

# North Carolina Industrial Hemp Commission

## MINUTES

October 23, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.  
Telephone / Internet Conference Call

Commissioners in attendance:	Other official attendees:
Dr. Tom Melton, Chair	Tien Cheng, Department of Justice
Dr. Sandy Stewart, Vice-Chair	Janyne Kizer, EIT, NCSU
Chief Daniel House	Beth Farrell, General Administration, NCDA&CS
Dr. Shirley Hymon-Parker	Phil Wilson, Plant Industry Division, NCDA&CS
Mr. Billy McLawhorn	Jon Lanier, Asst. General Counsel, NCDA&CS
Mr. Fen Rascoe	

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. Six 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 Mr. Paul Adams to provide a program update.

- Mr. **Adams** reported that as of October 23, 2020, North Carolina has 1,512 licensed industrial hemp growers, representing 14,648.17 licensed acres and 7,215,992.59 square feet of licensed greenhouse production. There are currently 1,184 registered processors in the state.

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## New Business

- Statement of Potential Conflict for Dr. Shirley Hymon-Parker
  - On behalf of Chairman **Melton**, Beth Farrell, NCDA&CS, read the following statement: we received notification from the State Ethics Commission that during the evaluation of the Statement of Economic Interest filed by Dr. Shirley Hymon-Parker that they did not find an actual conflict of interest, but found a potential conflict of interest. The potential conflict identified does not
  
- Approval of Minutes from the July 21, 2020 meeting – Dr. Tom Melton, Chairman
  - Chairman **Melton** called for a motion to approve the minutes from the July 21, 2020, meeting. Motion to approve these minutes was made by Commissioner **House** and seconded by Commissioner **Hymon-Parker**. 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: Richard Alonzo Hill; Sheila Mae Stephenson; Daniel Clay Lovelace; Jordan Brian Hall; Janine Diane Severt; Alton Brown Williams; Dindi Rashida Robinson; Senadzi Kpeglo; Janie V. Dickens; Pisamai Bounsouk; Mindy Gail Coats; Vicki Lynn Hyder; Demetrius Cheyen Henderson; Kevin Brinson; and Armaney Richardson.
    - Chairman **Melton** asked if there was a motion to approve the applications presented. Commissioner **McLawhorn** made a motion to approve the applications. Commissioner **Rascoe** seconded the motion to approve.
    - After roll call vote, all applications were approved.
  
- NC Industrial Hemp Pilot Program Update – Mr. Jon Lanier, Asst. General Counsel, NCDA&CS
  - Mr. **Lanier** noted that since the Commission's last meeting there had been an extension of pilot programs on the federal level. This was included through a provision in the Continuing Resolution on funding to extend hip pilot programs until September 30, 2021. The North Carolina Industrial Hemp Pilot Program will be extended until this date.
  - Vice-Chairman **Stewart** noted that USDA also reopened the comment period on the Domestic Hemp Program Interim Final Rules. While there still concerns with what USDA has proposed, Commissioner Steve Troxler and NCDA&CS continue to advocate for final rules that are favorable to farmers. Mr. Jon Lanier was thanked for his efforts.
  
- Warning about the grey areas of existing law – Commission Members
  - Commissioner **Rascoe** thanked Commissioner Troxler and NCDA&CS for all they have done to establish a hemp program in North Carolina. He noted concern regarding overage of inventory and cautioned license holders to be careful of what you grow. Hemp is not like other commodities and there is no guarantee for getting paid for your crop; he also noted that most growers should include legal fees in their production budgets.

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- Chairman **Melton** remarked that he has heard there are limited, if any, contracts being issued. He encouraged license holders to be sure they know who will be buying their crop or plan on self-processing.
- Commissioner **McLawhorn** noted that the legal THC level is 0.3%, but has personal experience with a crop testing “hot” and being destroyed. He warned license holders that environmental conditions can make THC levels go above the legal limits and need to be destroyed; it is a very risky crop.
- Chairman **Melton** reiterated that growers should not be planting or investing more in hemp than they can afford to lose.
- Vice-Chairman **Stewart** welcomed Dr. Shirley Hymon-Parker to the Commission and thanked Dr. Yang. He noted NCA&T State University’s strong research and extension programs supporting hemp production in the state.

Adjourn: Being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner **Rascoe** and seconded by Commissioner **House**. Motion passed on a voice vote.

**Industrial Hemp Commission**

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