



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
CANNABIS COMMISSION

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A regular meeting of the CNMI Cannabis Commission will be held on **Wednesday, November 30, 2022, at 10:30 AM.** at the office of the CNMI Cannabis Commission Conference Room at Ascension Ct. Bldg. 1341, Capitol Hill, Saipan.

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum
- III. Consideration and adoption of Agenda
- IV. Consideration and adoption of Minutes of prior meetings
- V. Public Comment
- VI. Acting Chair Report

- VII. New Business
 1. DPS Training Request – Tinian and Rota
 2. Website
 3. CNMCC Regulatory Bulletin – Discounts Discussions

- VIII. Old Business
 1. Discussion on Regulatory Amendments

- IX. Acting Managing Director’s Report

- X. Executive Session

- VIII. Adjournment

Copies of this notice and agenda have been posted at the Administration Building Entrance Hall, House of Representative Entrance Hall, Senate Entrance Hall and www.cnmicannabis.org, the CNMI Cannabis Commission’s official website.

Written comments on the agenda may be submitted to the office of the CNMI Cannabis Commission located at Ascension Ct., Bldg. 1341, Capitol Hill, Saipan or emailed to info@cnmicannabis.org on or before the meeting date. Oral testimony may also be presented during the meeting on Wednesday, November 30, 2022.

CNMI Cannabis Commission
Regular Session Meeting Minutes
November 30, 2022

I. Call to Order

Acting Chair Mathew Deleon Guerrero called the CNMI Cannabis Commission's meeting to order at 10:30 a.m., which was held at the Office of the CNMI Cannabis Commission Conference Room located at Ascencion Ct., Bldg. 1341, Capitol Hill, Saipan.

II. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum

Acting chair called roll of the commissioners:

Secretary Journie Hofschneider, representing Tinian, was present (via Zoom); and Member Thomas Songsong, representing Rota, was present (via Zoom).

The acting chair stated that Commissioner Valentino Taisacan was unable to join today's meeting and is excused.

Acting Managing Director Erik Basa, Executive Secretary Natasha Palacios and Assistant Attorney General Carl Dela Cruz were also in attendance via Zoom.

III. Consideration and adoption of Agenda

The acting chair asked if there was a motion to adopt the agenda. The secretary motioned to adopt the agenda, seconded by Member Songsong. There was no discussion, the agenda was adopted.

IV. Consideration and adoption of Minutes of prior meetings

The acting chair read the agenda item of prior meeting minutes. Member Songsong remarked that he e-mailed the meeting minutes of January 28, 2022, for review to the commissioners and that if there were no amendments needed, would like to motion for its adoption, which was seconded by Secretary Hofschneider. There was no discussion, all commissioners voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

Acting chair commented about the transcribing of meeting minutes and stated that because the CNMICC has additional staff with the hiring of the executive secretary, whether the staff can share the responsibility of putting the minutes together with the acting MD and executive secretary, and then asked the acting MD if that is something they can do at the staff level; he continued to say that in the structure that the CNMICC envisioned, the executive secretary would be a part of reviewing the minutes and putting

it together for the commission because it adds some definite value in having the director review it and put it together because Commissioner Songsong is in a position of both being a part of the meeting and having to transcribe the meeting and his parts of the meeting. Acting MD and executive secretary acknowledged the acting chair.

Member Songsong mentioned that being that the executive secretary recently began her duties with CNMICC last month in October 2022, he is okay with transcribing the pending meeting minutes that were prior to the executive secretary's employment date as she may not be familiar with those meeting discussions, and asked that he continue transcribing those prior pending minutes while the executive secretary can begin transcribing meeting minutes starting with October 2022. Acting chair acknowledged Member Songsong's comment and said that if he was okay with that, it is greatly appreciated.

V. Public Comment

The acting chair opened the floor for public comment. Acting MD reported that there were no members of the public present for public comment. The acting chair stated the same and moved on to the next agenda item.

VI. Acting Chair Report

Acting chair thanked Secretary Hofschneider for stepping up to the role holding the October 2022 meeting and apologized for being unavailable as he was not in the CNMI, and then mentioned that there are a couple of things that need to be covered as the commission comes close to wrapping up the year 2022:

- The *Citizen Centric Report* was submitted and thanked the acting MD for providing information and the executive secretary for running it through; and
- The *request for proposal for the cannabis tracking system* was put together to get to a point where the commission could issue the RFP.

Acting chair indicated that the RFP was e-mailed to the commissioners for review and suggested that it would seem practically difficult to get businesses to put in the effort to submit the required RFP information during the Christmas season, if a thirty-day RFP timeline was established that fell within the Christmas to New Years time frame during these heavy leave period, the commission may not have the responses that it is looking for; timeline wise, January 2023 may be the opportune time frame to issue the RFP with some areas considered for possible changes, and mentioned that this may be an area that

AAG Carl Dela Cruz may talk about because he is well versed with procurement, and thanked the AAG for joining the commission's meeting and apologized for not recognizing him earlier in the meeting.

AAG greeted everyone and expressed that he would be happy to help with procurement issues and that AAG Keisha Blaise is also familiar in that area.

Acting chair indicated that just a consideration on the RFP's development up to its current stage, right now it's an RFP, the difficulty is that the commission does not know how much a cannabis tracking system (CTS) is going to cost, and so in looking at it, it seems as though this may be more of an RFQ (request for quotation) or RFI (request for information); the commission is looking at how much the CTS is actually going to cost, whether the commission has a budget for it or whether the commission needs to request for additional funds to be able to make it go through, and that is the question he discussed with procurement and asked the AAG if he has any thoughts about it.

AAG responded that he does not recall if the commission's regulations allow for RFIs, because potential contractors can actually be contacted and asked for general information, however, the commission would want to be careful; if it is allowed in the commission's regulations, there is a procedure as mentioned with request for information and exemplified where a survey can be conducted with available service providers or potential contractors, and kind of do a survey of either what they offer or what they consider to be important factors in the type of project that is envisioned; they could give some information on what to expect as far as requirements, concerns, cost, time projections, etc., but be careful in that respect because these are potential contractors, limit those discussions with potential vendors because there are conflict of interest concerns that could be implicated down the line; that is an area that can be planned together with the AAG ahead of time, because we want to be cautious with the communications between the commission and potential vendors because often times there are potential for conflicts of interest, it is a delicate balance but that he or AAG Blaise will be happy to work together with the commission to plan it ahead of time, review project requirements and information that would help the commission; yes there are ways to get that information from contractors without obligating the commission to any kind of fee, and the commission definitely does not want to pay for information, there are ways to do it and to frame questions carefully and generally, and not to ask specific questions.

Acting chair acknowledged the AAG and then mentioned that because some of the funds that are potentially being used are ARPA funds and its does have a deadline; if the RFP process is going to be initiated, it would be what is the fastest point from selection to expense, and so the RFP makes a little sense, but it is also simple out of potentiality.

AAG added that depending upon the cost, if there are any issues regarding cost, when it comes to those discussions, those concerns can be discussed in executive session before the RFP is published so that the commission would not inadvertently compromise its position, generally and just to be aware of that, and that AAG Blaise may also raise those matters as well.

The acting chair thanked the AAG for sharing his thoughts on the RFP issue and then asked if there were any questions on those reports, the CCR and CTS RFP.

Secretary Hofschneider noted the former chairperson's email in the draft RFP, which the acting chair acknowledged for correction. There were no further questions/discussion.

VII. New Business

1. DPS Training Request – Tinian and Rota

The acting chair granted the floor to Commissioner Hofschneider since she included this agenda item for discussion.

Secretary Hofschneider reported that she was approached by the Tinian Department of Public Safety Director Villagomez seeking discussions on cannabis issues and the cannabis enforcement training workshop that Saipan DPS received and are fully trained in dealing with cannabis enforcement and compliance issues; it was initially explained in the recent past that the CNMICC experienced a turnover of its staff with the resignation of the former managing director who coordinated the training with Chief Prosecutor Mr. Chester Hinds, which affected the training completion of DPS personnel on the islands of Tinian and Rota, and considerations are being made on how to get that training completed; there has been several issues on Tinian where cannabis were confiscated, which led to the DPS not knowing exactly how to deal with the violator, which she ended up assisting in getting the violator come into compliance with cannabis law by obtaining a homegrown marijuana registry permit.

Secretary Hofschneider sought suggestions on how the commission would be able to complete the cannabis training with DPS personnel on Tinian and Rota; does the commission have to wait for the hiring of a managing director, and expressed the need to discuss it to figure out if there is anything that the commission can do to get this cannabis training completed for DPS personnel on Tinian and Rota.

Acting chair acknowledged secretary's concern and suggested a "purchase request" is an idea that should be explored in finding a way to see if the commission's prior managing director has the time and interest in providing those training sessions that she conducted previously that is required of the commission in this area; and expressed awareness of certain cases that purchase requests are permitted for services, and suggested doing it that way; he acknowledged the AAG's knowledge with this procurement process and asked if the commission can procure services provided by an individual to provide training and have that be a purchase request on the commission that it can pay out.

AAG acknowledged that small purchase procedures could be used to procure professional services or consulting services so long as it meets the threshold amount, which he believes locally funded is \$50,000 for small purchase order; services could be procured using that small purchase procedure, in other words, procurement is not normally required unless the procurement director says otherwise, but absent that, if it is \$50,000 or less, the small purchase procedure is allowed per fiscal year.

Acting chair mentioned that to his point in providing the training services, he is going to reach out and see if he can set that up and said to Commissioner Hofschneider that she can also reach out into that conversation and provide general assistance for the commission, get a proposal in and everything within the confines of small purchase so that the commission can start moving forward with procuring services.

The acting chair asked if there was anything else on that issue. Secretary Hofschneider mentioned that she will be pleased to update the Tinian DPS Director Villagomez on the commission's proposed actions to procure services for the law enforcement cannabis training.

AAG cordially interrupted the acting chair and asked, for quorum confirmation purposes, if Commissioner Songsong was present in this meeting. The acting chair acknowledged that he was present, to scroll down Zoom and that Commissioner Songsong's posted name is Thomas. The AAG acknowledged.

2. Website

Acting chair shared some background information about the commission's website that the former Chair Nadine Deleon Guerrero bore the cost of establishing and hosting the CNMI Cannabis Commission's website, and that he has been in communication with her to transfer those administrative privileges and rights to managing, changing and updating the commission's website to the commission, and

that he is seeking a path forward in reimbursing her for those costs; as soon as he hears from the former chair, he will communicate that information to the commission so that it can continue updating the website with the executive secretary taking control of it.

3. CNMICC Regulatory Bulletin – Discounts Discussions

Acting chair brought up Regulatory Bulletin No. 2 relating to “discounts” and reminded everyone that Regulatory Bulletin No. 1 was “product advertising,” i.e., what is allowed, what is restricted, the processes for advertising, etc., and that Secretary Hofschneider, the acting MD and AAG Blaise worked on Regulatory Bulletin No. 2 on “discounts,” and then passed the floor to Secretary Hofschneider to brief the commission about it.

Secretary Hofschneider indicated that the commission received some questions from licensees for clarification on advertising and discounting, and currently, there are questions on two items in the regulations:

- The first relates to retail prohibitions in that a licensee cannot discount a marijuana item if the retail sale of the marijuana item is made in conjunction with the retail of any other items, any other marijuana or hemp items, i.e., buy one, get one free or buy a joint and get a discount on a bong pipe, etc., would not be permitted; and
- The second is that retailers may not sell a marijuana item at a “nominal price” for promotional purposes, nominal meaning below the actual real value, e.g., 50% off.

Secretary continued that the black law definition of nominal price were reviewed with the AAG and various scenarios were discussed to figure the development of an compliance advisory for licensees; the point being if the commission specifies that licensees are allowed to discount items that is above the nominal value, what would that look like, will the commission allow for 10% - 15% discounts, what would be the maximum allowable discount, e.g., 20%, and how often can licensees provide for discounts; if the commission allows it, could licensees circumvent that regulation or policy and simply price the product at a certain price that would achieve the discount, e.g., 20% discount.

Secretary continued that another discussion with the AAG is the fact that the commission does not have a set minimum price for any marijuana product, how is the commission enforcing pricing, of course the commission receives all that price information from licensee reports, but the commission has not structured anything and

issued requirements, in reality, the commission has not been regulating the pricing of any marijuana items; further discussions with the acting MD raised considerations of the potentiality of producers wanting to market a new product and offer discounts to licensees to promote this new product, what would that look like; on top of that, the commission would also have to consider the Lounge Class 1 licensees, are they allowed to have a day for discounts, i.e., every Tuesday 10% off on pre-rolled joints or the words “happy hour,” there are no prohibitions or allowance on any of these details; those were the highlights of their discussions and want to initiate discussion to figure what specific direction the commission should go with, and if a threshold on discounts were to be established, what would that look like.

Acting chair asked what are the discussion points, genuinely it is important that the commission let licensees know what the regulations say when it comes to cultural pricing, but also with gifts, raffle prizes, etc., the whole scope of it, what licensees can do in terms of marketing its business when it comes to transference of marijuana products, what would you say are the areas in which the commission needs to focus on.

Secretary replied that right now the commission does not have any regulations specifically for anything else except for retailers; the two sections of the regulations that was previously stated relating to *discounts* and *nominal pricing* were specific to retailers, so in the absence of regulations for the other types of licenses, the commission would have to create those regulations and suggested prohibition until such time; with retailers, considering the CNMI mirrored Oregon state’s regulations for those two regulatory items, she found that in 2017, Oregon issued a bulletin to clarify what a discount could look like for retailers and exemplified an allowance of 10% - 15% discounts on marijuana items as long as it does not go below the real value, the nominal pricing for the purposes of promotion; the points are to contemplate what the commission wants to do for the retailers as far as discounting and how the commission will define nominal pricing, what is the commission’s interpretation of that.

Acting chair suggested that the interpretation may be in the form of an advisory or whether or not it needs to be defined clearly in the regulations; the structure of the entire cannabis regulatory system within the CNMI is built off of Oregon and so it makes sense to consider and adopt Oregon’s interpretation.

Secretary stated that Oregon’s bulletin on discounts states that “licensed retailers may discount marijuana items,” which exemplified that “a retailer may offer a 20% discount for top shelf product”; that was the other issue discussed, determining “top shelf,” the commission cannot include that in its bulletin because there is no marijuana testing

facility to confirm the product being top shelf, so licensees cannot price things high because the product is not tested; there is also regulations that prohibit the advertisement of marijuana products that is not, as a result, the commission cannot say “top shelf” product.

Acting chair expressed thinking about “general products.” The secretary agreed and reiterated that was the example in Oregon’s bulletin, and if the commission wants to use that example, it could say “may offer up to 20% discount,” and expressed its reasonableness and supports retailers to allow for discounts.

Acting chair expressed that he was considering what the regulatory value is of permitting or not permitting, the conversation about nominal pricing, and seems like the worst-case scenario without real enforcement of this provision is, for example, \$1.00 maximum or \$1.00 max quantity for certain individuals, just as a way of shooting out product either to themselves or using a retail vehicle to do that, and maybe get paid outside of the balance of tax without enforcement; but they are only charging \$1.00 because it was a 99% discount or whatever, and thinks it comes down to making sure that they are making money legitimately and not giving the opportunity or the ability for them to justify getting paid under the table without taxation. The secretary agreed and mentioned that is what the commission wants to avoid.

Acting chair suggested setting a bound regardless of what the number is, whether it is 20% or 50%, as long as it is not 99%, gives the commission at least the ability to ensure that licensees are above board on their sales and not parceling out, i.e., pay \$20 but also give \$5 kind of thing, and expressed that the commission should not be in the business of regulating prices necessarily, personally.

The secretary expressed that the commission’s bulletin needs to be set-up in a way that it could be self-regulating and reasonable so that licensees do not attempt to strategize circumventing taxation.

Acting chair expressed if the commission could have a draft of the second bulletin and if the commission sticks with 10% or 20%, the commission could have that to review, but it would be whether or not the commission could justify that within the bulletin; the commission’s ability to determine that without regulatory definitions and may be the only thing that would enable the release of the commission’s bulletin no. 2; does the commission need a firm definition of what is nominal, the commission may not have to if Oregon does not; he is fine with 10% or 20% discount and does not think the number at those levels is as important as having a measurement of what they cannot exceed; also worthy of further discussion for regulatory amendments is

“happy hours” on lounges, and thinks it makes sense, not necessarily to say they can or cannot, but just adding in a component within the requirements of SOPs for *“regularly recurring discounts,”* what is their regularly recurring discounts, whether it's a Thursday thing or everyday thing, putting that into their SOPs, the important part is awareness from the regulatory side as to what is their plan.

The secretary agreed with getting an idea of their pricing scheme and referred to the acting MD indicating that it would be a good addition to the SOP requirements, *“regularly recurring discounts,”* for retailers and lounges.

The acting chair mentioned that he would be comfortable with reviewing what the commission has drafted and if it passes through AAG Blaise’s views on whether the commission is allowed to set levels, then he would be fine with the bulletin’s issuance.

The secretary mentioned that AAG Blaise was fine with the bulletin as long as the discount is not far below nominal price and reiterated that Oregon did not define anything other than provide an example scenario.

Acting chair asked AAG Dela Cruz if he had any thoughts on the matter who replied that it would be best that he not comment at this time because he would need background information, unless the commission has a case that pops up, and would defer to AAG Blaise since she has already reviewed this information and will share this discussion with her.

Secretary shared that what could also be included in the bulletin relating to misleading information, as in claiming a product as *“top shelf,”* because it is not tested to prove that it is; in the case of lounges, although the commission is not there yet because there is no regulations, but stipulations that promotions do not promote over consumption, e.g., smoking competition, etc., things like that.

Secretary summarized that she and the acting MD will work on the draft bulletin specifically for retailers as regulations are in place to provide for a clear understanding of discounts up to a certain percentage and suggested possible maximum discount allowance of 30%.

The acting chair stated that the crucial point of the conversation is establishing what discount percent.

Acting MD suggested setting an example for the time being and not setting a set percentage, and reiterated discussions with AAG Blaise that she had mentioned that the commission cannot establish a percentage because of its absence in the regulations.

The acting chair commented that he thinks that is where the power of the example comes into play and what percentage would be used in the example.

The secretary suggested following Oregon's 20% discount example. The acting MD commented that licensees may not desire allowing for any more than 20% discount.

Acting chair expressed that he thinks this gets to the enforcement point, if the commission sets the example percentage rate at 20% and a licensee goes beyond it, it does lead to the commission's incentive to take a look into that retailer to make sure that they are actually selling and doing the full operation at those levels; it does seem to work both ways, setting a bar for them by the example and also setting a bar for the commission into taking a look into a discount that exceeds the exemplified discount percent.

Acting chair asked if there were any more discussion on the regulatory bulletin and reiterated the need to review the draft bulletin, to add any comments and if there are no comments, the sooner the bulletin is released the better; credit to the licensee that raised those questions, they are trying to adhere to the regulations and it's the commission's responsibility to get information out as fast as it can.

Secretary added that as soon as the commission's new website is completed, bulletins would be posted alongside other informational resources, and any other advisories that will be discussed because the other question what was asked for clarification purposes was the "buy one, get one free" promotion, which would basically be similar to Oregon's advisory.

VIII. Old Business

1. Discussion on Regulatory Amendments

Acting chair mentioned there are a couple for discussion, one is the question about whether the commission sets a definition for what nominal price is, any discussion on whether the commission should consider pricing arrangements and discounts on the producer level.

The secretary indicated that she does not know what that would look like and that she and the acting MD researched other jurisdictions and did not find any information on nominal price.

Acting chair indicated that it would be difficult and asked if there were any other elements that would be added into the next meeting's agenda, and mentioned that the commission had a list of what it wanted to add for discussion, but those were knocked down already with the homegrown regulations that was discussed two meetings ago, clarifying and simplifying the homegrown regulations.

The secretary asked the acting MD if the homegrown application was updated based on the commission's discussion and actions.

Acting MD apologized that he was unable to work on updating the homegrown application, however, he will revisit that discussion and update the application. The secretary briefly discussed administrative arrangements relating to the updating of the homegrown application with the acting MD.

The acting chair stated that was all he had at least for the next discussion and asked if the commission would want to pursue language to talk about nominal pricing or any other discount conversation for the next meeting.

The secretary asked if she should pull up the information that AAG Blaise provided. The acting chair replied for the next discussion, specific to the language that the commission may consider approving. The secretary acknowledged and stated that she has forwarded that e-mail response from the AAG to the commissioners.

IX. Acting Managing Director's Report

Acting managing director reported the following bullet points:

- **Permitting and Licensing**: Under commercial licenses, there are six active producers and three active retailers, four inactive applications, five pending applications, and an approval-in-principal (AIP) was issued to Common Wealth Cannabis Farms during the last week of October in which delays resulted as a consequence of the applicant's proposed change in initial floor plans, however, due to additional zoning requirements, they decided to stick with its initial floor plan; there are currently ten AIPs of which five are held by the Tu Group with two of their AIPs expiring tomorrow, which are for a retailer and lounge at the GIG location in Garapan and that notice was issued informing them of a required site

inspection required under the AIP or that the CNMICC be informed if they seek AIP extensions; there were inquiries from potential applicants on the application and zoning processes relating to lounge and one licensee is considering pursuing a processor application/license; the homegrown marijuana registry, there are seventeen active permittees, ten inactive (expired and did not seek renewal), five pending applications, and two did not renew their permit card this month.

- Enforcement and Investigation: One licensee is pending the submittal of its monthly report for the month of November; with the citation book, AAG Blaise reached out to Chief Prosecutor Chester Hinds and based on their discussion, the DPS would handle the enforcement of cannabis citations because the cannabis commission is not considered an enforcement entity, in addition, Mr. Hinds raised the concern over where the citation fines would be allotted to; two memorandums were issued during the month reminding licensees of the prohibition on the sale of marijuana items during the days of the general and run-off elections, which the run-off election day happened to be on a black Friday day where licensees had planned a black Friday sale.

Acting chair asked a question for budget purposes, recalled past discussions on budgeting and budget issues, and being that the acting MD is thinking budgeting, stated that the commission had a significant surplus last year thanks to the ARPA money, the commission had expenditures of approximately \$300,000 and a good amount for this year, and one of the items that the commission may want to pursue this year in spending ARPA money in addition to the cannabis tracking system are the satellite offices and staffing in Tinian and Rota, sought the acting MD's thoughts and the group's thoughts about how that would look, what would be the needs and how the commission would start rolling in that direction.

The acting MD replied that he would have to assess how other agencies manage those situations.

Acting chair mentioned that at one point the commission would need to find office spaces, something that could be provided to the commission or go through the Commonwealth Development Authority route and do a request for proposal, and seeks a clear direction on a permanent managing director because managing Tinian and Rota staff from Saipan is probably a larger task and wanted to make sure that this is brought into the discussion and including that information into the Citizen Centric Report on concepts the commission is looking at, e.g., satellite offices, staffing, education and outreach, and then asked Member Songsong if he sees a good need or reason for

committing the funds in establishing a physical presence, maybe with additional staffing in Rota.

Member Songsong replied that he is unsure at this point if Rota needs additional staffing because it seems that there is a lot of inaction with cannabis, but as far as office space, he expressed that he should relocate from the commission's temporary Rota satellite office at the Department of Lands and Natural Resources because two DLNR staff were squeezed-in behind him in a little corner and that he will seek a new office space at the mayor's office; for basic needs, a computer, printer, desk and chair would suffice for now until Rota starts having licenses, gets busier, and then maybe that would be a better time to consider staffing Rota.

Acting chair mentioned that is definitely something to consider is the lack of commission employees and talking to the community, understanding that both commissioners do a lot of work in being the face of the commission in Tinian and Rota but would hate to be in a position in having resources at the end of the fiscal year and knowing that the commission has not committed a lot of those resources for Tinian and Rota when the commission could have, and so it is worthwhile in seeing if the commission could get a computer and printer over to both islands.

Member Songsong added that if the commission feels it should commit resources for staffing purposes, he also supports the idea of getting people employed in Tinian and Rota, which may also help with justifying future funding.

Secretary Hofschneider added that if the commission has the resources, it is time that Tinian and Rota acquire its office space; office space was sought with the Tinian municipality for a period of two and a half years but were unresponsive, and suspects that upon completion of the cannabis training with Tinian DPS personnel and educational outreach, people will be more inclined to apply for cannabis permits or licenses, and having at least one staff on Tinian would be able to assist the commission not only with Tinian matters, but also with the main office's administrative tasks and other projects; she does not want it to come across that Tinian and Rota are not needed, that satellite offices are not needed, Tinian has been receiving some interest, especially coming out of Covid, the economy is trying to start-up again, the built-up on Tinian and does not want to miss the opportunity on having something established on Tinian.

Acting chair mentioned that he understands that CEDA (Commonwealth Economic Development Authority) has been interested in seeing how they can help use some of their resources for the cannabis industry; he talked with CEDA's Director Sablan and staff and they seem to be seeking ways they could support or help the industry, and

knows that they are also wrapping up their RFP for their satellite offices, maybe that is something that they would be able to do if the commission rented a space within their office building, that way they can collocate financial resources, that may be one of the reasons why it is difficult for commercial operations to establish on Tinian and Rota is the lack of financing, connecting with CEDA may make sense for them and the commission, and that is may be worth having conversations with CEDA staff on Tinian and Rota while he will also communicate with CEDA in Saipan.

The secretary briefly discussed conversations and activities she has had on Tinian and the Department of Commerce's handling of CNMICC's applications and expressed that it would be great to remove that responsibility from the commerce department.

Acting chair indicated that timeline wise, there are things that need to be done in sequence in order for the commission to get to that point, the first thing is to figure out how much budget the commission has left minus the cost of the cannabis tracking system, and expressed that the CTS is on the higher priority list, the hiring of a managing director comes after, and then the available resources; the problem with that, there is a serious conversation point about making sure Tinian and Rota have their resources and prioritizing those resources.

Acting chair asked the acting MD if there was anything else with his report, which he concluded with reporting the following:

- Administrative matters: The executive secretary's accomplishments thus far since joining the CNMICC last month October involved training with understanding the regulations, commission meetings and meeting minutes, filing system, annual budget, inventory, supplies and training with the finance department with its Munis System; since then, she has performed those work on her own with little to no guidance and is also working on improving the filing and inventory system; timekeepers training and certification is being arranged with the Office of Personnel Management, and that the commission was involved with other governmental agencies on a planned 2022 Christmas Village festivity during the Christmas holidays.

Acting chair and secretary thanked the acting MD and executive secretary for all their work and putting things together for the commission, and then asked about the next board meeting if the Tinian and Rota commissioners would be interested in attending the commission's board meeting on Saipan, get to know commission staff and have a small get together Christmas holiday meal.

Both Commissioners Hofschneider and Songsong agreed to attend the commission's December board meeting in Saipan tentatively scheduled for December 15, 2022.

The acting chair stated that he does not have any items for executive session and asked the acting MD if there were any LSRs that needed to be discussed, or if any member had any for discussion.

The acting MD replied that there was none at this time. Secretary Hofschneider and Member Songsong had no items for discussion.

The acting chair indicated that he is preparing a press release on the managing director position and is hoping to get that posted at the Office of Personnel Management's website in January 2023 for potential selection.

Member Songsong indicated that he thought the commission already went through the process of selecting its candidate for the managing director position.

The acting chair apologized if he did not have that mentioned but the candidate that was chosen for the managing director position declined after consideration, and then asked if there were any other matters for discussion or motion for meeting adjournment.

X. Executive Session

1. Legal matters – AAG

There were no legal matters discussed.

XI. Adjournment

Secretary Hofschneider motioned for meeting adjournment, seconded by Member Songsong. All commissioners voted in favor of the motion; motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.