

North Carolina Industrial Hemp Commission

MINUTES

November 12, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.

Telephone / Internet Conference Call

Commissioners in attendance:	Other official attendees:
Dr. Tom Melton, Chairman	Paul Adams, Plant Industry Division, NCDA&CS
Mr. Guy Carpenter	Tien Cheng, Department of Justice
Mr. Billy McLawhorn	Janyne Kizer, EIT, NCSU
Sheriff Tim Manning	Beth Farrell, General Administration, NCDA&CS
Mr. Fen Rascoe	Phil Wilson, Plant Industry Division, NCDA&CS
Mr. Pat Short	Laura Kilian, Legislative Liaison, NCDA&CS
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 November 12, 2019, North Carolina has 1,353 licensed industrial hemp growers, representing 16,981.76 licensed acres and 6,560,717.60 square feet of licensed greenhouse production. There are currently 915 registered processors in the state.

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New Business

- Approval of Minutes from the September 24, 2019 meeting – *Dr. Tom Melton, Chairman*
 - Chairman **Melton** called for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 24, 2019 meeting. Motion to approve these minutes was made by Commissioner **Manning** and seconded by Commissioner **Carpenter**. 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: Tucker Andrew Jones; Mickey Wilkerson Johnson; William D. Rogers; Douglas Eugene Murphy; Henry B. Crews; Alexander Toncray Long; Billy Ray Kanoy; John Lamar Lawrence; Alonza Nicole Simmons; Tammy Sue Slate; Dewitt Dennis Page; Brandon Trent Alexander; Gregory Scott Horvath; Adam Michael Williams; Bennie Edward Barbour; Melissa Lee Rollizo; Daniel Joseph Moye; William Elijah Brasch; Cory Steven Coe; Robert Brandon Potts; Joseph Woodard; Dalton Lane Huff; Amanda Dawn Killon-Atwood; Larry Neil Johnson; Jon Ford Pearce; Jeffrey Clark Adcock; Anna Heustess Tolan; Scott Daniel Dula; Arnell Vanessa Bobbitt; Michael Patrick Stram; Robert Ryan Gibbs; Nathan Prentice Klenushin; Naveed Tashrif Ulhaq; Austin Gray Lynch; Don Klooster; Donald Bruce Tallent; William Edward Prewitt III; Sheila Asbury; William Ragan Copeland; and Drew Thomas Bowman.
 - Chairman **Melton** asked if there was a motion to approve the applications presented. Commissioner **Short** made a motion to approve the applications. Commissioner **McLawhorn** seconded the motion to approve. After roll call vote, all applications were approved.

- Update on 2019 Farm Act and USDA State Plan for North Carolina – *Ms. Laura Kilian, Legislative Liaison, NCDA&CS*
 - Ms. **Kilian** noted that the 2019 NC Farm Act (SB 315) has been approved by the NC Senate and is currently being held in the House chamber. USDA released the interim final rule for comment for the establishment of a domestic hemp production program on October 31, 2019. The general idea is that states will have three options: 1) submit a state plan to USDA; 2) if not establishing a state plan, farmers will submit directly to USDA; or 3) operate through 2020 under the 2014 Farm Bill while developing a state plan.
 - Chairman **Melton** encouraged paying attention to developments.
 - Commissioner **Short** commented that he is getting questions from growers asking what program they will be operating under in 2020; Chairman **Melton** noted that this is not known at this time.
 - Commissioner **Short** also noted that he has heard from farmers that they will not grow hemp if there is a ban on smokables and the crop is viewed as too risky.
 - Commissioner **Rascoe** asked if the N.C. Farm Act passes if a state plan would have to be submitted to USDA; Ms. Kilian noted that if it passes, the pilot program would sunset at the end of 2019.

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- Chairman **Melton** asked if the Farm Act passes if there may be a period with no legal hemp plan in place; Ms. **Kilian** responded this could potentially happen, there is a lot of grey area surrounding what may happen.
 - Commissioner **Rascoe** moved that the N.C. Industrial Hemp Commission pass a resolution to operate under the pilot program through 2020; Commissioner **Carpenter** seconded the motion. Motion was approved on voice vote.
 - wanted it to be clear that while there is a roadside test available to law enforcement for alcohol impairment it is much more difficult to test for impairment due to narcotics. He noted that comparing the two is unfair.
- Warning about the grey areas of existing law - Dr. Tom Melton, Chairman
 - Chairman **Melton** noted that it should be apparent from the discussion during the meeting that there remains a lot of grey areas regarding.
 - Commissioner **Rascoe** moved for the N.C. Industrial Hemp Commission to make formal comments against the USDA interim rules regarding a domestic hemp program. Commissioner **Carpenter** seconded, and the motion carried on voice vote.
 - Chairman **Melton** noted that hearing reports of people trying to lease land for (\$500 per acre, well above market rate). He suggested always having a lawyer review any contracts prior to signing.
- Adjourn: Being no further business, Commissioner **Rascoe** made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Commissioner **Short**.

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