concern for the CCA in experiencing issues around the stigmatization of cannabis and for youth in Virginia with the presence of illegal products in the state's market. Mr. Anthony Edwards stated that the regulatory authority of the CCA is still unclear to the general population and requested clarification.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned at 1:54 PM.