



Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board Meeting

Thursday, June 1, 2023, 2:00pm

This meeting was held in a hybrid environment

Meeting Minutes

2:01 pm - Executive Assistant Dustin Dickson announced that the lobbies were open and the recording had begun.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair David Postman called the special meeting of the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board to order at 2:01 pm on Thursday, June 1, 2023. Members Ollie Garrett and Jim Vollendroff were also present

2. GENERAL AGENCY BUSINESS

Chair Postman: The purpose of this meeting is to take final action on hiring the new Director for agency to replace Rick Garza who retires later this summer.

Last week, the Board met and took two different votes to both designate "Candidate A" as the top candidate and to authorize me to work with our HR (Human Resource) team and others to negotiate. I'm happy to say that those negotiations were successful, and so today we're ready to take that action.

"Candidate A" is named William Lukela, he goes by Will. He is currently the Deputy Chief of Licensing for the Colorado Department of Revenue's Marijuana Enforcement Division and has been there since 2018. He oversees Licensing staff and investigations, business analysts assigned to both headquarters and regional offices. Before that he worked at the Gaming Commission. He is a law enforcement officer. He shows, I thought, great passion for team-building, equity and DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion). He understands the [cannabis] industry and is eager to jump into the others that we regulate.

Before I say any more, why don't we go ahead and take a motion – we need to do the hiring and set the salary publicly. I think we've done a pretty open process as much as we can, while respecting the privacy of the applicants. The motion we would need is to hire William Lukela for an annual salary of \$170,000.

MOTION: Member Garrett moved to hire William Lukela for the annual salary of \$170,000.

SECOND: Member Vollendroff seconded.

ACTION: Chair Postman approved the motion.

Chair Postman: I'm really pleased, and I was super impressed. It was a competitive process; we had some great candidates with a variety of backgrounds. I think Will really, for me at least, the energy and passion that he showed for some of the things we on the Board had been talking about that we were looking for.

He'll be starting, we hope, July 10, 2023. He's already committed to come out next week for the all employee gathering that we have on Tuesday – he's hoping to spend the whole day with us there. He'll have a few minutes to talk with us all and meet staff more informally too. We're really excited about that. He and his wife, Penny, will both be here looking for a place to relocate to. With that I'll pause, Jim or Ollie, anything to add today?

Member Garrett: You covered it. Like you said, we went through an extensive interview process – narrowing it down and narrowing it down even more to get to where we are. I was very impressed with the person we are bringing on and am looking forward to moving on with a new director and getting everything going. I was very impressed with his interview.

Chair Postman: Great.

Member Vollendroff: I'll just add the same, that I was very impressed. I'm very excited about the hire.

I also have to make comment about the process. I thought the process by which we received comments from the public, we allowed staff internally to have opportunity to have interface with the candidates. I was extremely impressed with the overall quality and diversity of the candidate pool. I've been involved in a lot of hires at the director level positions and you don't always come out with the same quality that we did. We had great quality of candidates to choose from, and Will is going to be exceptional in this role, I'm sure.

Chair Postman: It was really impressive, the people that we all had a chance to talk to. I think it helped us focus on what we were really looking for and who stood out. I want to thank Anita Bingham, our HR Director for helping us, as well as Dennis and Marissa Karras who we had hired to do the recruiting. Their expertise really helped us as well.

We'll find a time, once Will starts, to come to a Board meeting and to start meeting the public as well. Don't everybody pounce on him at once, but once he's in the office we'll start helping him schedule meetings with stakeholders, Tribes and others, to get to know people. I know he's excited and looking forward to the chance to meet the staff first, and the entire community as well. I'm excited, thank you all for that.

3. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Postman: That takes us to the last item on our agenda, public comment, which we always allow when there's a meeting where we take final action. We have two people signed up, both in the room today, the first is Peter Manning.

Peter Manning – Black Excellence in Cannabis

Good afternoon, everybody. Good afternoon, Board Member Postman, Ollie and Vollendroff. I can't wait to meet William, is it William?

Chair Postman: He goes by Will.

Mr. Manning: Will, we look forward to meeting him, us at Black Excellence in Cannabis. We want to give an update on what we thought about Ponder Diversity Group. The whole process is working well. It appears there are still some hiccups, but we're still satisfied. We're satisfied with the LCB and we're satisfied with Ponder. We think everything is looking good. So, from us to you, thank you.

Mike Asai – Black Excellence in Cannabis

Good afternoon, everybody. We were wondering why there was a Board meeting today, on a Thursday afternoon. We figured it was something special.

Again, Mike Asai with Black Excellence in Cannabis. I just wanted to echo what Peter said. With Ponder, there was a hiccup, as a lot of people know – being locked out a day early of the due date. But before that, Ponder – as Peter and I have talked – has been very professional in the way they've done the Social Equity Program. They call people to say "you haven't signed up". They email. They've been very transparent, very professional.

And, it's not just us – we're here for the community, we don't just speak on behalf of ourselves. We're speaking on behalf of the community. A lot of people were upset. They didn't understand why they got locked out. We knew there was another 14-day window. A lot of people don't read the rules, and whatnot, so it made a lot of applicants really nervous. A lot of people were actually in the portal uploading documents, clicked on the next page and got locked out. So, understand that when someone that doesn't understand the navigation they are like "wait a minute, what happened".

So, anyway, we appreciate everything that is going on. We're anxious to see how this process goes. Thank you.

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Chair Postman: Thank you. That's our business for today. Thanks everybody for coming, it's the biggest crowd we've had. I meant to tell Jim and Ollie we have a lot of employees in the room that came to watch. It's great.

We'll now start to help Will get ready to come in. We'll be calling on a lot of employees to help us in that process too.

Thanks everybody.

Chair Postman adjourned the meeting at 2:11pm.

Minutes approved this 7th day of June, 2023.



David Postman
Board Chair



Ollie Garrett
Board Member



Jim Vollandroff
Board Member

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

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

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