

Vermont Social Equity Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes—October 18, 2021

Chair calls to order meeting at 3:14 pm ET.

Attendees:

Advisory Committee Members

- Ashley Reynolds
- Xusana Davis
- Julio Thompson

VT Cannabis Board Members:

- Julie Hulburd

NACB:

- Gina Kranwinkel
- Geoffrey Gallegos

2 members of public

Minutes recorded by John O'Donnell.

*Geoffrey Gallegos entertains a motion to approve the Board's minutes for the October 14 meeting. Member *Ashley Reynolds moves. Member *Julio Thompson seconds. Minutes are approved.

Electronic Public Comments

*Geoffrey Pizzuttillo on behalf of Vermont Cannabis Equity Coalition submitted a 31 page document to the Vermont CCB.

*Karyn Vogel of Essex, Member of the coalition, underscoring her support of the comment submitted by the coalition.

Notable comments:

[Agenda and discussion set by accompanying Powerpoint slide presentation]

Social Equity Application

[slides 7-9]

*Gina Kranwinkel- [presentation] Application to include:

- Proof of residency
- Documentation indicating a conviction
- Ownership documentation

- Social Equity role in company
- Race/Ethnicity Identity
- Explanation of SE relevant harm

Vote- [slide 7 – Social Equity Applicant]

- *Ashley Reynolds- Agree
- *Julio Thompson- Agree

Social Equity Applications Approval

[slide 9]

*Gina Kranwinkel- [presentation] Recommendation for approval of application to be by:

- R1- CCB only
- R2- Cannabis Social Equity Board only
- R3- Both CCB + Cannabis SE Board

*Ashley Reynolds- Recommends that the SE Board assists SE candidates with their applications before it gets to the CCB.

*Julio Thompson- CCB should not review all submissions, nor all stages of the application, but only the final application.

*Julie Hulburd- CCB already approves licenses – issues of staff capacity to do the SE applications also.

*Ashley Reynolds- Recommends to keep the social equity related issues, as the responsibility of the SE Board.

Vote- [slide 9] Recommendation 3 - SE Board reviews Initial Application to ensure completion, then CCB does Final Approval

- *Ashley Reynolds- Agree
- *Julio Thompson- Agree

Social Equity Board Responsibilities

[slide 11]

*Gina Kranwinkel- [presentation] Responsibilities of the SE Board to include:

- Sustainable funding for program
- SE Educational programs
- Funding allocation to programs
- Disproportionately Impacted Communities Fund
- Approve SE candidates

*Julio Thompson- The SE Board is part of the “Collective Educational” effort for social equity candidates – it is education about program and also “Community outreach” (including receiving feedback).

*Ashley Reynolds- We don’t want to see discrimination occurring within the social equity community – what happens when that occurs? Does SE Board have a role?

*Gina Kranwinkel- Discrimination issues are to be first addressed by the CCB – due to it’s legislative role. CCB can then refer the discrimination issue to the SE Board if they feel it is necessary.

*Geoffrey Gallegos- The Appeals process is outlined in Act 164.

*Xusana Davis- Concerned about the decision-making authority being in too few hands – need to find a balance between a slower process with larger numbers of representatives, versus a streamlined process.

Vote- [slide 11] SE Board Responsibilities (with the addition of Community Outreach and Education of Program)

*Ashley Reynolds- Agree

*Julio Thompson- Agree

Cannabis SE Board Representatives

[slide 13]

*Gina Kranwinkel- [presentation] Proposing 13x representatives on SE Board consisting of:

1. Disproportionately Impacted Community (DIC) representative member
2. DIC experienced with community development
3. Convicted person
4. Family member of convicted person
5. Social worker in DIC
6. Educator in DIC
7. Business owner in DIC
8. Licensed SE candidate from retail, processor, or cultivator
9. Licensed non-SE cannabis operator
10. Department for Racial Equity, Diversity
11. Agency for Commerce & Community Development
12. SE Caucus member
13. CCB member

*Gina Kranwinkel- Generally agreed principles of SE Board:

- Odd number of representatives – 13 or 15
- 50% SE + 25% State + 25% Cannabis industry
- Geographic diversity preferred

*Julio Thompson- Add to “communities of color” to also include “and other marginalized individuals throughout state of Vermont” (e.g. other nation immigrants new to USA, marginalized because of their ethnicity). Vermont needs more feedback from these communities. They need to live and work in these communities they represent.

*Gina Kranwinkel – Add to social equity board the note:

“Members should be drawn from diverse backgrounds and geographic locations to represent the interest of communities of color and other marginalized groups throughout the State of Vermont”

*Ashley Reynolds- [bullet point 8] Reduce the definition for licensed social equity cannabis representative – remove qualification criteria defined as “retail, processor and cultivator sectors”.

*Xusana Davis- Is the criteria to “live in community”, affected by housing instability for that member?

13 or 15 or 17 Members on SE Board

*Julio Thompson- 15x members should be the upper limit. Would not want any increase in members to be with more license holders – license holders potentially have a vested commercial interest in the market.

*Gina Kranwinkel- When adding a SE candidate that is not a license holder, do they still need to work in the cannabis industry?

*Julio Thompson- If a representative to be added is an “applicant”, what happens after their application is approved (or declined)? – are they then removed from the SE Board?

Public Comments:

No Public Comments.

*Gina Kranwinkel- [to the public] The second stage of this subcommittee process, is an opportunity for greater public input – at the public meeting events in the town halls, coming up in November.

Adjournment:

*Gina Kranwinkel asked for a motion to adjourn. Member *Ashley Reynolds moves. Member *Julio Thompson seconds. Meeting is adjourned at 4:05 pm.

Next Social Equity Sub-Committee meeting is Thursday, October 21 at 3 pm ET.