

North Carolina Industrial Hemp Commission

MINUTES

June 12, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

Telephone / Internet Conference Call

Commissioners in attendance:	Other official attendees:
Dr. Tom Melton, Chair	Paul Adams, Plant Industry Division, NCDA&CS
Dr. Sandy Stewart, Vice-Chair	Tien Cheng, Department of Justice
Mr. Guy Carpenter	Janyne Kizer, EIT, NCSU
Mr. Billy McLawhorn	Beth Farrell, General Administration, NCDA&CS
Sheriff Tim Manning	Phil Wilson, Plant Industry Division, NCDA&CS
Mr. Pat Short	
Dr. Guochen Yang	

Call to Order – *Dr. Tom Melton, Chairman*

Roll Call of Attendees – *Dr. Tom Melton, Chairman*

Chairman **Melton** initiated a roll call to determine if a quorum of Commissioners were present. Seven Commissioners as listed above were in attendance, meeting the requirement of a quorum.

Statement Concerning Conflicts of Interest – *Dr. Tom Melton, Chairman*

Chairman **Melton** read the statement concerning conflicts of interest and asked members to identify any potential conflicts of interest. No conflicts of interest were identified.

Recognition of Conference Call – *Dr. Tom Melton, Chairman*

Chairman **Melton** noted that the purpose of this meeting is to approve applications to cultivate industrial hemp in North Carolina. Under state and federal laws, individuals must be issued a license to participate in the North Carolina Industrial Hemp Pilot Program. Growers in the state who wish to cultivate industrial hemp must submit an application for a license to the Industrial Hemp Commission. Applications that have been vetted seriously by N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services staff will be reviewed at this meeting. There is no public comment period for this meeting.

Recognition of Special Guests – *Dr. Tom Melton, Chairman*

Chairman **Melton** noted there were no special guests at this meeting.

Industrial Hemp Program Update – *Mr. Paul Adams, NC Industrial Hemp Program Manager, Plant Industry Division, NCDA&CS*

Chairman **Melton** called on Paul Adams, NC Industrial Hemp Program Manager, to provide a program update.

- Mr. **Adams** reported that as of June 12, 2020, North Carolina has 1,503 licensed industrial hemp growers, representing 16,433.83 licensed acres and 7,276,393.59 square feet of licensed greenhouse production. There are currently 1,086 registered processors in the state.

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New Business

- Chairman **Melton** noted that clarity regarding THC may be needed on both the NCDA&CS and NC State websites. Mr. Phil Wilson, Plant Industry Director, noted that anyone with questions can contact the Plant Industry Division for clarification regarding testing.
- Approval of Minutes from the May 29, 2020 meeting – Dr. Tom Melton, Chairman
 - Chairman **Melton** called for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 29, 2020, meeting. Motion to approve these minutes was made by Commissioner **Short** and seconded by Commissioner **Manning**. Motion passed on a voice vote.
- Review and Approval of Research Pilot Program Applications – Dr. Tom Melton, Chairman
 - Chairman **Melton** read the names of the applications under consideration at this time: Henry Wallace Parker; Darryl J. McKovich; Michael Clayton Shipley; William Grant Bodway; Willis Burnell Powell; Evan Bryce Stern; Catherine Courtney Whaley; and Tobias Autrea Artis.
 - Chairman **Melton** asked if there was a motion to approve the applications presented. Commissioner **Carpenter** made a motion to approve the applications. Commissioner **McLawhorn** seconded the motion to approve.
 - After roll call vote, all applications were approved.
- Update on the NC Farm Act and State Plan – Mr. Tien Cheng, Assistant Attorney General, NC Department of Justice
 - Mr. **Cheng** noted that the NC General Assembly has signed the NC Farm Act and that the bill is waiting for Governor Cooper’s signature. The hemp provisions were removed from this legislation, and NC is continuing to operate under the pilot program. NCDA&CS is working on the federal level to extend the pilot program until Fall 2021, but nothing is in stone. Currently, if there is no State Program will operate under USDA Program beginning October 31, 2020.
- Warning about the grey areas of existing law – Commission Members
 - Chairman **Melton** stated if license holders have not studied the industry well, may need to research further. Currently, the CBD market is flooded, and an industry contact has remarked that there will not be contracts issued this year. It is an expensive crop to grow and encouraged having a buyer with a solid contract. Private label may not be as lucrative as you’ve heard. There have also been several large companies file for protection from creditors. Right now, the current program ends on October 30, 2020 and there are many uncertainties going forward. Uncertainties also remain for the legality of smokable hemp in North Carolina.
 - Vice-Chairman **Stewart** noted that there is both marketing and regulatory uncertainties. After October 30, 2020, NC will either operate a state program under USDA rules, USDA will operate a program in NC or congressional action is needed to extend the current pilot program until fall 2021.

Adjourn: Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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