



Cannabis Public Health Advisory Council
As Required by 2021 Acts of Assembly, Chapter 551
November 3, 2025

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Marwaha Business Plaza - Conference Rooms A/B
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Craig Markva (on behalf of Secretary Janet V. Kelly, Chair)
Ngiste Abebe, Vice Chair
Karin Addison
Michael Krawitz
Dr. Michael Gillette (Virtual)
Christopher Lindsay (on behalf of Dr. Karen Shelton)
Shawn Casey (on behalf of Jamie Patten)
Melissa K. Ackley
LeNelle M. Mozell
Linda Jackson
Arne Owens
Nikeya Thomas (on behalf of Joseph Guthrie)
Rev. Dr. Jermone Barber
Dr. Larry Keen

LEGAL COUNSEL: Valentine Southall, Office of the Attorney General

PRESENTERS: Dr. James Hutchings, Virginia Department of Forensic Science
LeNelle Mozell, Prince William County Department of
Community Services
Dr. Diane Anderson, Prince William Health District

1. Introductory Remarks & Roll Call

Mr. Markva called the meeting to order at 2:07 PM.

2. Determination of Quorum

Mr. Markva determined that, with 13 members present in-person, the Council had a quorum.

3. Electronic Participation Approval

The following Advisory Council members joined the meeting remotely:

- Dr. Michael Gillette participated from his office in Lynchburg, VA, as his principal residence is more than 60 miles from the meeting location.

Council members physically present approved the member's electronic participation.

4. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

Upon motion by Ms. Abebe, and duly seconded by Ms. Addison, the Council members voted to approve the draft minutes from the Advisory Council meeting on May 12, 2025.

5. Vote to Approve the Electronic Meeting Policy

Upon motion by Ms. Abebe, and duly seconded by Ms. Addison, the Council members voted to approve the Electronic Meeting Policy.

6. Vote to Approve the 2025 Annual Report

Upon motion by Ms. Abebe, and duly seconded by Ms. Addison, the Council members voted to approve the 2025 Annual Report.

7. Presentation: Drug-Impaired Driving in Virginia?

Dr. James Hutchings, Toxicology Program Manager from the Virginia Department of Forensic Science, gave a presentation titled "Drug-Impaired Driving in Virginia." He discussed the factors contributing to safe driving and examined how various drugs can affect driving abilities. He noted that between 2020-2024 THC has consistently been the most prevalent drug detected (excluding alcohol) in Driving Under the Influence of Drugs cases.

Dr. Hutchings highlighted concerns regarding THC impaired driving, citing findings from the Cannabis Control Authority's (CCA) 2024 Safe Driving Survey, which revealed that 30% of surveyed drivers in Virginia believe that marijuana consumers are safer drivers. He also pointed out the increase in THC potency over the years.

8. Presentation: Has Legalization Impacted Public Health in Prince William County

Dr. Diane Anderson, Population Health Supervisor and Lead Epidemiologist for the Prince William Health District, and Ms. LeNelle Mozell, LMSW, Program Manager for Prince William County Community Services (PWCCS), examined the effects of cannabis legalization on public health within the Prince William County community.

Both agencies tracked the number of individuals citing cannabis use as a reason for seeking services beginning in July 2020 to the present. Data from unsupervised, random drug testing of adult participants in PWCCS's Substance Use Disorders treatment program was also included. The data indicated that in the years following partial legalization (July 2021), there was an increase in reported usage and testing across all age groups, particularly among youth. Additionally, there was an uptick in emergency room visits associated with cannabis use. The research data also indicated that numbers have somewhat decreased over the past two years; however, they have not returned to pre-legalization levels.

Ms. Mozelle and Dr. Anderson emphasized that ongoing monitoring of cannabis use is essential for understanding and addressing the public health needs of the community.

9. Next Steps

Based on Council member discussions throughout the meeting, Mr. Markva listed several possible topics for further CPHAC meeting agenda items: Virginia Department of Health, THC and CBD Adverse Events Reporting Portal; Virginia Foundation for Health Youth research efforts with Dr. Michelle Peace from Virginia Commonwealth University; research from Dr. Ethan Russo; and data from Virginia's Opioid Abatement Authority's Substance Use Disorder Analytics (SUDA) program.

Mr. Gillette noted that the legislative charge of the Council was to make recommendations and suggested that moving forward the Council should focus on gathering data needed to make intelligent recommendations to the appropriate authorities about how to move forward with a retail cannabis market.

10. Public Comment

Mr. Markva opened the public comment period.

Mary Lynn Mathre, a registered nurse from Virginia and the President and Co-Founder of Patients Out of Time, highlighted the importance of increasing cannabis education for both the public and healthcare professionals, and she mentioned a recent article published in JAMA called "Developing Medical Cannabis Competencies."

11. Adjournment

The Council adjourned at 3:50 PM.