



Board Caucus Meeting

Tuesday, March 22, 2022, 10:00am
This meeting was held via web conference

Meeting Minutes

CAUCUS ATTENDEES

Chair David Postman
Member Ollie Garrett
Dustin Dickson, Executive Assistant

GUESTS

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Chair Postman announced that the consideration of the March 15, 2022, Board Caucus minutes was postponed until a later date.

BOARD MEMBER AND EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT REPORTS

Chair Postman: We're going to cancel the scheduled Executive Management Team meeting for tomorrow, Wednesday afternoon. It conflicts with the social equity rules "listen and learn" session that Member Garrett and key staff will be attending. We don't want to have to split people between the two so we will put that off until another time. We had rescheduled due to sine die, so it's a little bit of time between the two meetings, but I'm sure the next will be action-packed.

I want to talk for a second about the armed robberies we're seeing. First, and most importantly, on behalf of the Board and the entire agency, we send our condolences to the families, friends and coworkers of the budtender in Tacoma that was killed in an armed robbery. I spoke to the owner, the licensee – you can only imagine what it's like to have somebody on your staff, a coworker, gunned down like that. It was cold blooded, it is tragic, and it was the third shooting death in a four-day period in just the Puget Sound area related to cannabis store robberies. The other two were alleged assailants – one shot by a police officer and one shot by either staff or security. It's so tragic. When I talked to the licensee, he's doing what he can to support his employees, that's the most important job right now for him – and to try and look at what to do.

It's an incredibly violent crime wave. And when you read these stories and talk to the people involved about people busting in, shooting guns up into the ceiling, making people lay on the floor – it is just the most traumatic kind of event, and we feel that here for these people.

Over the past month, really, we've been hearing from licensees, we've been reaching out to licensees and industry experts about this rash of armed robberies. We've been talking to law enforcement, and there were a couple of legislative proposals around this that didn't advance.

I can tell you the one thing that is universal – it is the need to get safe banking for the cannabis industry. We are so, so, past due for that. There's a lot of reasons why it hasn't happened, I suppose. There's still some new reasons now, why it doesn't appear to be happening. But until we can get these legitimate businesses to work with the American banking system like any other legitimate business, we're going to have a problem.

There's a lot to talk about, here, and so for the past week or so we've been working to organize a discussion for next week – at next week's Caucus on the 29th, we'll do a little bit of Board business and then we're going to spend at least an hour with a roundtable discussion with licensees, including some who have been victims of robberies. We have elected officials confirmed to attend and an industry expert. We're hoping a law enforcement representative will join us. We'll certainly have our key staff there, including our Enforcement and Education Director and our Agency Director.

We want the licensees to tell their stories and ask some questions of us or each other. I know the conversations I've been having with them are very positive and productive in terms of working with each other. I know a group of retailers are meeting today, on their own, to information share and work together and I applaud that and we stand ready to help in any way we can.

We will do this in an open meeting, like all of our Caucus' are. I will have more details – I think we'll send something out soon, maybe today, outlining some of the participants and outlining formal notice of the meeting. The forum will start a little after 10a and take as long as it needs, within reason to the commitments that those that have agreed to join us and talk about it. We will talk about anything – we'll talk about what stores can do, we're going to talk about what the LCB can do, we're going to talk about what the legislature could do and we're going to talk about what Congress has to do. And, we're going to talk about how to best communicate that as a group. This is a place where regulators and industry and policy makers and legislature all stand together as far as I can tell. There is no daylight so we need to take advantage of that.

I do hope people will tune in, as I said, and listen to that conversation. We will be following up. I know it's not delivering answers, but I have heard from people that want to have this conversation and I do too. So, we're going to engage, we're going to talk, we're going to ask each other questions and challenge each other a little bit about what can be done and see how we can help.

That is all I have on that front. We'll get official notice out very soon. Member Garrett, anything else to add?

Member Garrett: Nothing else from me.

Chair Postman: Thank you. Dustin, anything more to add?

Dustin Dickson: Nothing additional from me, thank you Chair.

Chair Postman: Thanks, everybody. We hope to see many of you this time next week to talk about that urgent and traumatic issue that is facing all of you and so many others.

Thanks everybody, have a good day, we'll see you next week.

Meeting adjourned at 10:08am.

Minutes approved this 29th day of March, 2022.



David Postman
Board Chair



Ollie Garrett
Board Member

Minutes Prepared by: Dustin Dickson, Executive Assistant to the Board