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COMMONWEALTH of the NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
CANNABIS COMMISSION

A meeting of the CNMI Cannabis Commission will be held on **Friday, August 7, 2020, at 10:30 A.M.** at the office of the Office of the Commonwealth Cannabis Commission Conference Room located at Asencion Ct., Building #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. Old Business
 1. Final discussion & Adoption of Resolution 2020-001 regarding the limitations of commercial licenses
 2. Continued discussion on proposed amendments to PL 20-66 & PL 21-05
- VII. New Business
 1. Managing Director's Report
- VIII. Executive Session
 - a. Discussion on current applicant(s) and/or status(es) of license(s)
- IX. Adjournment

Copies of this notice and agenda have been posted at the Administration Building Entrance Hall and House of Representatives Entrance Hall and Senate Entrance Hall.

Written comments on the agenda may be submitted to the CNMI Cannabis Commission, through the Office of the Governor, on or before the meeting date. Oral testimony may be presented during the meeting on Friday, August 7, 2020.

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I. Call to Order

Chairwoman Nadine Deleon Guerrero called the CNMI Cannabis Commission's meeting to order at 10:43 a.m., which was held at the its conference room located at Asencion Ct., Building #1341, Capitol Hill, Saipan.

II. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum

Chairwoman Nadine Deleon Guerrero was present and called roll of the commissioners: Vice Chairman Matthew Deleon Guerrero, representing Saipan, was present; Secretary Journie Hofschneider, representing Tinian, was present (telephonically); Member Thomas Songsong, representing Rota, was present (telephonically); Treasurer Valentino Taisacan, representing Northern Islands, was present. Chairwoman announced the presence of all five commissioners and confirmed quorum.

Also acknowledged for their presence were Mr. Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero, Special Advisor to the Commission, and Ms. Alexis Hofschneider, Legislative Secretary on behalf of the Senate Committee on Cannabis. Commission Managing Director, Monique Sablan, was also present.

III. Consideration and Adoption of Agenda

Chairwoman called for the adoption of the 8/7/2020 agenda; Vice Chairman motioned to *add to the agenda under New Business discussion on proposed regulatory amendments to the licensing structure* for consideration on what should be openly and urgently needed for promulgation.

Chairwoman seconded Vice Chairman's motion, all commissioners voted in favor to amend agenda with new addition under New Business; motion carried/agenda adopted.

IV. Consideration and Adoption of Minutes of Prior Meetings

Chairwoman called for the adoption of minutes of prior meetings, Secretary motioned to table, seconded by Treasurer; all commissioners voted in favor to table the adoption of minutes of prior meetings, motion carried.

V. Public Comment

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No members of the public were present during meeting or in the immediate common areas for public commenting as verified by Treasurer; no written public comment(s) were received by the Commission on the meeting's agenda items.

VI. Old Business

1. Final discussion & Adoption of Resolution 2020-001 regarding the limitations of commercial licenses

Chairwoman opened the floor for final discussion on limitations on commercial licenses.

Vice Chairman elaborated on license limitations and the reading of Resolution 2020-001 which identified the number of license limits and no limits for the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota; discussion continued with Secretary detailing scenarios on how license limitations could be administered.

Special Advisor mentioned his encounter with a member of the public who inquired on license limits, and suggested that the Commission ensure transparency and implement public notices to fairly keep the public informed on this issue.

RECESS: Chairwoman called for recess at 10:59 a.m.; meeting was called back to order at 11:06 a.m.

Commissioners continued their discussion on license limitations, the selection process, e.g., first-come first-serve basis, including experience and know-how are important factors to consider in the selection process; zoning issues were brought up affecting applicants in which the Managing Director explained further the zoning processes.

Vice Chairman recommended that *Commission Resolution 2020-001* would state that “*No license holder can obtain more than 15,000 square feet under cultivation, or any combination of class 1, 2, and 3 production licenses under common ownership,*” which would be the basis for the license under common ownership limitation.

Special Advisor pointed out that the Commission discussed the possibility of limiting licensees and licenses, and sought to clarify the Commission's position with respect to the resolution, which as written, are structured limiting licenses.

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Vice Chairman proposed that there should be limitations on *licensees* and *not licenses*, and offered changes to the resolution to reflect the Commission's current position as discussed.

RECESS: Chairwoman called for recess at 11:57 a.m.; meeting was called back to order at 12:10 p.m.

Chairwoman motioned for a *vote on Commission Resolution 2020-001 implementing limitations on commercial licensees and licenses* in which all commissioners voted in favor of adopting Resolution 2020-001; motion carried.

2. Continued discussion on proposed amendments to PL 20-66 & PL 21-05

The Commission discussed issues with the CNMI cannabis law and proposed amendments; Chairwoman then called for this matter's inclusion in next meeting's agenda for further discussion.

VII. New Business

1. Discussion and approval of locations for approved marijuana retail establishments

Vice Chairman opened discussion for consideration on the topic of the Saipan delegation's zoning bill affecting cannabis applicant processes and establishments, locations, e.g., rural zones, village mixed commercial, industrial zones, cannabis cultivation and lounges in certain zones, and conditional use permits; Vice Chairman further stated that the zoning policy does not apply to home growers under the Commission's Homegrown Registry.

Since the Commission has no approved locations for crop cultivation and only for retail locations, Vice Chairman suggested a *motion* for the record for purposes of approved locations on Saipan for retail and lounges, that the Commission *adopt the definitions and locations as provided in the Saipan zoning law or Saipan Local Law 21-15, and that for Tinian and Rota, its entire area are approved for retail and lounges.*

Vice Chairman inquired with member Songsong his opinion on the entire island of Rota being approved for retail and lounge; member Songsong supported that motion, however, suggested that retail operations within residential areas on Rota, a public notice for public awareness purposes would help give the public advanced notice of the proposed

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establishment to avoid public complaints or outcry for not being informed being that not all members of the public are pro-cannabis.

Chairwoman motioned to *vote for the adoption of Saipan Local Law 21-15 as the approved zoning for Saipan for lounges and retail sites*; all commissioners voted in favor, motioned carries.

Chairwoman reiterated that the Commission will further discuss in future meetings public notices and processes for Rota for cannabis retailers.

2. Managing Director's Report

Managing Director discussed the Commission's FY2021 budget for office equipment, costs associated with moving into the Commission's new office building in Capital Hill, building repairs and improvements, and the set-up of the Rota and Tinian satellite offices.

She went on to explain the Commission's first week of its cannabis application opening (beginning 8/4/20) and the processes, applicant inquiries, zoning requirements, home growers without licenses, and public compliance with cannabis law.

RECESS: Chairwoman called for recess at 1:37 p.m.; meeting was called back to order at 2:04 p.m.

Vice Chairman offered a proposed amendment to the regulations for emergency promulgation in next meeting's agenda relating to zoning permit requirements, in which the Commission will consider replacing the word "*new license*" with "*conditional license*" in its regulations, and explained that the Commission *conditionally approves* an applicant until such time all other requirements, e.g., zoning permit, etc., is completed and issued to applicant at which time the Commission then issues a full *approved* license.

Vice Chairman further addressed for inclusion in the Commission's next meeting a proposed amendment of the cannabis law on the need to state that the "*Commission does not enforce the Homegrown Registry, and that the Department of Public Safety will be the enforcing body and general management authority of the Homegrown Registry.*"

After discussions on proposed amendments to cannabis law for next meeting's agenda, Chairwoman motioned to move into executive session, seconded by Treasurer; all commissioners voted in favor to move into executive session, motion carried.

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VIII. Executive Session

a. Discussion on current applicant(s) and/or status(es) of license(s)

Chairwoman announced executive session at 2:17 p.m., and asked for the Managing Director's update and concerns of current applicants and licenses.

Chairwoman motioned to exit executive session at 3:29 p.m., seconded by Treasurer; all commissioners voted in favor of exiting executive session, motioned carried.

Chairwoman stated that discussions during executive session were related potential applicants, status of current applicants, applicant issues and inquiries, and compliance with CNMI cannabis law, and scheduled the Commission's next meeting for next Friday, August, 14, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.

IX. Adjournment

Chairwoman motioned for adjournment, seconded by Treasurer; all commissioners voted in favor for adjournment, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 3:31 p.m.