



Draft Minutes of the Social Equity in Cannabis Task Force
April 26, 2022
Virtual Meeting

Task Force Members Present:

Rep. Kelly Chambers	Tamara Berkley
Sen. Rebecca Saldaña	Pablo Antonio Gonzalez
Sen. Curtis King	Raft Hollingsworth
Carmen Rivera	Monica Martinez
Michelle Merriweather	Micah Sherman
David Mendoza	Jim Makoso
Sharon Swanson	Dorian Waller
Ollie Garrett	Joyce Bruce

Task Force Members Absent:

Rep. Melanie Morgan	Jessica Camacho
Craig Bill	Joe Solorio

Guests and Other Participants:

Throughout the meeting, approximately 35 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
Lauren King	Linh Huynh

The meeting begins with Linh Huynh, Health Disparities Council Manager introducing herself and explaining that Task Force Chair, Rep. Melanie Morgan is unable to attend today's meeting. According to bylaws, Task Force members present must elect a Chair Pro-Tem to lead the meeting. Linh began with roll call of members present to establish a quorum and then opened it up to members for nominations.

Motion: Sen. Rebecca Saldaña be elected as Chair Pro-Tem for the meeting

Motion/Second: Michelle Merriweather, Member/Sharon Swanson, Member
Approved unanimously

Call to Order

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Chair Pro-Tem, called the public meeting to order at 2:10 p.m. and read from a prepared statement (on file). Linh Huynh, Staff shared the Zoom protocol and conversation norms.

1. Approval of Agenda

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Chair Pro-Tem, asks Lauren King, Staff to show the agenda on screen.

Motion: Approve Agenda for April 26th, 2022 Meeting

Motion/Second: Micah Sherman, Member/Michelle Merriweather, Member
Approved unanimously

2. Approval of January 24th, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Sen. Saldaña, Chair Pro-Tem, asks Lauren King, Staff to show the minutes from the January 24th, 2022 meeting on screen. Task Force members were provided these minutes for review prior to the meeting today.

Motion: Approve the minutes as written

Motion/Second: Micah Sherman, Member/Tamara Berkley, Member
Approved unanimously

3. Task Force Proposals & Discussion – Licensing Workgroup

Micah Sherman, Co-Lead of the Licensing Workgroup began by clarifying that the Task Force is being asked to approve the recommendations only. Supporting materials, documentation, and further rationale will be worked on and included in the final report. Task Force members should have received the recommendations for review ahead of time. Then Micah Sherman and Monica Martinez, Co-Leads, presented the Licensing workgroup recommendations regarding Social Equity, Retail licenses, Producer Licenses and New License Types to the Task Force Members.

Retail License Recommendations: The legislature should create additional retail licenses available across the state exclusive to social equity applicants until 2029.

Micah opens this recommendation up for member comment, questions and discussion. Pablo Gonzalez, Member asks how many licenses will be given out, will it be unlimited? Being in the retail business, he would like to see more specifics. Micah Sherman, Co-Lead explains that the workgroup does not want to be specific with numbers but make a general recommendation and provide further guiding information in the report for policy makers to be able to determine more specifics.

Motion: Approve the recommendation as written

Motion/Second: Micah Sherman, Member/Jim Makoso, Member
Motion passed. Yea: 10 Nay: 2 Abstain: 0

Producer License Recommendations: The legislature should create additional producer licenses available across the state exclusive to social equity applicants until 2029.

Micah Sherman, Co-Lead, opens the recommendation up for comments, questions and discussion of workgroup members. Pablo Gonzalez, Member wonders why it says producer and not processor, does that mean we are not asking for processor licenses? Micah Sherman, Co-Lead explains that anyone with a producer license is eligible for a processor license.

Motion: Approve the recommendation as written

Motion/Second: Micah Sherman, Member/Jim Makoso, Member
Motion Passed. Yea: 10 Nay: 2 Abstain: 0

New License Type Recommendations: The legislature should create a cannabis delivery license and cannabis social consumption licenses across the state exclusive to social equity applicants until 2029.

Micah Sherman, Co-Lead explains the two new proposed licenses further. Home delivery allows homeowners to purchase product via website or app and deliver to private residences, or hotels. Delivery license wouldn't enable delivery to a public place, only a private residence. The workgroup had the opportunity to speak with a business owner from another state who has such a license to gather more information and insight. The second new license type would allow a business owner to have a private establishment where they could allow members to consume cannabis safely. The workgroup found difficulties for such a license in The Clean Air Act and concluded a private membership model is the easiest way around those restrictions. Social consumption licensees would not sell cannabis, but just provide a space and environment to consume. Such private clubs would sell daily, weekly, monthly and yearly memberships. The other type of social consumption license includes a venue or event license, such as an outdoor area for people to consume. The workgroup heard from social consumption licensees in other states as part of their information gathering and research. He then opens it up for member questions, comments, or discussion.

Rep. Kelly Chambers inquired about Washington's clean air act and how, specifically the workgroup considered that. Micah Sherman, Co-Lead explained that this is where a membership model and private establishment/club model would come in. Other discussion included the importance of the delivery license to bypass retail and go straight to grower, that delivery would not be intended as a fulfillment position, which can yield inequitable results. The question of allowing current retail owners to

add delivery came up. Monica Martinez, Co-Lead explained that the reason the workgroup wanted to distinguish the recommendation was to give applicants a way to own a business instead of being just an employee. David Mendoza, Member says he would hesitate that as a Task Force they endorse current retail having delivery because the point is to add on new licenses. Also, to avoid a fulfillment type license, drivers should have to be made employees of a delivery licensee. Ollie Garrett, Member wondered if they would be looking into changing the law that prohibits indoor smoking. Micah Sherman, Co-Lead explains that as supporting material in the report, they plan to speak of the barrier, but it would be up to the legislature to address the issue.

Motion: Approve the recommendation as written

Motion/Second: Monica Martinez, Member/Pablo Gonzalez, Member
Motion passed. Yea: 8 Nay: 2 Abstain: 1

Social Equity Recommendation: The legislature should establish a policy goal that 50% of total licenses should be owned by social equity licensees by 2029.

Micah Sherman, Co-Lead explains the workgroup looked at other state social equity goals. New York is a newer market and adopted the goal of 50% of licensees be social equity applicants. The licensing workgroup agreed this seemed reasonable and reminded Task Force members that this is simply a goal, not a requirement, and helps to ensure and encourage we get more social equity licenses into the market. Then Micah opens the floor for member discussion. There were very few comments and questions. Monica Martinez, Co-Lead clarified that the hope behind the recommendation would be to start from here and add retail/producer licenses, striving for the 50% goal.

Motion: Approve the recommendation as written

Motion/Second: David Mendoza, Member/Jim Makoso, Member
Motion Passed. Yea: 8 Nay: 2 Abstain: 1

4. Task Force Proposals & Discussion – Community Reinvestment and Workforce Training Workgroup

Raft Hollingsworth, Co-Lead for the Community Reinvestment and Workforce Training Workgroup presented recommendations on Workforce Training as well as a list of trusted community organizations who work in the areas of Economic Development, Legal Assistance, Violence Prevention and Re-Entry. The workgroup surveyed community members and worked on this list in their meetings. They compiled the list to deliver it to the Task Force. Co-Leads asked staff to share the survey results (on file) on screen and answered basic questions including that there were a total of 69 responses, representing Eastern and Western Washington and multiple counties and explained the survey was open for about 3 weeks.

Workforce Job Training Recommendation 1: The Legislature should make available funds for grants and scholarships to be issued to applicants from underserved communities to support education for careers in the cannabis industry, including: HR, manufacturing training, engineering/science, accounting, creative writing, business operations management, IT, Trademarking, law and policy.

Workforce Job Training Recommendation 2: Encourage cannabis certification programs within community colleges, universities, or other educational hubs.

Tamara Berkey, Co-Lead explains that funds may entice educational institutions to create programs and perhaps engage industry members. Michelle Merriweather, Co-Lead summarized rationale behind the recommendations, explaining that the workgroup wanted to include areas that support the cannabis industry, not solely the retail portion, but all aspects that supports the industry.

Motion: Approve recommendations 1 & 2 as written.

Motion/Second: Michelle Merriweather, Member/Tamara Berkley, Member
Motion approved. Yea: 11 Nay: 1 Abstain: 2

Sen. Saldaña, Chair Pro-Tem proposes a break until 3:40 pm, then open up to public comment.

Motion: Amend the agenda to show a break from 3:28 pm to 3:40 pm and open up public comment at 3:40 pm once members return from break.

Motion/Second: Micah Sherman, Member/Tamara Berkley, Member

Prior to the break, Sen. Curtis King, Member wanted to thank the Task Force and workgroup members for their work on these recommendations. He knows they put forth a good effort. He has specific reasons for being no vote or abstaining and will be trying to put forth a statement as to why he voted the way he did. Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Chair Pro-Tem, asked if other members wanted to contribute anything before break. Hearing none, she adjourned for break until 3:40 pm.

5. Public Comment

Sen. Saldaña, Chair Pro-Tem, opens the floor for public comment.

Public comment included recommending that all dormant producer licenses be made available to the social equity program. Task Force members heard from frustrated community members about the process for Social Equity Licenses taking too long, many want to see the Social Equity program begin, they want action. Another

community member expressed frustration that the public comment period comes at the end of the meeting, once decisions have already been made.

Micah Sherman, Member let community members know that the LCB is in the middle of writing rules to issue Social Equity licenses and explained that the Social Equity Task Force is not the place where action can happen, but where recommendations come from. Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Chair Pro-Tem suggests that we try to have an update from the LCB at the next Task Force meeting in regard to the rule making process of Social Equity Licenses.

6. Next Steps

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Chair Pro Tem, asks Anzhane Slaughter, Staff, to review Next Steps.

- Licensing and Community Reinvestment/Workforce Training workgroups are coming to a close
- Department of Agriculture and Homegrow/Non-Violent Offence workgroups need to begin

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Chair Pro Tem, announces the need for Task Force member volunteers to lead the Homegrow/Non-Violent Offence Policy Workgroup and explains that it can be completed in just one or two workgroup meetings. Micah Sherman, Member and Co-Lead of the Dept. of Agriculture Workgroup, explained that he and his Co-Lead, Jim Makoso plan to have 1-2 very effective meetings. Tamara Berkley, Member volunteered to co-lead the Homegrow/Non-Violent Offense workgroup but would like help and suggested Raft Hollingsworth. Michelle Merriweather, Member volunteered to co-lead the Homegrow/Non-Violent Offence workgroup.

Ollie Garrett, Member wanted to discuss the bylaws as they pertain to leadership of the Task Force. The bylaws state that the Task Force will have 2 co-chairs, and if we had 2 we wouldn't be in the position of having to elect a Chair Pro-Tem. Anzhane Slaughter, Staff confirmed that the bylaws state 2 Co-Chairs, one would be a Task Force member who is a legislative representative and the other would be a Task Force Member who is a community member. Tamara Berkley, Member tried to recollect if there was a discussion in regard to Co-Chair replacement when we lost the previous Co-Chair. Micah Sherman, Member suggested the topic of Co-Chair be put on the agenda next meeting. Sen. Rebecca Saldaña confirms that Task Force members would like the Co-Chair opening to be placed on the next agenda.

Good of the Order & Adjournment

Sen. Saldaña Pro-Tem Chair, thanks everyone for their participation and reminds everyone of how the Task Force began and got here. She acknowledged the process takes time. Before adjourning, she asks each Task Force member to share something of joy or to celebrate. Members take turns sharing joyful things of celebration. Then Sen. Saldaña Pro-Tem Chair thanks the staff, Task Force members and our community members for their time and efforts, and adjourned the meeting at 4:31 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.

PO Box 47990 • Olympia, Washington • 98504-7990
360-236-4110 • wsboh@sboh.wa.gov • sboh.wa.gov