



**Draft Minutes of the Social Equity in Cannabis Task Force**  
**November 16, 2021**  
Virtual Meeting

**Workgroup Members Present:**

Rep. Melanie Morgan	Tamara Berkley
Sen. Rebecca Saldaña	Pablo Antonio Gonzalez
Sen. Curtis King	Raft Hollingsworth
Carmen Rivera	Monica Martinez
Michelle Merriweather	Micah Sherman
Joe Solorio	Jim Makoso
Ollie Garrett	Dorian Waller

**Workgroup Members Absent:**

Rep. Kelly Chambers	Craig Bill
David Mendoza	

**Guests and Other Participants:**

Throughout the meeting, approximately 47 members of the public joined and participated. The Task Force thanks all of those who attended and shared their time, expertise, and lived experience to help shape this important work.

**Staff Support:**

Anzhane Slaughter	Crystal Ogle
Joy Hollingsworth	

**Call to Order**

Representative Melanie Morgan, Chair, called the public meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and read from a prepared statement (on file). Anzhane Slaughter, Staff shared the Zoom protocol, conversation norms, and reviewed the agenda. Anzhane Slaughter, staff facilitated role call of members.

**1. Approval of Agenda**

Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair asks Anzhane Slaughter, Staff to show the agenda for the meeting this evening for Task Force members to see and review.

**Motion:** Approve Agenda for November 16, 2021 Meeting

**Motion/Second:** Micah Sherman, Member / Sen. Curtis King, Member  
Approved unanimously

## 2. Approval of September 14, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair asks Anzhane Slaughter, Staff to show the September 14, 2021 Meeting Minutes for Task Force members to see and review.

**Motion:** Approve the minutes as written

**Motion/Second:** Michelle Merriweather, Member / Tamara Berkley, Member  
Approved unanimously

## 3. Task Force Proposals & Discussion – Disproportionately Impacted Areas Workgroup Proposal – Scoring rubric and Application Process

Dorian Waller, DIA Workgroup Member, supported by Anzhane Slaughter, Staff present the edited Scoring Rubric members created at the last Task Force Special Meeting on October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Mr. Waller asks Task Force members to review it. The scoring rubric (on file) is shown to members.

Micah Sherman, Member proposes a new rubric that came from feedback made by community members (on file). He explains the current proposed rubric is based on needing to avoid the issue of race and he believes the rubric was created without being race conscious. This alternative rubric takes a race conscious approach in distributing points for eligibility and ownership.

Pablo Antonio Gonzalez, Member expresses concern that the rubric does not represent what Washington needs and is not equitable enough. He points out that he does not see Asians, Pacific Islanders, or Women represented in the rubric. Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair suggests perhaps it's something the Task Force could look in to, possibly expanding to include other communities or color or discriminated people according to federal law. Ollie Garrett, Member makes the point that we need to get the licenses out that they already have and wonders if it's possible to have a conversation with the Assistant Attorney General for the Liquor Cannabis Board to confirm what's needed to do this. Micah Sherman, Member believes both Rubrics will have the same legal hurdles, but the community one gets more done for those most harmed. Rebecca Smith, Licensing Director from the Liquor and Cannabis Board wants to be sure to point out that a rubric based on race would require legislation to utilize. Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair reminds members that even if it requires legislation, we need to move forward with a recommendation. Ollie Garrett, Member asks if it is possible to come up with another metric to get the current licenses out, meanwhile working through the legislative process for new licenses, We have about 30 licenses now that can be used for Social Equity. She wonders if we have to come up with a picture for the whole Social Equity program or if we can come up with something now and in the future? Michelle Merriweather, Member points out that at an earlier Task Force meeting, data was shared and presented that showed the dramatic impact the war on drugs had and that the impact showed harm mainly on Black but also Hispanic and Native American people. The data presented also mentioned that it did not have an impact on Asian brothers and sisters and

other communities of color. Micah Sherman, Member agrees with Michelle and says that the Task Force was instructed to use data to lead them, and this is where it's led them. Carmen Rivera, Member wants to highlight colorism and that we need to be conscious of it. Some Black people can also be Black and Latino, for example. Micah Sherman, Member points out a concern that the rubric the DIA Workgroup made can be manipulated. Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair asks for an example. Micah Sherman, Member says if three people were owners and one was Black, they would get full points for being Black in the DIA rubric. With the community rubric, the more the company is owned by a Black social equity applicant there would be more points. It's a similar approach but further moves race consciousness into areas. The nature of ownership drives the score. There's discussion around points and how they differ for family member vs individual convictions. Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair reminds members that we are not trying to solve the whole issue, that's too big. We are trying to get us to the outcome that we need. Anzhane Slaughter, Staff helps to clarify for members that they can either go back to the version that the DIA workgroup worked hard to give us or move forward knowing it would stall the current licenses they have now. Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair asks Ollie to think about what the Liquor Cannabis Board needs in terms of getting out the current licenses. Dorain Waller, Member wants the Task Force to be sure they are accomplishing the work they are set to do and asks if it's appropriate, he'd like to call for a motion to vote on the rubric. Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair says it's important that before taking a vote members must know what they are voting for. Michelle Merriweather, Member says they are here to do what is right, not what is fast. If the rubric gets us to where we want to be, we need to push it through legislation. She agrees with Dorian and that they should move forward with a vote. Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair asks if everyone has had a chance to speak and if there's anything else the Task Force can recommend within its power that does not require legislation? Ollie Garrett, Member wants to clarify that the decision does not fall on the Liquor Cannabis Board, but it requires legislation. Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair likes the idea that Ollie will be checking into what the AAG says about moving forward, and thinks the Liquor Cannabis Board can have conversations in the future while waiting for legislation. She then calls on Dorian to make the motion to vote on the Rubric.

**Motion:** To approve the Community Based Scoring Rubric with a total score of 650 points.

**Motion/Second:** Dorian Waller, Member / Michelle Merriweather, Member

Motion passed: Yea 10                      Nay 1                      Abstain 1

Next, Dorian Waller, Member presents the application process listed out as the Task Force previously requested. The presentation (on file) is shown.

Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair asks if this is the same organizational chart that was presented at the last meeting, just put into word format. Dorian Waller, Member confirms that it is. Task Force members discuss the element of a third party verifier. It's confirmed that third party social equity verifiers exist and that they would replace a panel. The timeline of 6 months with a 6 month extension available is discussed.

Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair wants to see that nothing is left up to interpretation, what is meant by 6 months and what triggers a 6 month extension. Micah Sherman, Member asks who determines if an extension is granted? Dorian Waller, Member believes the LCB would be the authority to determine. The question of a need for a time limit is raised. Rebecca Smith, Director of Licensing for the Liquor Cannabis Board, doesn't believe there needs to be a time limit and can see it as a barrier. There is support of no or a longer time limit from those in the industry. Monica Martinez, Member suggests instead of a time limit, there be a time out, if an applicant does not communicate with the Liquor Cannabis Board, after some time the applicant is disqualified. Sen. Curtis King, Member is in favor of a 6 month time limit with a 6 month extension, thinking of the fact that if a location is found, an applicant has to put down money or agree to begin paying rent. There should be a limit of some kind. Discussion around a time out occurs and suggestion that if no activity for 6 months, a licensee is given 90 days to respond to a letter is made. Ollie Garrett, Member cautions members not to put anything under Social Equity that will disqualify people based on something we put in place. There's no benefit to holding onto a license. You cannot sell a retail license. She reminds members that we aren't here to impose more barriers but take them down for social equity applicants. Dorian Waller, Member thinks Ollie Garrett made a compelling point and is ready to make a motion to vote.

**Motion:** To approve the application process as presented without limitation of time included.

**Motion/Second:** Dorian Waller, Member / Micah Sherman, Member  
Motion passed: Yea 12                      Nay 1                      Abstain 0

Break is taken at 5:32 pm

#### **4. Task Force Proposals & Discussion – Technical Assistance & Mentorship Workgroup**

Raft Hollingsworth and Tamara Berkely, Workgroup Co-Leads, present what the workgroup would like to recommend for tax funding of Community Reinvestment (on file). The group proposes that 50% of all Cannabis tax revenue goes to the Social Equity in Cannabis program. 5% of that tax will go to low interest loans, 10% of the tax will go to grants and the other 35% will go towards community reinvestment.

Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair would like to have further information in regards to Faith-based organizations, non-profits, and individuals, the last bullet. It's clarified that these entities within DIA's would be the ones whom grants were distributed to. A suggestion to move the first bullet under the second bullet is made. Micah Sherman, Member has some questions in regards to details of allocating money, who allocates grants and loans the same entity? What about the mechanism of delivery of the grants and loans? Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair believes these details are further than we are looking to go today. The focus now is how the 35% of the 50% will be reinvested. Sen. Curtis King, Member has a concern with the term individual. Rep.

Melanie Morgan, Chair agrees. Tamara Berkley, Co-Lead, suggests the term individual be taken out, Raft Hollingsworth, Co-Lead agrees. Questions about allocating funds for particular causes or projects, for healthcare premiums, and other detailed areas. Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair reminds members that further details can be discussed at a later time. A motion to vote is made.

**Motion:** To adopt the recommendations as presented

**Motion/Second:** Raft Hollingsworth, Member / Tamara Berkley, Member

Motion passed: Yea 11      Nay 2      Abstain 0

## 5. Public Comment

In general, the public is thankful for these recommendations and the work of the Task Force. They are congratulated and comment is that this is historical. There was some concern that the current licenses won't be moved forward while having to wait for legislation and that legislation will take years.

## 6. Next Steps

Anzhane Slaughter, Staff shares upcoming meetings.

SECTF Meeting December 14<sup>th</sup>, currently scheduled from 4pm – 7pm, watch for a confirmation of the time, as we may have to extend the meeting. There may be Licensing and Technical Assistance and Mentorship Workgroup meetings in December, these will also be announced once planned.

## Good of the Order & Adjournment

Rep. Melanie Morgan, Task Force Chair, asks for final comments. Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Member, is hopeful we can get the current licenses out without legislation. She will speak with the Liquor Cannabis Board and the Attorney General's office to confirm. Sen. Curtis King, Member wanted to make a point in expressing concern regarding earlier comments which, in a different circumstance would have been considered offensive, and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. Rep. Melanie Morgan, Chair, explains that next the legislators are going to work, and have committee days coming up. Anzhane Slaughter, Staff, will be presenting at the Commerce and Gaming meeting on Thursday about what the Task Force has been doing. Rep. Morgan, Chair compliments members for their good work. She thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Kelie Kahler, Washington State Board of Health Communication Manager, at 360-236-4102 or by email at [kelie.kahler@sboh.wa.gov](mailto:kelie.kahler@sboh.wa.gov) TTY users can dial 711.

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