

**CNMI Cannabis Commission**  
**Regular Session Meeting Minutes**  
**March 10, 2020**

**I. Call to Order**

The CNMI Cannabis Commission was called to order by Chairwoman Nadine Deleon Guerrero at 10:34 a.m. on March 10, 2020, in the Commonwealth Casino Commission Conference Room, Saipan.

**II. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum**

Nadine Deleon Guerrero, Commissioner representing Saipan  
Matthew Deleon Guerrero, Commissioner representing Saipan  
Valentino Taisacan Jr., Commissioner representing Northern Islands  
Journie Hofschneider, Commissioner representing Tinian (attending by telephone)  
Thomas Songsong, Commissioner representing Rota (attending by telephone)  
Joseph Deleon Guerrero, Special Advisor (SA) on Cannabis Industry for the Office of the Governor  
Monique B. Sablan, Managing Director (MD)  
Keisha Blaise, Attorney General  
Alexis Hofschneider, Senate Legislative Assistant  
Janice Castro, Zoning Administrator

**III. Consideration and Adoption of Agenda**

- Secretary made a motion to adopt the agenda. Treasurer seconded. No discussion. All members were in favor, motion carried.

**IV. Consideration and Adoption of Minutes of Prior Meeting**

- Secretary made a motion to table the January 30<sup>th</sup>, February 6<sup>th</sup>, February 27<sup>th</sup>, to the following meeting. Chairwoman seconded it. No discussion. All Members voted in favor of the motion.

**V. Public Comment**

- SA, verified that there were no members of the public present; therefore, no public comments were made to the Commission.

**VI. Old Business**

**1. Adoption of Regulations**

- Chairwoman made a motion to adopt the emergency commercial regulations. Vice Chairman seconded. No discussion, all Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.
- Chairwoman made a motion to approve the homegrown and commercial regulations for public comment period (30 days) and submit the regulations into the Commonwealth Register. Treasurer seconded. Secretary asked a question about Homegrown timelines. All Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

**2. Continued discussion regarding the website**

- Chairwoman provided an update regarding the website and updated Commissioner Songsong that Commissioners are sharing the expense of the cost for the website for the first year. \$85 each.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Janice Castro (Zoning)**

- Vice Chairman discussed an option to do a pilot process through regulations by geographically segmenting retail locations not zoned for residential; discussed the importance and necessity of partnership with zoning for Saipan.
- Ms. Castro advised that she is not currently working with zoning; however, given her experience, she attended the meeting to help with any procedural questions and offered to see about zoning staff providing a map (including churches, schools, etc) that will be useful to the Commission.

### **2. Addition of a Legal Counsel Report**

- Keisha advised that LSRs are required for all questions posed to the Attorney General
- SA asked Keisha for clarification on **whether the Commission could give licensees civil fines for violations**. She advised that she believes so; however, she would follow up.
- Members discussed whether we could share commercial (not homegrown) licensee information with other government agencies such as the Casino Commission. Alexis H. mentioned that the casino cannot freely share info with other law enforcement agencies because they lack the statutory power to do so as well as they cannot prevent OGAs from accessing the casino's internal structure. She suggested we look at the language of the bill if we are interested currently back with the House. (HS1-SD1)
- Vice Chairman raised a **LSR** that needs to be submitted as a result of meeting with Rev & Tax. The question is whether or not it would be problematic for businesses to claim deductions based on marijuana expenses when it goes to the IRS and whether or not Rev & Tax/AG would have an issue with reporting deductions related to seed purchases, grow lights etc. if we are trying to avoid Federal conflict and is revenue from cannabis business going to affect child tax.
- Keisha advised that she is part of the Cannabis Projects Litigation blog which they post cases that are up and coming. The last issue in Colorado was regarding estate planning, what happens in divorce, insolvencies, court ordered receiver transfers, etc. Colorado developed an expedited process to have the license change hands.
- Chairwoman asked if Keisha could continue to share information obtained from the litigation blogs. Keisha agreed.
- SA raised the issue to Keisha regarding transportation/import/export product between islands.

### **3. Special Advisor's Report – no updates**

### **4. Director's Report**

- MD provided an update regarding procuring an office space. May be able to move into the Language Commissions office; however, to be determined. Renovations

would be required; ADA accessible. Secretary Robert Hunter will advise if this is a possibility.

- MD met with SOF regarding budget status: there will be another cut; MD assumes a total of 48% (\$286,769 budget for this year from October to October). MD will need to restructure the budget again. SOF offered to provide conference tables, fixtures, etc. MD is also looking into nighthawk option for CUC.
- SA mentioned that SOF offered to share wifi
- MD (and Secretary) provided an update regarding the meeting with ABTC and their application process which we can use as a model; Secretary and MD are currently working on developing the applications.
- Secretary discussed her experience while working in BC regarding security screening requirements for legal entities/individuals and wanting the Commission to consider who we will require to undergo a security check. For example, in BC, all directors of a corporation were required to undergo a security check, not just the top 4 directors. Secretary recommended to submit a LSR to seek AG's advice on this matter to ensure the process developed adheres to the law.
- MD is looking in to creating a MOU to see if someone from ABTC can be borrowed to assist the Commission with intake of applications.

### **Adjournment**

Chairwoman Nadine Deleon Guerrero made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:35 a.m. on March 10, 2020; Vice Chairman seconded; no discussion, all members voted in favor of adjourning.