



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

**560 Jefferson Boulevard  
Warwick, Rhode Island 02886**

## **Cannabis Control Commission**

### **Open Meeting Minutes**

**DATE:** March 15, 2024  
**TIME:** 1:00 P.M.  
**PLACE:** Public Utilities Commission  
89 Jefferson Boulevard  
Warwick, RI 02886

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Kimberly R. Ahern, Esq.  
Commissioner Robert B. Jacquard, Esq.  
Commissioner Olayiwola Oduyingbo, Esq.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mariana Ormonde, Chief of Legal Services, Cannabis Control Commission  
Kelsey McQueeney, Administrative Officer, Cannabis Control Commission  
Carla Aveledo, Policy Liaison & Legal Support, Cannabis Control Commission  
Madison Rivard, MPH, NREMT, Public Health Epidemiologist, Cannabis Use, Rhode Island Department of Health

Chairperson Ahern called the meeting to order at 1:02 pm.

The first item of business was:

**Motion to approve the minutes of the open session meeting held on January 12, 2024.**

Upon motion made by Commissioner Jacquard and duly seconded by Commissioner Oduyingbo, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the open session meeting held on January 12, 2024.

The next item of business was:

**Updates from the Chairperson, with specific focus on the following:**

- Restated that the guiding pillars of the Commission are safety, equity and transparency.
- Provided a review on what the Commission has accomplished in 2023 and what is anticipated in 2024.
- Noted that the Commission is working on drafting its first set of regulations, which includes developing the state’s first social equity program.
- Discussed how the Commission receives information and support from the Cannabis Advisory Board and its subcommittees, members of the public, industry professionals, and partnerships across state agencies.
- Noted what the Cannabis Advisory Board subcommittees are currently working on specific topics to give advice and recommendations to the Commission on, including:
  - The Public Safety subcommittee is reviewing whether conditions in our state are appropriate to consider licensing social consumption establishments;
  - The Public Health and Cannabis Industry subcommittees are reviewing topics related to packaging and labeling of cannabis products;
  - The Social Equity and Market Participation subcommittees are assessing whether additional considerations should be considered when qualifying applicants as social equity applicants.
- Identified statutorily mandated studies that the Commission is working on, including reports to the General Assembly that are due on April 1, concerning the state’s medical marijuana program, and May 1, concerning cannabis cultivation in the state.

The next item of business was:

**Presentation by Carla Aveledo, Policy Liaison and Legal Support to the Cannabis Advisory Board, and Madison Rivard, MPH, NREMT, Public Health Epidemiologist – Cannabis Use, Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH)**

The presentation given was on the study being conducted related to the impact of the implementation of adult use cannabis in Rhode Island on the existing medical marijuana program, and included:

- A review of product menus from Rhode Island Compassion Centers comparing availability of products on the medical menu versus the recreational menu.

- Showed that there is no difference between the medical and recreational menus with respect to the variety of product types, but there were differences in product availability on each type of menu.
- Highlighted the decline of registered medical patients since adult use sales began.
- Reviewed the roles of patients, caregivers and authorized purchasers, as well as details related to the plant tag program.

The next item of business was:

**Public Comment:**

Two people provided public comment on the following:

- Former medical patient spoke to the effectiveness of cannabis for their medical condition.
- Explained that, from a cultivator perspective, adult use and medical products are the same, the only difference is how the product is labeled.
- Recommendation that there not be different labels for medical and adult use, and have all products available to both, giving preference/priority to medical patients.
- Highlighted that having a separate medical line at compassion centers is very helpful for medical patients, especially at busier times of day.
- Medical patient noted that the medical program has helped them tremendously.
- Noted the oversaturated cultivator market.
- Statement that the medical program has not been harmed by introduction of adult use, since prices are the same and medical patients can ask for products on the recreational menu.
- Request that the Commission direct the Office of Cannabis Regulation to issue emergency regulations to get new retail stores opened.

Chair Ahern also noted that anyone who would like to provide public comment, but do not want or cannot speak in person can send their comments to the Commission's inquiry email, [cccinquiry@ccc.ri.gov](mailto:cccinquiry@ccc.ri.gov).

Commissioner Jacquard asked about an update on data that is being compiled and analyzed regarding the question of what areas constitute disproportionately impacted areas in Rhode Island.

Chair Ahern provided an update responding that the data will be presented in a public meeting forum once the data collection and analysis has been completed.

The next item of business was:

**Next Meeting Date: March 29, 2024 at 1:00pm at the Public Utilities Commission, 89 Jefferson Boulevard, Warwick, RI 02889.**

Adjournment:

Upon motion made by Commissioner Jacquard and duly seconded by Commissioner Oduyingbo, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 1:48 pm.