



Draft Minutes of the Social Equity in Cannabis Task Force
December 07, 2022
Virtual Meeting

Task Force Members Present:

Jim Makoso, Co-Chair	Ollie Garrett
Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair	Tamara Berkley
Sen. Curtis King	Pablo Antonio Gonzalez
Carmen Rivera	Raft Hollingsworth
Craig Bill	Monica Martinez
Michelle Merriweather	Micah Sherman
David Mendoza	Dorian Waller
Alison Beason	Joyce Bruce

Task Force Members Absent:

Rep. Kelly Chambers	Joe Solorio
Rep. Debra Entenman	

Guests and Other Participants:

Throughout the meeting, approximately 34 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
LinhPhung Huynh	

Note About Adopting These Minutes

These minutes were not officially adopted by the Task Force because minutes are usually adopted at the subsequent meeting. At this meeting, the Task Force wrapped up its work and did not meet after December 7th.

Call to Order

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, called the public meeting to order at 2:04 p.m. and read from a prepared statement (on file). Anzhane Slaughter, Staff shared the Zoom protocol, conversation norms, reviewed the agenda and facilitated introductions of members.

1. Approval of Agenda and October 26th Meeting Minutes

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, asks Anzhane Slaughter, Staff to show the proposed agenda on screen. After viewing, she asks for a motion to approve or amend.

Motion: Approve Agenda for the December 7th meeting as written

Motion/Second: Micah Sherman/Carmen Rivera

Motion approved by acclimation

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, asks Anzhane Slaughter, Staff to show the minutes from the October 26th meeting. After viewing the October 26th meeting minutes, she asks for a motion to approve or amend.

Motion: Approve the minutes as written

Motion/Second: Micah Sherman/Joyce Bruce

Motion approved by acclimation, with David Mendoza abstaining due to his absence last meeting.

2. Briefing – Social Equity in Cannabis Task Force Final Report

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, expresses gratitude to staff for the many ways they sought out input on the report, including seeking one-on-one meetings with Task Force members, taking general public comments into account and incorporating state agency feedback. Additionally, she highlights the care taken to be sure the report is ADA accessible and that it reflected the work of the Task Force. She then asks Anzhane Slaughter, Staff to provide Task Force members a debrief on the report.

Anzhane Slaughter, Staff, begins by explaining that staff worked with Chairs, members, and key partners to present the final report. The draft (on file) is available on our website for public viewing and was made available to all Task Force members in preparation for this meeting. Ms. Slaughter then briefs Task Force members on the report via a presentation (on file).

After completing a review of the report, Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair thanks Ms. Slaughter for the briefing and she calls on Jim Makoso, Co-Chair to initiate public comment.

3. Public Comment

Jim Makoso, Co-Chair asks LinhPhung Huynh, Staff to call on those who signed up for public comment, providing them each up to 3 minutes to speak. Public comments included frustration over the length of time it's taken to get through this process. Some members of the public expressed concern for corruption in the Task Force and LCB. Other members of the public praised the Task Force for the work being done and called on everyone to stay engaged and keep up the support as these recommendations move forward.

4. Possible Action – Social Equity in Cannabis Final Report Review

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, begins the discussion of approving the final report. She asks that Task Force members unmute for comments and discussion. Jim Makoso, Co-Chair commented that he has learned a lot from this experience, that his eyes have been opened even more throughout the process. The work has been under scrutiny, which can be difficult to work in and through. He challenges everyone to not think of this as the end of the work, but the beginning of it. He ends his comments by acknowledging Task Force Staff and Task Force Member Micah Sherman, who took an active role in the difficult work of getting this report to its finality. He is proud of the team for getting to this point. Carmen Rivera, Member, is excited for what is being submitted and hopes it's taken seriously. Tamara Berkley, Member, would like to see quoted public comments removed from the report. There is a bit of discussion about keeping or removing quoted public comments from the report as they do exist in the public domain and the report may want to highlight some comments gathered. Raft Hollingsworth, Member supports putting removing public comments from the report up to vote.

Motion: That the Task Force approves the 2022 Social Equity in Cannabis Task Force Final Report. The Task Force directs staff to incorporate the amendments and gives the co-chairs authority to finalize the report and submit the report to the Governor's office and Legislature.

Motion/Second: Michelle Merriweather/Dorian Waller

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair then directs Anzhane Slaughter, Staff to complete a roll call vote.

Jim Makoso,	Aye	Ollie Garrett,	Aye
Sen. Rebecca Saldaña,	Aye	Tamara Berkley,	Aye
Sen. Curtis King,	Without recommendation	Alison Beason,	Aye
Carment Rivera,	Aye	Raft Hollingsworth,	Aye
Michelle Merriweather,	Aye	Monica Martinez,	Aye
David Mendoza,	Aye	Micah Sherman,	Aye
Pablo Antonio Gonzalez,	Aye	Dorian Waller,	Aye

Absent at time of vote: Joyce Bruce, Rep, Kelly Chambers, Rep. Debra Entenman, and Joe Solorio.

Aye: 13, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Without recommendation: 1

Motion passed

After the vote, a member asks for clarification on what voting “without recommendation” means. Sen. Curtis King, Member explained that rather than saying no, it’s a way to say there are some things I support and some things I have concerns about. In the senate it means a soft no. Michelle Merriweather, Member, appreciates the explanation and believes they have come a long way in finding middle ground. Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair then moves to the break portion of the agenda and reminds everyone the meeting will begin again at 3:30 pm.

5. Discussion – LCB Proposed Bill and Final Rules

Jim Makoso, Co-Chair asks staff to share slides of LCB’s proposed bill being compared side by side to Task Force recommendations (on file) and invites Chris Thompson of the LCB to open the discussion and answer any questions from Task Force members.

Chris Thompson, LCB begins by thanking the Task Force for allowing him this time and reports that the bill was approved last week by the governor’s office. He also informs Task Force members that he will be retiring, and that Mark Webster will be his successor. He clarifies an open question from an earlier discussion that social equity applicants will only have one opportunity during any 30-day window of application to apply. He then confirms that social equity applicants have only one opportunity in a 30-day window to apply and asks if he can answer Task Force member questions. Raft Hollingsworth, Member wonders if an applicant with business experience will be required to participate in the mentorship program and if priority will be given to those who have licenses, and finally if there is a time limit for when an applicant must open their business to keep their license. Chris Thompson, LCB explains that the mentorship program is there to support and assist those who need it, but participation is not a requirement. He also explains that applicants who have had licenses previously will be awarded points for that, but not necessarily given preference. He adds that there is no time limit to open their business. Pablo Gonzalez, Member, wants to know if applicants must have a location before applying. Chris Thompson, LCB replies that in the current program applicants wouldn’t need a specific address or location of business. Instead, they select a county in which there is an available license. Under the legislation they are proposing, the applicant will have a one-time opportunity to find and select a location anywhere in the state. Paul Brice, Advisory Member asks if being a mentor or facilitator will be a conflict of interest in getting a license. Chris Thompson, LCB does not believe so, but can’t give a definitive answer. It will need to be verified. Alison Beason, Department of Commerce provides some insight. She says they have 50 applications for mentors, and they hope to have mentors selected mid-January. They will share the list of mentors with the LCB and because the LCB issues licenses and the Department of Commerce handles mentorship, they are two different agencies so there should be no conflict. Micah Sherman, Member asks about the delay in opening the application window and wonders if Mr. Thompson has

any further information. Chris Thompson, LCB explains there is data they are waiting on to complete the DIA which is the primary factor in preventing them from getting ready to open the window. They are working on it but cannot give a timeline for collecting that data. Jim Makoso, Co-Chair, sees the need for 10 more minutes added to this agenda item. Anzhane Slaughter, Staff asks for a formal motion to adjust the agenda.

Motion: To extend this agenda item with Chris Thompson by 10 minutes.

Motion/Second: Jim Makoso / Micah Sherman

Motion passed by acclamation

David Mendoza, Member asks why the rules do not contain the important need for social equity applicants to have at least a 51% ownership by those meeting the social equity applicant definition. Chris Thompson, LCB explains it does not need to be included in rule language because it's already included in statute language. Mr. Thompson goes on to highlight how critical mobility of a license is to make the program viable. Under the proposed legislation, social equity licenses would become portable to any jurisdiction with openings in the state. Addressing a question about a per capita number, Mr. Thompson explains that rules do not allow the LCB to create more licenses, legislation does. The LCB estimates that the proposed legislation would create about 50-52 licenses with potential for small increases each year. He also encourages engagement in the legislative process as the bill is introduced as written but can be changed along the process. They want a robust and viable bill.

6. Progress Report – Community Reinvestment Act

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, introduces Jesse Miller of the Harriet Tubman Foundation for Safe Passage. She explains that Ms. Miller will provide the Task Force with an update. Jesse Miller, founder of Harriett Tubman Foundation for Safe Passage, explains that they have written an investment plan for Commerce which includes the use of 100 million in 2023 and 100 million in 2024 for Community Reinvestment. Ms. Miller goes on to explain they are in a planning phase, are currently contracting with support people and forming an advisory panel. The foundation is a small foundation, that has about 8 core staff members, and with forming an advisory group, they hope to have up to 30 people. They plan to have recommendations to Department of Commerce for their implementation plan by March. They have four areas of focus, including Economic Development, Civil and Criminal Legal Assistance, Violence Prevention and Reentry. They are currently awaiting data to help determine what areas they should focus on serving. Raft Hollingsworth, Member asks how they plan to interface with community. Jesse Miller, founder of Harriet Tubman Foundation for Safe Passage explains they will use their website, email, text, and Facebook messenger. All ways are possible using their website. [Community Reinvestment Plan \(wa-reinvest.com\)](http://wa-reinvest.com)

7. Public Comment

Co-Chairs then open the floor to the last oral public comment period. Public comment included a medical cannabis patient making everyone aware of a

documentary they have made which has been submitted to the Seattle Black Film Festival. Another commenter supports focus being on all applicants, not just those who are established in the industry. There were criticisms heard about LCB and alleged corruption. Another commenter wants to support and make contributions, is one of very few Black producers who just heard about the Task Force. They want to open their space to anyone wanting to learn, is willing to share their knowledge with up and coming Black licensees wanting to gain experience.

8. Reflections and Closing Remarks

Co-Chairs share that the Health Disparities Council has asked them to share some lessons learned throughout member time with the Task Force at the next Health Disparities Council meeting. Co-Chairs would like to go around and have members share thoughts. The Health Disparities Council meeting will be on December 15th and is an open public meeting, he invites all to join. Member comments included acknowledging the tough and hard process this was, learning how to have conversations with those you don't agree with, lessons on patience, opportunity to meet new people, thankful that a minority opinion could be expressed, lots of listening and trying to understand, many acknowledged this is only the beginning, and the real work of making these recommendations into reality is ahead, as well as learning and living with the fact that being put in a public spotlight can provoke personal and professional attacks, which is hard. Finally, from a Staff perspective, Anzhane Slaughter wished there were some compensation for the Task Force member volunteers. It's requires a lot of time and effort on the Member's part. Additionally, having access to legal resources for staff would have been helpful. Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, reminds those listening that the legislative session begins in January. She urges people to reach out to their local lawmakers and ask for support in the recommendations. Consider testifying in committees when bills containing these recommendations are being heard. She then thanks the Staff, Members and the public for their input in this process.

Good of the Order & Adjournment

Jim Makoso, Task Force Co-Chair, thanks everyone for their participation and wishes everyone a wonderful afternoon. The meeting is adjourned at 5:10 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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