

**AGENDA SPECIAL MEETING ANTIOCH CITY COUNCIL
CANNABIS STANDING COMMITTEE
COUNCIL MEMBERS WILSON AND TORRES-WALKER
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2022
2:00 P.M.**

Special Meeting
2:00 P.M.

October 28, 2022
Meeting Conducted Remotely

The City of Antioch, in response to the Executive Order of the Governor and the Order of the Health Officer of Contra Costa County concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), held the Cannabis Standing Committee meeting live stream (at www.antiochca.gov/csc/meeting/). The Cannabis Standing Committee meeting was conducted utilizing Zoom Audio/Video Technology.

1. ROLL CALL

Council Member/Committee Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 2:09 P.M. and City Attorney Smith called the roll.

Present: Council Member/Committee Chair Wilson and Council/Committee Member Torres-Walker

Staff: City Attorney, Thomas Lloyd Smith
Outside Legal Counsel, Ruthann Ziegler
Director of Economic Development, Kwame Reed
Director of Public Safety and Community Resources, Tasha Johnson
Youth Services Network Manager, Monserrat Cabral
Executive Legal Assistant, Rakia Grant-Smith
Minutes Clerk, Kitty Eiden

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Director of Public Safety and Community Resources Johnson and City Attorney Smith introduced attendees of the meeting.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT ON UNAGENDIZED ITEMS – None

4. NATURAL SUPPLEMENTS – PROPOSED OPERATING AGREEMENT AND SOCIAL EQUITY PROGRAM (RUBICON)

Outside Legal Counsel Ziegler presented the staff report dated October 28, 2022, recommending the Cannabis Committee review the proposed operating agreement and provide direction to staff.

A. Public Comment

Robert Aguilar, representing Natural Supplements, gave an overview of their business structure and stated they were excited to operate in Antioch.

DC Dorham-Kelly, Rubicon Programs CEO, highlighted their Anti-Poverty Programs and Social Equity Program.

B. Discussion and Direction to Staff

On motion by Council Member/Committee Chair Wilson, seconded by Council/Committee Member Torres-Walker the Cannabis Standing Committee unanimously recommended the Operating Agreement and Social Equity Program move forward to the City Council for consideration.

5. UPDATE ON EXISTING SOCIAL EQUITY PROGRAMS

A. LEMONNADE (OPPORTUNITY JUNCTION)

B. CONTRA COSTA FARMS (OPPORTUNITY JUNCTION)

I. Presentation by Alissa Friedman

Alissa Friedman provided a PowerPoint presentation of their Social Equity Program – Antioch CNA Training at Opportunity Junction, which included people served, enrollment, graduation, licensing, and employment. She clarified that they were funded through Contra Costa Farms and Lemonnade’s Social Equity Programs.

Director of Public Safety and Community Resources Johnson announced One Plant had not responded with their Social Equity report so there would be a meeting set up between City Attorney Smith, Outside Legal Counsel Ziegler, herself along with Beat the Streets to discuss their program and she would bring back an update at a later date.

II. Public Comment

Steven Abundis, advocate for the justice impacted and social equity in cannabis, questioned if there was data tracking the progress non-profits had made with regards to providing services to those individuals impacted by the war on drugs.

City Attorney Smith responded that the City had asked each of the organizations to report on their impact and Director of Public Safety and Community Resources Johnson was working with them on how to transform their programs to measurable observable results.

Director of Public Safety and Community Resources Johnson added the initial setup for Social Equity Programs was determining who would be the best match with the operators and then it was between the nonprofit and operator to connect. She noted reports went to the operator and then the City who ensured everyone was on track for payments.

Mr. Abundis questioned if there was a mechanism in place to track the data on how the non-profits helped the justice impacted effected by the war on drugs or if there was a public record that could be viewed to see how the profits were being utilized for the community.

III. Discussion and Direction to Staff

Council Member/Committee Chair Wilson reported on her attendance at a Cannabis Conference with Council/Committee Member Torres-Walker, and she noted that one item that was discussed was cities needing to better define their statistics regarding communities and individuals that were negatively impacted by the war on drugs. She suggested bringing this item back so they could better define the program.

City Attorney Smith responded that the Committee could bring this item back. He noted Ms. Friedman had provided data regarding who was served and how money was invested. He explained each program was different, so it had been on a case-by-case basis. He noted consistency was held by Director of Public Safety and Community Resources Johnson who ensured there were reports back on the programs.

Council/Committee Member Torres-Walker thanked Ms. Friedman for the presentation. She questioned if the application process, metrics for those chosen and how it impacted communities affected by the war on drugs, had been defined. Additionally, she questioned how many underserved individuals were served in Antioch and how over time they would quantify success generationally. She commented that dispensary operators did not look like the people impacted by the war on drugs. She stated she was familiar with Rubicon's work around previously incarcerated people. She reiterated that she had not seen a metric to show that those directly impacted by the war on drugs had greatly benefited from Social Equity Programs.

Council Member/Committee Chair Wilson thanked staff for the update on current Social Equity partners. She requested bringing an item back to the Committee that better defined the program and metrics showing the impacts being made in the community.

City Attorney Smith stated a strategy/study session could be scheduled to better define the metrics requested.

Council Member/Committee Chair Wilson stated that she believed the State would be asking for the information as well.

C. DELTA DISPENSARY (BEAT THE STREETS)

As previously reported Director of Public Safety and Community Resources Johnson announced there would be a meeting set up between City Attorney Smith, Outside Legal Counsel Ziegler, herself, and Beat the Streets to discuss the Social Equity Program and she would bring back an update in the future.

D. ONE PLANT (BEAT THE STREETS)

As previously reported Director of Public Safety and Community Resources Johnson announced there would be a meeting set up between City Attorney Smith, Outside Legal Counsel Ziegler, herself and Beat the Streets to discuss the Social Equity Program and she would bring back an update at a later date.

6. STATE CANNABIS EQUITY GRANTS FOR LOCAL JURISDICTIONS

A. Presentation by Michael Macias and Khalil Ferguson

Michael Macias, Antioch resident, provided a brief personal history. He announced he was advocating for establishing a State recognized Social Equity Program that offered cannabis operator opportunities to Antioch residents who had been impacted by the war on drugs. He reported the State had \$15m to allocate towards state recognized Social Equity Programs and the deadline to apply was December 14, 2022. He recommended utilizing non-profits to accomplish this goal. He also recommended local dispensaries agree to allocating 15% of their shelf space to local social equity brands. Lastly, he recommended opening store front opportunities, green zones and offering priority processing to verified social equities.

Marlene Jimenez stated she was a victim of the drug war and urged Council to support equality in terms of black and brown owned cannabis businesses.

Steven Abundis provided a brief personal history. He stated he was an advocate for the justice impacted and social equity in cannabis. He spoke in support of Antioch providing local small cannabis businesses opportunities to study Social Equity Cannabis. He noted that he had been advocating for a state recognized Social Equity Program in cannabis for Antioch with several of the City's elected officials. He stated they needed more persons of color, justice impacted and true equity operators within the city's cannabis industry. He noted it was unclear how the City tracked social equity program contributions and outcomes. He explained that the city's social equity model would not be recognized by the state which meant they would not be able to apply annually for grant funding. He reported Roots for Success was a non-profit providing environmental and job training program in the STEM fields for the justice impacted incarcerated.

Khalil Ferguson, United Core Alliance, discussed services they had provided with regards to social equity program development, funding, and assessments as well as a local equity grant program. He noted the primary purpose of UCA was to help ensure there were individuals of color who studied cannabis connected to the equity industry to guide discussions and assessments. He discussed the advantages and benefits of having an established equity program.

B. Public Comment

Alexis Angulo, Founder of Pretty and Posh Cannabis Brand, stated she was an equity verified cannabis brand out of Sacramento. She questioned how CNA training would provide equity and justice to those negatively impacted by the war on drugs and prepare individuals to own a successful cannabis business.

City Attorney Smith commented that the Committee had moved on from that discussion item.

Steven Abundis thanked Khalil and Alexis for their comments. He stated he believed the solution to creating an adequate Social Equity Program for Antioch was utilizing Roots of Success to create environmental education, job training and curriculum in the creation of a Social Equity Program. He noted there was also an enterprise technology company that could track profits and how they serviced the people within the social equity community and operators. He stated he was willing to work with anyone to pinpoint and service those impacted and he looked forward to collaborating with any operators or organizations.

Mr. Ferguson announced the state funding application due date would close December 14, 2022. He noted in fiscal year 2023-24 local governments would be required to match grant funding.

Mr. Abundis stated they had the stakeholders in place, and they just needed to discuss how to move forward.

Director of Economic Development Reed commented the Social Equity Program adopted by the City was not created in vain of what was occurring at the State level. He explained some items the money was going towards were not part of what was defined as a Social Equity Program at the State level; however, the City needed to plan how they wanted to move forward and then seek funding to accomplish those goals. He stated more discussion needed to take place.

C. Discussion and Direction to Staff

Council/Committee Member Torres-Walker thanked the speakers and noted this conversation had been ongoing for over a year. She further noted that this Committee was the best place to have these discussions. She encouraged stakeholders to continue to show up and advocate for these things to happen. She believed moving forward prior to the city having to match funds would be a great opportunity. She stated she was unsure how to move forward while they were trying to consider having a more purposeful process on the non-profit side for equity funds and better metrics regarding changing the lives of generational disparity and disenfranchisement because of the war on drugs.

Council Member/Committee Chair Wilson commented when the city moved forward with cannabis quickly without completely vetting options and Social Equity was never clearly defined or addressed. She noted it needed to be defined in the true meaning of what it really meant under proposition 64. She supported the City applying for state funding by December 14, 2022.

Director of Economic Development Reed commented that he would need to discuss this matter with City Manager Johnson to determine how it fit into the work plan for his department.

Mr. Macias urged the Council/Committee to expedite applying for the funds, so they did not miss the opportunity. He noted they could take their time on establishing a program.

Mr. Ferguson offered to assist the City with the application process and equity assessment.

Council Member/Committee Chair Wilson suggested Mr. Ferguson work with Director of Economic Development Reed and City Attorney Smith to qualify the City for the grant.

Director of Economic Development Reed stated that he did not know if staff could work with an outside organization on this item because of the RFQ process. He questioned if this was the only opportunity for grant funding.

Mr. Ferguson explained the grant process was reoccurring yearly; however, in future years, the city would have to match funds and solicitation occurred yearly.

Director of Economic Development Reed stated he would discuss this matter with City Manager Johnson to determine how to move forward.

Michael Macias commented the first step would be the declaration to the state notifying them that they intended to establish a new program.

Mr. Ferguson added the first step was the assessment and once framework was established, they could apply for the funding for the Equity Program.

Director of Economic Development Reed reiterated that he would discuss this matter with City Manager Johnson. He noted that the Committee members could participate in the meeting.

Council Member/Committee Chair Wilson agreed that Committee Members should participate in the meeting.

City Attorney Smith stated he would be happy to assist with the meeting.

Michael Macias reported City Clerk Householder had drafted a declaration.

7. ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Council/Committee Member Torres Walker, seconded by Council/Committee Chair Wilson the Committee unanimously adjourned the meeting a 3:19 P.M.

Respectfully submitted:

Kitty Eiden

KITTY EIDEN, Minutes Clerk