

## **Alabama Medical Cannabis Commission Meeting**

### **Minutes**

**October 14, 2021**

The Alabama Medical Cannabis Commission met on October 14, 2021, in the RSA Dexter Conference Room. The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Rex Vaughn at 1:00 P.M.

Daniel Autrey led the invocation and pledge of allegiance. The roll was taken with a quorum present. Commission members present for the meeting were Mr. Rex Vaughn, Dr. William Saliski Jr., Dr. Sam Blakemore, Mr. Dwight Gamble, Dr. Angela Martin, Dr. Eric Jensen, Ms. Loree Skelton, Judge Charles Price, Ms. Taylor Hatchett, Mr. James Harwell, Dr. Jerzy P. Szaflarski, Ms. Katherine Robertson, and Special Agent Dion Robinson. Members absent from the meeting were Dr. Steven Stokes.

Vice-Chairman Vaughn presented the minutes from the August 12, 2021, commission meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Skelton, seconded by Dr. Blakemore, and received unanimous approval by the Commission.

Vice-Chairman Vaughn then presented amended minutes from the August 25, 2021, commission meeting. A motion to approve was made by Dr. Jensen, seconded by Mr. Harwell, and was followed by unanimous approval.

Minutes from the September 9, 2021, meeting were presented to the commission by Vice-Chairman Vaughn. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Gamble, seconded by Dr. Jensen, and unanimously approved.

Vice-Chairman Vaughn made opening remarks and introduced the Commission's new staff members, which included Mr. John McMillan (Director), Mr. Daniel Autrey (Assistant Director), Ms. Brittany Peters (Communication), and Ms. Cindy Wright (Office and Property Manager).

Dr. Saliski's report for the Physicians Committee included three additional presenters: Mr. Mark Jackson (Executive Director of the Medical Association), Dr. Szaflarski (UAB Neurology Department and AMCC Member), and Mr. Matt Hart (Board of Medical Examiners). Mr. Jackson shared with the Commission a whitepaper that outlined other States' Medical Cannabis CME requirements. He explained that the physician educational component is under development and that they are looking to other programs for guidance. Dr. Szaflarski noted that he made a presentation to the Board of Medical Examiners and Medical Licensure Commission on medical cannabis data, scientific support, legality, and the qualifying conditions that are included in the Alabama law. Mr. Hart concluded the subcommittee's report by providing an update on the development and timeline for physician certification rules.

Vice-Chairman Vaughn provided an update for the Agricultural Committee. He highlighted the timeline that is currently outlined in the medical cannabis law and expressed concern that moving the September 1, 2022, application date up could expose the law to unwanted changes.

He suggested that the Commission move forward with the current timeline and work toward the upcoming due dates.

Dr. Jensen provided a report on behalf of the Processors Committee. He noted that the subcommittee was looking at operating CBD facilities and surrounding states to review their processing and cultivation practices and laws.

During the Dispensary Committee Report, Dr. Blakemore provided a chart to members that outlined the states which he had contacted and information he had obtained. He noted that Ohio and Minnesota conversations were of significance and they discussed foundational training for dispensary employees and tracking patient treatment satisfaction. Additionally, he provided an update on the adjacent states' medical cannabis progression. Dr. Blakemore also educated the Commission on isomers of Delta-9 THC. He noted that Michigan recently passed legislation designating that all THC isomers be under the supervision of their Marijuana Regulatory Agency. Regulators in Connecticut and Oregon have also regulated THC isomers in the same manner.

Mr. Gamble was recognized and reported on behalf of the Audits Committee. He began by recommending and making a motion to change the name of the committee to "Budget Committee." This was seconded by Ms. Skelton and was unanimously approved. Mr. Gamble noted that Ms. Charla Doucet would present the budget later in the meeting.

With subcommittee reports complete, the Commission moved into staff reports. Mr. McMillan shared his gratitude to the Commission for the opportunity to serve as director and for their hard work thus far. He also recognized Representative Mike Ball for being in attendance at the meeting and thanked him for helping establish the Alabama medical cannabis law.

Upon the completion of Mr. McMillan's report, he recognized Mr. Autrey to give a legal and legislative update. Mr. Autrey called attention to two vital matters that lie before the Commission – those matters are to draft and promulgate rules and obtain major purchases, most notably the seed-to-sale tracking system and patient/physician registry. To help the Commission members better understand the process of purchasing and promulgating rules, Mr. Autrey invited Mr. Michael Jones (Purchasing Director at the Alabama Department of Finance) and Ms. Jennifer Hagood (Director of Rules Division at the Legislative Service Agency) to present on their respective topics.

Mr. Jones shared the role of his office and how they interact between government agencies and the private sector. He also outlined the laws related to purchasing and how the system works. Mr. Jones emphasized the importance of maintaining integrity as the Commission moves through the procurement process.

To provide insight on drafting and promulgating rules, Mr. Autrey introduced Ms. Hagood. She began her presentation by explaining how the Administrative Procedure Act is integrated into the legislative rule-making process. She explained the requirements and expected timelines to complete the rule-making process.

Mr. Autrey completed his report by providing an update to members on their upcoming legislative confirmation. He noted that this would likely be done at the January 2022, Legislative Session.

Mr. McMillan then introduced Ms. Doucet, a retired state employee who is assisting the Commission and staff with purchases and budgeting needs. She began by reviewing the financial structures that have been established thus far. She also discussed the fiscal year 2021 and 2022 expenses and projected future costs associated with implementing the Alabama medical cannabis program.

Ms. Peters was then recognized to report on communication and technology. She shared the Commission's newly established website and provided a demonstration of the content and capabilities. Ms. Peters also presented a drafted version of an Alabama Medical Cannabis Commission state symbol for the Commission's consideration. She referenced the law which requires an official symbol be created and placed on all medical cannabis products sold in Alabama.

With the conclusion of staff reports, Vice-Chairman Vaughn moved into the decision items.

Vice-Chairman Vaughn presented a proposal to delegate the Director supervisor of all administrative and technical activities, including all employment-related decisions for the Commission, and ratify employment of Commission staff effective October 1, 2021. A motion was made to approve the resolution by Dr. Jensen, seconded by Ms. Skelton, and was unanimously approved by the Commission.

Consideration of the Alabama Medical Cannabis Commission State Symbol was then presented by Vice-Chairman Vaughn. A motion was made by Mr. Harwell, seconded by Judge Price, and unanimously approved by the Commission.

With there being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Skelton, seconded by Judge Price, and unanimously approved by the Commission. The meeting adjourned at 2:13 P.M.

Approved on: \_\_\_\_\_

Presiding Chair: \_\_\_\_\_