



**Draft Minutes of the Social Equity in Cannabis Task Force
Community Reinvestment and Workforce Training Workgroup
April 14, 2022
Virtual Meeting**

Workgroup Members Present:

Michelle Merriweather, Co-Lead
Raft Hollingsworth, Co-Lead
Tamara Berkley, Co-Lead
Jim Buchanan

Elmer Dixon
Zach James Fairley
Jim Makoso
Donna Moodie

Workgroup Members Absent:

Kate Kelly

Guests and Other Participants:

Throughout the meeting, approximately 16 members of the public joined and participated. The workgroup thanks all of those who attended and shared their time, expertise, and lived experience to help shape this important work. In addition to workgroup members present, Task Force Member Micah Sherman and Task Force Advisory Member, Paul Brice were present.

Staff Support:

Anzhane Slaughter
Lauren King

Crystal Ogle

Call to Order

Tamara Berkley, Co-Lead, called the public meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. and read from a prepared statement (on file). Staff member Anzhane Slaughter shared the Zoom protocol, conversation norms, and reviewed the agenda. Anzhane Slaughter, Staff facilitated role call of members.

1. Workgroup Scope and Priorities

Raft Hollingsworth, Co-Lead outlines the plan for this meeting. The first discussion will be the Community Reinvestment list. At the February 17th meeting, SECTF Chair Representative Morgan asked the workgroup to put together a list of trusted community organizations. Today's meeting is to review the list and add organizations that were left out. The point of this list is to offer the Department of Commerce trusted community organizations working in economic development, re-

entry, civil and legal aid and violence prevention. The next discussion will be in regards to Workforce job training. HB 1443 states “The final recommendations must include whether to create workforce training opportunities for underserved communities to increase employment opportunities in the cannabis industry;”. Workgroup members will discuss this.

2. Discussion – Community Organization List

Michelle Merriweather, Co-Lead explains that a survey was sent out to our distribution list on March 30th and was open for 7 days. She thanked everyone who participated and provided an overview of the list. She asks Anzhane Slaughter, Staff Member to show the list on screen and then opens the floor to workgroup members for additional organizations to add to the list.

Some corrections were made to organization names and additions were made to the list. Workgroup members generally agree that specific locations of organizations should be receiving funds, not the general organizations. The organizations within impacted communities that support impacted people. Example, the YMCA in Rainier Vista or Federal Way, not the YMCA general fund. The workgroup members also discuss ways of having oversight, to be sure funds are distributed in the correct manner. They wonder if this is something that can be added to the recommendation.

3. Discussion – Workforce Job Training

Tamara Berkley, Co-Lead then turns the discussion to Workforce Training. She explains that they would like to brainstorm possible solutions around the topic and propose them to the Task Force for approval. Some areas to discuss include should money be set aside for scholarship and grant programs? She opens the floor to workgroup members to discuss.

Workgroup members come to a consensus that money should be set aside to fund workforce training opportunities for underserved communities in the cannabis industry. They have an in depth brainstorming session and determine that it should go beyond just retail and farm employment, but include direct and auxiliary businesses such as: security, HR, manufacturing training, engineering/science, accounting, creative writing and marketing, culinary, agricultural, business/operations management, IT, trademarking and legal training. The workgroup also discussed encouraging cannabis certification programs within community colleges, universities or other educational hubs. Members made it clear they don't believe the certifications should be mandatory, but remain optional. There is also some discussion regarding state budget for Community Reinvestment. Ultimately there wasn't an understanding if an amount was set aside for fiscal years 2024/2025. Staff will continue to work on getting this answer for the workgroup.

Tamara Berkley, Co-Lead then asks for community comments on the topic of Workforce Job Training. Generally, the community agrees that there are areas funding should be directed to help with job growth in the industry. They support many of the same ideas members had.

Next Steps

Michelle Merriweather, Co-Lead asks Anzhane Slaughter, Staff Member to review Next Steps.

Licensing Workgroup Meeting April 21st 4pm – 7pm

Task Force Meeting April 26th time TBD

Good of the Order & Adjournment

Michelle Merriweather, Co-Lead thanked staff, workgroup members and the community for their input and support and adjourned the meeting at 5:29 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 TTY users can dial 711.

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