



Cannabis Advisory Council (CAC) Meeting

Wednesday, August 20, 2025, 1:30pm

This meeting was held in a hybrid environment

Meeting Minutes

CANNABIS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Ollie Garrett, WSLCB Board Member
Will Lukela, WSLCB Director
Caitlein Ryan, The Cannabis Alliance
Bethany Rondeaux, WA Cannabis Licensee Association
Shea Hynes, WA Cannabis Licensee Association
Amber Vaughn, Washington CannaBusiness Association
Brie Dyson, Washington CannaBusiness Association
Micah Sherman, WA Sun & Craft Growers Association

GUESTS

Jim Vollendroff, WSLCB Board Chair
Pete Holmes, WSLCB Board Member
Becky Smith, Licensing & Regulation Director
Larry Grant, Director of Enforcement & Education
Justin Nordhorn, Policy and External Affairs Director
Marc Webster, Director of Legislative Relations
Sarah Okey, PhD Research Program Manager
Kristen Haley, Public Health Education Liaison
Jesten Meyer, Natural Care
Rolando Rodriguez, Green Road Cannabis
Paul Brice, Happy Tree
Samuel Ward Jr., Cloud 9
PJ Kasala, Goliath Pines
Nicole Grady, Mountain High Cannabis

Welcome

Board Member Garrett convened the CAC meeting to order at 1:30 pm on Wednesday, August 20, 2025. She welcomed everyone and began by introducing items on the agenda. For today's meeting she invited social equity licensees to share their experiences getting licensed and how things are going. Justin Nordhorn has been asked to talk about House Bill (HB) 5403 and Senate Bill (SB) 5206, and Larry Grant will address WAC 314-55-102 concerning labs.

Introductions

The CAC members, staff and guests introduced themselves and provided their names and affiliations.

Social Equity Licensees Updates

Member Garrett invited the social equity licensees to speak about their experiences in the industry.

PJ Kasala of Goliath Pines shared his difficulties finding a location and competing for product with larger retailers.

Sam Ward of Cloud Nine Cannabis shared his financial struggles to start and stay in business.

Paul Brice of Happy Trees confirmed that finding a location that is not already in a saturated area is a challenge, and competition is fierce when you are new to an area with existing retailers.

Rolando Rodriguez of Green Road Cannabis wanted to echo a lot of the same points made by the social equity retailers but added that his experience opening a store in Moses Lake has been very rewarding. They were frugal but by the time they got to their opening date, there was no money for product, so they got a personal loan and are working to pay it back. What he has experienced is that after they started seeing some success, a larger company came into Grant County, saw what products were selling at Green Road, then put those products on their shelves at 50% less. He stated that there are still opportunities to be had and noted that his rent is significantly lower than rents on the west side of the state.

Jesten Meyer of Natural Care reiterated that high traffic locations are scarce, and often the rents are high. He echoed the difficulties that had been mentioned by others and added the challenge of keeping up with the changing guidelines from the Department of Commerce for the grant funding.

PJ Kasala asked if anything can be done to help social equity licensees like vertical integration, excise tax exemption or zone reduction.

Director Becky Smith addressed the issue of zoning by informing that her team has been working hard to get cannabis moratoriums lifted to open up new locations. They have also been meeting regularly with the Association of Washington Cities in an attempt to open up new cities and towns.

Nicole Grady of Mountain High Cannabis noted that in Ferry County they were fortunate to not have problems finding a location and they used a personal loan to get started.

Updates

Update on HB 5403 and SB 5206

Director Justin Nordhorn updated on activities of the Rules team toward implementing HB 5403 and SB 5206. The team is working to identify and address issues surrounding management agreements, and one idea that was floated is uniform pricing. There was discussion surrounding unfair practices.

Nordhorn then addressed the advertising bill, SB 5206, stating that the legislation added some regulations, and suggested that some of the oversight of signage may be shifted to local governments. His team is looking at how they can clarify the language around some of the components, and they hope for and welcome a lot of feedback while drafting the rules surrounding these issues.

WAC 314-55-102, Certified Laboratory Quality Control Testing

Director Grant stated that there was some concern that the rules had been changed regarding required testing and the category of R & D testing. The agency is working with all the state labs to make sure that everyone is on the same page for what is required by RCW and WAC, and there have been no changes. Enforcement is working with the labs to incrementally get postdated results added to the system for tests that were done before the March 10th newsletter.

Roundtable

Member Garrett stated that future CAC meetings will be virtual with her and Director Lukela, and asked for members to provide suggestions for agenda items and topics.

Director Nordhorn announced that there would be no agency-request legislation for the next legislative session.

Caitlein Ryan suggested including a social equity representative and a patient representative on the Council.

Director Smith suggested the possibility of two social equity representatives, one from the east side & one from the west side of the state.

Director's Comments

Director Lukela took the opportunity to thank all the social equity licensees for being willing to share their successes and challenges.

Closing, Next Meeting and Adjourn

Member Garrett thanked everyone and adjourned the meeting at 3:23 pm.

Minutes approved this 23rd day of September 2025



Jim Vollendroff
Board Chair

Not Present

Ollie Garrett
Board Member



Peter Holmes
Board Member

Minutes Prepared by: Deborah Soper, Administrative Assistant to the Board

LCB Mission - Promote public safety, public health, and trust through fair administration, education, and enforcement of liquor, cannabis, tobacco, and vapor laws.
