These minutes have not been approved by the commission.

Nebraska Medical Cannabis Commission

Open Meeting

August 17, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.

301 Centennial Mall South, 301 Centennial Mall South - 1st Floor
Hearing Room, Lincoln, NE 68509

Draft Minutes

1. Call to Order/Open Meetings Act Notification

Chair Mueting called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. on August 17, 2026. She stated that the meeting was subject to the Nebraska Open Meetings Act and that a copy of the Act was available for public review at the back of the room. She further stated that the meeting agenda and documents to be discussed were available for public review.

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2. Record Roll Call

Roll call was conducted with Commissioners Jim Elworth, Lorelle Mueting, and Judge Michael Coffey present. Chair Mueting noted that Commissioner Bud Synhorst was expected to arrive shortly and would be recorded upon arrival.

A quorum was present, and the Commission proceeded with the meeting.

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3. Approval of July 20 Meeting Minutes

The Commission considered approval of the minutes from the July 20, 2026, meeting. Chair Mueting asked whether there were any corrections or additions to the minutes. None were presented and the minutes were presented for approval as amended.

Commissioner Elworth moved to approve the July 20, 2026, meeting minutes as amended. Commissioner Coffey seconded the motion.

There was no further discussion. The motion was submitted to a roll call vote.

The motion was adopted with Commissioners Mueting, Coffey, and Elworth voting in favor.

These minutes have not been approved by the commission.

Commissioner Bud Synhorst arrived at 1:04 p.m., prior to the beginning of the public comment period.

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4. Public Comment Period

Commissioner Mueting noted that there will be an opportunity for the public to comment. She stated that the public comment portion of the Commission meeting was not a question-and-answer session and that defamatory remarks and hostile commentary would not be tolerated. Each speaker is allowed three minutes to speak. The public comment period will be limited to one hour or less if there are not sufficient speakers. She asked each speaker to state and spell their name for the record and asked for a show of hands from members of the public who wished to comment.

Below is a summary of the public comments received during the meeting. The summary is intended to capture each speaker's primary personal experiences, policy recommendations, implementation issues, industry concerns, and other matters relevant to the Commission's work. The minutes are not intended to be a verbatim transcript or to include every statement made during public comment.

Dominic and William Gillen

Summary: Mr. Gillen questioned whether the Commission had made use of existing state expertise when developing Nebraska's medical cannabis regulatory program. He specifically discussed prior work of the Nebraska Hemp Commission and referenced a letter from the Chair of the Nebraska Hemp Commission describing efforts to engage state officials regarding hemp and CBD policy, including issues involving consumer protection, taxation, law enforcement, crime laboratory needs, and regulatory development.

Mr. Gillen stated that the Nebraska Hemp Commission had previously developed regulations addressing hemp and cannabis-related products and that, although those regulations would not necessarily have been appropriate for the medical cannabis program, the experience and regulatory work already conducted by the Commission could have provided useful information. He noted that the Hemp Commission did not have authority over medical cannabis but questioned whether its experience with cannabis-related products, consumer protection, testing, enforcement, and oversight could have informed the development of the medical cannabis program.

Mr. Gillen asked whether the Nebraska Medical Cannabis Commission had been made aware of the Nebraska Hemp Commission's prior regulatory work and whether representatives of the two commissions had been asked to meet to determine whether any existing expertise, regulatory concepts, or lessons learned could be useful to the medical cannabis program. He stated that, if such collaboration had occurred, he would welcome an explanation of how it was used, and if it had not occurred, he questioned why the opportunity had not been pursued.

Mr. Gillen emphasized that the Nebraska Hemp Commission was a state commission and that its prior regulatory work represented an existing state resource. He stated that, when developing a new regulatory system, the state should consider qualified resources and existing work rather than starting entirely from the beginning. He encouraged the Commission to consider what resources may have been overlooked during development of the program and whether existing expertise could still be used to improve or accelerate implementation.

Lia Post

Summary: Ms. Post discussed her recent appointment with her pain management specialist, Dr. Matthew Stottle of Omaha Pain Physicians, and her experience as a medical cannabis patient. She stated that she discussed the Nebraska Medical Cannabis Commission with her physician and described the Commission's previous meeting, including concerns regarding the manufacturer application process. She referenced a previous meeting in which the Commission was informed that there were no manufacturer applicants from staff, while individuals present at the meeting stated that they had submitted applications and had copies of their applications. She questioned the Commission's decision to extend the manufacturer application process in light of those circumstances.

Ms. Post specifically referenced Sweetwater Hemp and stated that, as a medical cannabis patient, she had toured the facility and believed it could be operational quickly. She asked whether the Commission was aware of the facility's readiness and encouraged the Commission to move the program forward so that manufacturers could provide products to patients.

Ms. Post also discussed her physician's views regarding recommending medical cannabis. She stated that her physician told her that he was not opposed to recommending medical cannabis but questioned the practical value of providing a recommendation when patients do not yet have access to a functioning medical cannabis system. She also stated that her physician is part of a finance group that she understood to be backing one of the producers and said that he had expressed a similar perspective regarding the current availability of medical cannabis.

Ms. Post stated that she encouraged her physician to provide her with a written recommendation and described his response as illustrating the difficulty physicians face when patients do not yet have access to the medical cannabis system. She emphasized her physician's professional qualifications, describing him as a fellowship-trained, double-board-certified interventional pain medicine physician, and encouraged the Commission to consider the perspectives of physicians who treat patients who may benefit from medical cannabis.

Ms. Post further stated that she had provided a release of information to members of the press and hoped that members of the press would follow up with her physician regarding his perspective on medical cannabis and patient care.

Sherri Lawler

Summary: Ms. Lawler spoke about her daughter, Brooke, who has experienced seizures since she was 15 months old. She stated that Brooke is now 33 years old and continues to experience seizures and wears a protective helmet because of injuries she has sustained during seizures. Ms. Lawler discussed her concerns about her and her husband's ability to continue providing care as they approach retirement age and emphasized the importance of establishing appropriate long-term living and care arrangements for their daughter.

Ms. Lawler described a residential and day-service program called the Sheltering Tree that she recently visited and said she would like her daughter to be able to access. She stated that her daughter's use of medical cannabis currently presents a barrier to accessing the facility because medical cannabis cannot be brought into or administered within the facility under its current requirements.

Ms. Lawler stated that she and her daughter are registered medical cannabis caregiver and patient, respectively, and that DHHS supports her daughter's care and use of the medication. She described additional legal and administrative requirements that, in her experience, make it difficult for staff at residential and day-service facilities to assist with the administration of medical cannabis. She stated that she believes a change in law or other authorization is needed to allow an authorized person to bring medical cannabis into a facility and administer it to a patient.

Ms. Lawler described situations in which staff at Brooke's day-service program have contacted her when Brooke experiences a cluster of seizures. She stated that, because she has medical cannabis available that she believes helps stop the seizures, she has been required to come to the facility, take Brooke to her vehicle while she is still experiencing seizures, and administer the medication there. Ms. Lawler contrasted the medication she administers with other rescue medications, which she stated can cause significant sedation.

Ms. Lawler stated that Brooke also uses medical cannabis daily in capsule and oil forms created by her mother and discussed the challenges of having those products administered in care settings. She asked whether the Commission could address the ability of authorized caregivers or trained facility staff to administer medical cannabis to qualified patients in residential and day-service settings. She stated that the issue should be addressed by the Commission or through legislation so that patients who rely on residential or supportive-care services are not excluded from those services because of their medical cannabis treatment.

Ms. Lawler also discussed the limited availability of specialized residential facilities and the lengthy waitlists for such services. She encouraged the Commission and Legislature to consider the needs of patients with significant disabilities who may require both specialized care and access to medical cannabis. She stated that she had previously consulted with a Colorado physician regarding her daughter's treatment and that she believes the treatment has been beneficial for her daughter, but that similar treatment and administration options remain difficult to implement in Nebraska.

Georgianna Schroeder-Stanley

Summary: Ms. Schroeder-Stanley expressed concerns about the implementation of Nebraska's medical cannabis program and stated that she believes political opposition has contributed to delays in establishing the program. She discussed attending a town hall held by Representative Flood and described an attempt to submit a question regarding how he would respond if a family member or close friend sought treatment through a medical cannabis program.

Ms. Schroeder-Stanley stated that she submitted the question to Representative Flood's office after she was unable to ask it at the town hall. She described receiving a written response from the office that did not directly answer the question she had submitted. She expressed frustration with what she characterized as continued opposition to medical cannabis and stated that she believes Nebraska voters support implementation of the medical cannabis program.

Melanie Knight

Summary: Ms. Knight stated that it had been approximately 30 days since she last spoke before the Commission and expressed frustration that she had not seen sufficient progress in the implementation of the medical cannabis program during that time. She stated that, although she does not have a family member who personally requires medical cannabis, she knows patients, friends, family members, and neighbors who do.

Ms. Knight discussed patients she has met through attending Commission meetings and described witnessing individuals continue to experience seizures, pain, and other medical difficulties while waiting for the program to become fully operational. She expressed concern that patients and families have continued to come before the Commission to describe their experiences without seeing the progress they believe is needed.

Ms. Knight encouraged the Commissioners to consider the experiences shared during public comment and stated that she believes changes are needed in the implementation of the medical cannabis program. She emphasized that Nebraska voters approved medical cannabis and encouraged the Commission to move forward with implementation.

Angelica Marsaglia

Summary: Ms. Marsaglia expressed concerns regarding the implementation of Nebraska's medical cannabis program and stated that she believes the program has not been implemented in accordance with the intent of the law approved by Nebraska voters. She described concerns about what she characterized as selective enforcement and questioned why Nebraska patients continue to experience barriers to obtaining medical cannabis.

Ms. Marsaglia stated that patients and members of the public have repeatedly appeared before the Commission, submitted letters and emails, and provided comments regarding their experiences and concerns. She questioned when the Commission would be able to provide responses regarding those concerns and asked the Commission to consider the impact of delays in implementation on disabled Nebraskans, children, and other patients who are seeking medical care.

Ms. Marsaglia also referenced recent controversy surrounding the Good Government Lincoln petition process. She stated that she believed it was significant that petitions involving the state Attorney General were currently being subject to scrutiny and referenced what she described as prior statements characterizing the medical cannabis petition process as fraudulent. She stated that, in her view, there was an inconsistency between scrutiny of the medical cannabis petition process and the current controversy involving the Good Government Lincoln petitions. Ms. Marsaglia used this as an example of what she characterized as selective enforcement and expressed concern about the treatment of Nebraska's medical cannabis petition process.

Ms. Marsaglia stated that she believed the Commission should implement the medical cannabis law approved by Nebraska voters and expressed frustration that the Commission had not provided responses to concerns she and others had raised through letters, emails, and public comment.

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5. Manufacturer Application Process Reminder

Chair Mueting stated that the next order of business was an update on the manufacturer application process. She noted that, at the July Commission meeting, the Commission received two manufacturer application packets from members of the public who voluntarily provided materials during the meeting.

Chair Mueting clarified the process for submitting manufacturer applications going forward. Applications should be submitted directly to MCC staff by email or mail and should not be submitted to individual Commissioners or provided during a public meeting.

She further stated that, because the Commission may license no more than four manufacturers, applications will be selected for review through a secure, technology-based random selection process. The four applications selected through the random selection process will proceed through the established review and scoring process. Providing application materials during a public meeting or through public comment does not affect an applicant's place in the process or provide an advantage.

Chair Mueting opened the matter for Commission discussion.

Commissioner Elworth asked whether the Commission had received a third manufacturer application. Staff confirmed that three applications had been received.

Commissioner Elworth stated that he believed the manufacturer application process should remain open because the Commission may license up to four manufacturers.

Chair Mueting stated that this item was included separately from the manufacturer application update to review the application submission and selection process. She noted that the Commission would discuss the application deadline later in the agenda.

Chair Mueting stated that, as reviewers, Commissioners should only be aware of applications that are selected for review and presented to them. She stated that Commissioners should not know which applicants are in the queue or otherwise have information about applications that have not been selected for review in order to help ensure that the selection process remains random and unbiased.

There was no further discussion. Chair Mueting thanked the Commission and proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

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6. Program Implementation Update

Chair Mueting provided an update on the status of the Commission’s licensed cultivators.

- **MahāMotā Cultivation Company:** MahāMotā continues to move forward with cultivation operations and facility commissioning as anticipated. The company has added a Cultivation Systems Manager for its licensed cultivation facility.
- **Midwest Cultivators Group:** Midwest has taken possession of its new facility following the Commission’s approval of its address change in June and the City of Gretna’s approval of its Conditional Use Permit. The company continues to plan for development of the facility and reported that it is monitoring the development of Nebraska’s

manufacturing and dispensary infrastructure before making significant capital investments in the facility buildout. The company has established internal capital-deployment milestones tied to the progress of manufacturing and dispensary licensing and plans to proceed with its buildout as those market conditions develop.

- **KRL Med:** KRL Med continues to work through the county approval process and has confirmed that its Conditional Use Permit application is complete. The company is scheduled to appear before the Washington County Planning Commission on September 3, followed by the September 22 meeting of the Washington County Board of Supervisors. KRL Med is also working to obtain access to the property so it can be prepared for an MCC inspection following county approval. The company continues discussions with the County Attorney and others regarding proposed zoning text amendments.
- **Meadowlark Medicinals:** Meadowlark notified the Commission in July of its intent to renew its license, which expires September 16, 2026. The renewal application packet was provided to Meadowlark on August 12. Meadowlark requested additional time, through August 31, to submit the completed renewal application and indicated that it would attempt to submit the application sooner.

The Commission discussed the licensee updates.

Regarding Meadowlark Medicinals, Commissioner Synhorst moved to allow Meadowlark an additional 30 days to send in their license renewal. Commissioner Elworth seconded the motion. The motion was approved by roll call vote, with Commissioners Synhorst, Elworth, Mueting, and Coffey voting in favor.

Manufacturer Application Deadline

Chair Mueting stated that the manufacturer application deadline was scheduled to end August 17, 2026. Commissioner Elworth noted that the Commission currently had three manufacturer applications and could accept up to four applications. He proposed extending the manufacturer application period until the Commission's next regular meeting on September 14, 2026.

Commissioner Synhorst asked whether applications could be reviewed during the extended application period. Chair Mueting stated that applications would not be reviewed during that period.

Chair Mueting explained that the Commission's proposed regulatory changes would affect the manufacturer application requirements. She stated that the Commission anticipated that applications already submitted would likely need to be amended to address the regulatory changes and that it would therefore be appropriate to wait until those amendments were addressed before reviewing applications.

Commissioner Synhorst stated for the record that he intended to vote against extending the application period because he wanted to continue moving the manufacturer application process forward.

Commissioner Elworth moved to extend the manufacturer application period through September 14, 2026. Commissioner Coffey seconded the motion. Following discussion, the motion was approved by roll call vote, with Commissioners Elworth, Mueting, and Coffey voting in favor. Commissioner Synhorst voted against the motion.

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7. Regulatory / Policy Discussion

Chair Mueting introduced the proposed rules and regulations and reviewed the changes made since the Commission's July 20 meeting following legal review. The changes generally included removal of redundant provisions and streamlining of language for consistency; revisions to the transportation certificate structure intended to reduce licensing costs and improve efficiency; and miscellaneous grammatical and technical corrections.

Chair Mueting clarified that the Commission's vote at the meeting was not a vote to make the proposed regulations effective, but rather a vote to approve the proposed regulations for purposes of proceeding with the formal rulemaking process. She reviewed the anticipated rulemaking process, including publication of the proposed regulations, a public comment period and public hearing, Commission review of public comments, consideration of any additional changes, adoption of the final regulations, review by the Attorney General, and approval by the Governor before the regulations could become effective.

Chair Mueting also clarified that the public hearing associated with the rulemaking process is separate from the Commission's regular public meetings. She stated that MCC staff would facilitate the public hearing, document comments, and maintain the official record, and that the comments would subsequently be provided to the Commission for consideration.

Chair Mueting further discussed the relationship between the proposed regulations and the Commission's authority to collect fees. She stated that the Legislature authorized the Commission to establish fees by regulation and that the Commission could not begin collecting those fees until the applicable regulations were adopted and became effective. Until that time, the Commission would continue operating under the existing licensing and renewal structure, including six-month license renewals.

Commissioner Synhorst asked about the anticipated timing of the public comment period and hearing. Chair Mueting explained that, following approval, the proposed regulations would proceed through the promulgation process and that the public hearing would be scheduled as soon as practicable. She stated that the Commission would subsequently review comments received during the comment period and at the hearing. She further explained that substantive changes to the proposed regulations following public comment could require additional rulemaking steps.

Commissioner Elworth stated that the proposed changes were significant and would help streamline the licensing process. He highlighted proposed changes related to the definition of a cultivator and the responsibilities of manufacturers. Commissioner Elworth also stated that Commissioners had visited Sweetwater and spoken with Mr. Mayo, and that recommendations resulting from those discussions had been considered in developing the proposed changes. He stated that, if adopted, the changes in the proposed regulations were intended to streamline the process and help move the program forward. Commissioner Elworth also recognized the tremendous amount of work of the Commission’s legal counsel and Assistant Attorney General in preparing the proposed regulations.

Following discussion, Chair Mueting asked for a motion to approve the proposed rules and regulations for purposes of moving forward with the formal rulemaking process.

ASTM Standards

Chair Mueting introduced a discussion regarding ASTM standards and training opportunities that may support the Commission's developing inspection and compliance program. She asked Jessica Sodeke, MCC Program Manager, to provide background regarding ASTM and its potential relevance to the Commission's work.

Sodeke explained that ASTM International, founded in 1898 as the American Society for Testing and Materials, develops voluntary consensus standards through technical committees made up of subject-matter experts and stakeholders and does not manufacture products or operate as a cannabis or licensing company. She noted that ASTM develops standards used across a wide range of industries, including areas involving aviation, medical devices, construction, and consumer products, and that ASTM standards are also used in areas such as child-resistant packaging and cannabis labeling.

Sodeke explained that, in the absence of a unified federal regulatory framework for the cannabis industry, ASTM Committee D37 on Cannabis has become an important technical standards resource for the cannabis and hemp sectors. She stated that state regulators and industry operators in other jurisdictions use cannabis ASTM standards as a baseline or technical reference for areas including safety, testing, quality control, cultivation, processing, laboratory practices, security, and personnel.

Sodeke noted that she first became familiar with ASTM standards while working at the Nebraska Ethanol Board (NEB), where she was involved in educating industry stakeholders about applicable rules and regulations. She stated that ASTM standards are adopted in that industry and that the NEB's director, a chemical engineer, became a technical representative as a state representative, providing firsthand experience with participating in and understanding the development and application of technical standards. Sodeke stated that this prior experience was one of the reasons she was interested in bringing ASTM resources into MCC's inspection and compliance work and that she viewed ASTM as a valuable program for the Commission to consider.

Sodeke explained that ASTM's standards are developed through technical committees and that organizations may have multiple individuals participate in committee work, while organizational voting interests are generally limited to one official voting member. She stated that this structure is intended to help prevent any single organization from having disproportionate influence in the standards-development process and allows participating organizations to provide technical input. She noted that she was not recommending that MCC pursue ASTM membership at this time, but stated that membership could be considered in the future and that having a technically qualified MCC representative participate in the appropriate technical committee could be beneficial.

Sodeke stated that she was evaluating ASTM as a potential technical resource for MCC's inspection and compliance program and emphasized that she was not proposing automatic adoption of ASTM standards as regulatory requirements. Rather, applicable standards could be independently evaluated and used as a technical framework as MCC develops its own inspection procedures and compliance program.

Sodeke explained that one of the reasons she began looking more closely at ASTM was MCC's need for stronger and more consistent security and surveillance training specific to cannabis facilities and that ASTM Committee D37 has standards and training resources that could provide a more structured foundation for this work.

She proposed that at this time MCC evaluate applicable ASTM standards as technical resources and as a framework for developing inspection procedures, compliance monitoring, and staff competency. Sodeke emphasized that she was not proposing that MCC adopt every ASTM standard or automatically make ASTM standards regulatory requirements. Rather, as the Commission continues developing its regulatory and compliance framework, specific ASTM standards could be evaluated to determine whether formal adoption would be appropriate in the future.

She also noted that ASTM works with organizations involved in cannabis regulatory policy, including the Cannabis Regulators Association (CANNRA), of which Nebraska is a member, providing an opportunity for MCC to remain connected with standards and regulatory practices being considered by other cannabis regulators. Sodeke stated that the immediate value of ASTM is that it provides a recognized technical framework that MCC can evaluate as it develops Nebraska's inspection and compliance program, rather than having to develop every technical procedure from scratch.

Commissioner Elworth stated that MCC should independently evaluate ASTM standards rather than automatically accepting ASTM's characterization of its standards as industry standards. He emphasized that the Commission should determine whether particular standards are appropriate for Nebraska's regulatory and inspection processes.

Sodeke clarified that her immediate objective was to educate the Commission about ASTM and its potential use as a technical resource while the Commission develops its inspection program. She stated that she was also seeking authorization for staff training.

ASTM Training

Sodeke identified security and surveillance systems, particularly video surveillance and camera systems, as an immediate training need for staff involved in inspections. She described ASTM's cannabis-specific security training through its Security for the Cannabis Industry eLearning Program, which includes training on video surveillance, access control, and information security. The program is currently $170 per individual, and the individual courses are also available separately. ASTM identifies regulators among the intended audiences for these courses.

Sodeke requested authorization for MCC staff to use funds for applicable ASTM training for up to three employees. She explained that an overall training authorization would allow the Commission to select appropriate courses and employees after staff inspection responsibilities are further defined, rather than requiring separate Commission approval for each training course.

Sodeke stated that security training was the immediate priority and that additional training, including quality management system training, could be considered as the Commission's inspection and compliance program and seed-to-sale system are further developed.

Sodeke explained that the proposed training would represent an initial investment in staff competency as MCC continues to develop its inspection and compliance program. She stated that additional training could be evaluated as specific staff responsibilities and training needs are identified. Sodeke noted that ASTM also offers a Quality Management System (QMS) training program, currently priced at $440, as well as other cannabis-specific courses designed for regulators.

Sodeke explained that QMS training may become particularly valuable as MCC prepares for implementation of its seed-to-sale tracking system. She stated that the training could help MCC establish a structured approach for identifying, reviewing, and analyzing the appropriate data within the seed-to-sale system and for developing processes to identify potential compliance issues. She explained that the QMS framework would provide additional guidance for evaluating whether MCC is reviewing the appropriate information and applying consistent quality and compliance controls as the Commission's data and regulatory systems become more sophisticated.

Commissioner Synhorst asked whether the training was available online or required in-person attendance. Sodeke explained that the training was available through online modules, with individual modules taking approximately one hour. She stated that the security training was available as a three-course package for approximately $170 per individual, while the individual courses were approximately $99 each. Sodeke explained that, while additional training would likely be needed as the inspection and compliance program develops, she recommended prioritizing security and surveillance training as the immediate need.

Commissioner Synhorst asked what amount would be needed at this time. Sodeke explained that she was requesting authorization of up to $600 to provide flexibility to train up to three employees and to allow for training of an additional employee if one is hired in the near future. Chair Mueting noted that the security training would represent approximately three hours of training and that authorization of up to $600 would not require the entire amount to be spent.

Commissioner Synhorst asked whether Quality Management System (QMS) training should also be included in the current request. Sodeke explained that she recommended focusing the initial training investment on security because MCC's seed-to-sale software has not yet been implemented. She stated that she would like to pursue QMS training as MCC gets closer to implementation of the system, but that the Commission would first need to determine which staff roles would be responsible for those functions. Sodeke noted that those responsibilities would also be informed by the Commission's future organizational structure and the appointment of a Director. She further explained that MCC would have sufficient time to return to the Commission with a separate request for QMS training and that she wanted to further research the available training before requesting additional funding.

Following discussion, Commissioner Synhorst moved to authorize MCC staff to use up to $600 for applicable ASTM training for up to three employees. Commissioner Elworth seconded the motion. The motion was adopted following a roll call vote, with Commissioners Synhorst, Elworth, Mueting, and Coffey voting in favor.

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8. Budget, Expenditure, and Office Operations Update

Past Expenditures / Purchases

The Commission reviewed the July general ledger expenditures. Chair Mueting requested that Sodeke follow up with LCC staff regarding a $50 expense identified as NCSLA New Orleans (National Conference of State Liquor Administrators) to clarify the purpose and appropriate budget assignment of the expense. Chair Mueting also requested clarification regarding expenses listed for hearings in Kearney, as MCC did not conduct hearings in Kearney and the expenses may have been charged to the MCC budget in error. The Commission noted that mileage associated with MCC travel, including travel to Sweetwater, would be an appropriate MCC expense. Sodeke will follow up with LCC staff regarding the identified expenditures.

Upcoming Expenditures

The Commission discussed a staff request to purchase surplus office furniture from the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission as LCC transitions to new furniture. Staff explained that MCC currently does not have adequate desks or storage for existing staff or anticipated future staff and that the surplus furniture is available at minimal cost. Items identified included three filing cabinets for $20 total, an open shelving unit for $37.99, and five L-shaped desks at $1 each, with the potential for additional office chairs, a small conference table, and a cabinet/hutch if available. Staff estimated that the furniture itself would cost less than $100; however, transportation and moving costs were expected to bring the total expenditure above the Commission's established spending threshold. Because the surplus items might not remain available while moving arrangements were being made, staff requested authorization to purchase and transport the furniture. LCC would facilitate the purchase of the surplus items on MCC's behalf.

During discussion, Sodeke explained that she had not yet obtained a moving quote or identified an approved vendor and estimated that $200 would likely be sufficient for moving costs in addition to the approximately $100 cost of the furniture. Commissioner Coffey suggested authorizing up to $500 to provide sufficient flexibility for the total expense.

Following discussion, Chair Mueting asked for a motion to authorize staff to purchase the surplus furniture and arrange for transportation and moving costs, not to exceed $500. Commissioner Coffey made the motion, and Commissioner Synhorst seconded the motion.

There was further discussion. Chair Mueting called the roll, and the motion was adopted with Commissioners Synhorst, Elworth, Mueting, and Coffey voting in favor.

The Commission discussed upcoming expenditures related to professional development and attendance at an external stakeholder meeting. The CANNRA 2026 Annual Member Meeting is scheduled for December 1–3, 2026, in Arlington, Virginia, and registration is currently open. Staff noted that LCC and Attorney General's Office legal staff attended the meeting in the prior year and explained that, given Nebraska's membership in CANNRA and MCC's current work to establish its regulatory, inspection, compliance, and data-management programs, attendance would provide a valuable cannabis-specific professional development opportunity for MCC representatives.

Sodeke presented a table of estimated expenses and explained that the early-bird registration rate is \$650 per person through September 15, the regular registration rate is \$750 per person from September 16 through November 1, and the late registration rate is \$850 beginning November 2. Sodeke recommended registering two attendees at the early-bird rate who can be identified at this time and budgeting for a third attendee at the regular \$750 rate, with the third attendee to be determined based on future staffing. CANNRA requires registration fees to be paid by credit card and does not invoice states for registration. Registration includes the meeting, meeting materials, audiovisual expenses, breakfast, lunch, and snacks on December 2 and 3, as well as the welcome reception on December 2.

Sodeke also discussed two optional training sessions being offered on December 1. The first, “Cannabis Lab Testing 101: Lab Testing Science for Non-Laboratory Regulators,” would provide foundational information regarding cannabis laboratory testing and the science underlying the testing process. The second, “Data Strategies for Regulatory Agencies,” would address regulatory dashboards, public data, data requests and FOIAs, data security, and other data-management strategies. Each training is an additional \$300 per person. Sodeke recommended including funding for the training in the travel authorization so that the appropriate attendees would have the opportunity to participate.

Regarding travel, Sodeke reported that the current CANNRA hotel block at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City was approximately \$196 per night and that the hotel block would close November 9. For budgeting purposes, she estimated four nights of lodging for each attendee, with individual hotel rooms. The anticipated travel schedule would involve arriving Monday, November 30, and returning Thursday evening, December 3, or Friday, December 4, depending on flight availability and cost. The estimated expenses also included airfare, ground transportation, meals and incidental expenses, and hotel taxes and fees. The total estimated cost for three attendees, including registration, additional training, travel, and lodging, was approximately \$8,750. Sodeke requested authorization for an expenditure not to exceed \$10,000 for up to three MCC representatives to attend the CANNRA Annual Member Meeting and related training. She noted that the specific attendees could be determined after the Commission's discussion of staff roles and responsibilities.

During discussion, Commissioner Synhorst supported authorizing up to $10,000 and noted that airfare can fluctuate significantly. He proposed that, if airfare costs exceeded the amount anticipated, staff be authorized to work with the Chair to approve the additional airfare expense, subject to ratification by the Commission at its next meeting, so that the travel arrangements would not be delayed. Commissioner Coffey seconded the motion.

Following discussion, Chair Mueting asked for a motion to authorize an expenditure not to exceed $10,000 for up to three MCC representatives to attend the 2026 CANNRA Annual Member Meeting and related training in Arlington, Virginia, including registration, training, airfare, lodging, meals and incidental expenses, and ground transportation. Commissioner Synhorst made the motion, and Commissioner Coffey seconded the motion. There was further discussion. Chair Mueting called the roll, and the motion was adopted with Commissioners Synhorst, Elworth, Mueting, and Coffey voting in favor.

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9. Commission Leadership / Subcommittee Assignments

The Commission discussed revised subcommittee assignments and structure. Chair Mueting explained that the purpose of the subcommittees is to provide a structured way for Commissioners to communicate with staff, review background information, discuss matters within their assigned areas, and provide recommendations to the full Commission. Subcommittees do not make final Commission decisions or take formal action on behalf of the Commission, and any decision or action requiring Commission authority will be brought before the full Commission for consideration. The proposed structure consists of two Commissioners per subcommittee, unless the Commission's legal counsel determines that a different structure is necessary or appropriate.

Staff presented the proposed assignments as follows:

Subcommittee	**Commissioners**
Budget	Bud Synhorst and Jim Elworth

Director Recruitment	Lorelle Mueting and Bud Synhorst
Policy & Regulations	Jim Elworth and Lorelle Mueting
Seed-to-Sale/Data Systems	Lorelle Mueting and Bud Synhorst
Inspections & Compliance	Mike Coffey and Jim Elworth
Licensing & Renewals	Lorelle Mueting and Mike Coffey
Legislative & Stakeholder Relations	Jim Elworth and Bud Synhorst

Chair Mueting stated that the revised assignments are intended to provide coverage across the Commission's primary areas of work and distribute responsibilities among Commissioners. She noted that the assignments may be adjusted as the Commission's workload and staffing needs develop. There was no further discussion, and the Commission proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

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10. Commission Staffing and Operational Update

The Chair introduced the next order of business as an update on Commission staffing and operations. The Chair stated that the Commission is actively interviewing candidates for the Director position and that, in the meantime, the Commission needs to consider additional staffing necessary to support agency operations as it moves into the licensing, inspection, and compliance phase.

Sodeke provided an overview of immediate staffing needs and stated that, as the Commission continues building its operations, she believes two additional positions will ultimately be needed: an Administrative Assistant to provide administrative and operational support and a Field Inspector to support inspections and compliance activities. Sodeke stated that she recommends prioritizing establishment of the Field Inspector position first because the position will require specialized training and preparation before the Commission can rely on the individual to conduct or support inspections. She also noted that the Commission currently has budgetary and billing support from the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission through the end of the fiscal year and that she can continue to manage the administrative workload in the interim.

Sodeke also discussed the Commission's available Personal Services Limitation (PSL) authority for salaries and wages and explained that, when the salaries for the Commissioners, the Secretary of State positions being considered for transition to permanent MCC positions, the Program Manager, legal position, and anticipated Director position, with a proposed salary of $100,000, are taken into account, there would be limited PSL authority remaining for additional permanent positions. She stated that the remaining PSL authority would not be sufficient to establish both the Administrative Assistant and Field Inspector positions as additional permanent positions. Sodeke explained that the Commission therefore needs to evaluate whether the additional positions could be established through Secretary of State temporary staffing or another available mechanism. She also noted that any increase in the Commission's PSL authority would require legislative action.

Sodeke further discussed the training needs associated with the Field Inspector position. Because the Commission is developing its inspection and compliance program at the same time it is considering establishment of the position, she recommended building appropriate technical training into the position from the beginning. Potential training could include the ASTM training discussed earlier in the meeting, as well as additional training identified as necessary based on the Commission's inspection procedures. Sodeke stated that the specific training requirements and assignment of inspection responsibilities have not yet been finalized and would be developed as the Commission continues establishing its inspection and compliance program.

During discussion, Chair Mueting asked for the Commissioners' thoughts regarding whether the Administrative Assistant and Field Inspector positions should be established through Secretary of State temporary staffing, a contract arrangement, or as permanent positions, and which position should be prioritized.

Commissioner Coffey asked how the Commission could identify an individual to perform the Field Inspector work if the position were established through a contract arrangement and discussed the potential need for a contract-based approach.

Sodeke stated that she recommends prioritizing the Field Inspector position. She explained that she could continue managing the administrative workload for the time being, particularly with the existing support from LCC, while a Field Inspector could begin receiving specialized training and preparing for the Commission's inspection responsibilities.

Commissioner Elworth stated that Sodeke has been managing the administrative workload effectively and noted that the Commission has been able to address budgeting and other administrative matters with the support of LCC. He agreed that prioritizing the Field Inspector position would allow the Commission to begin preparing for its inspection responsibilities.

Commissioner Synhorst asked what the anticipated workload would be for a full-time Field Inspector given the current number of licensed facilities and whether there would be sufficient work to support the position.

Sodeke explained that the Field Inspector's responsibilities would extend beyond conducting initial facility inspections. She stated that the Commission's inspection program would include pre-operational inspections for applicable licensees, followed by harvest inspections, generally associated with a licensee's first harvest, and annual inspections. She explained that additional inspections could be conducted on an at-risk basis based on information identified through the Commission's compliance monitoring and seed-to-sale data analysis.

Sodeke further explained that, between physical inspections, the Field Inspector would conduct follow-up activities related to inspection findings and ongoing "desktop reviews" of seed-to-sale data. She stated that these reviews would allow the Commission to identify potential discrepancies or compliance concerns, including whether cannabis is leaving a facility appropriately or whether other employee or operational issues may warrant additional review. The results of those reviews could then inform future inspections and follow-up activities.

Commissioner Coffey asked whether law enforcement would be involved in these activities. Sodeke explained that enforcement would follow the Commission's inspection and compliance processes as appropriate and that a Field Inspector could conduct additional follow-up when information identified through inspections or data reviews indicated a potential compliance concern.

Sodeke also explained that the Field Inspector's responsibilities could eventually include compliance activities involving laboratories in addition to cultivation and manufacturing facilities. She noted that laboratory compliance would involve additional technical and regulatory training, including applicable FDA requirements and other regulatory standards. Sodeke stated that, considering the range of inspection, compliance, data review, follow-up, and laboratory responsibilities, she believes the position could support a full-time workload.

Commissioner Synhorst stated that, if the Commission decides to pursue a permanent Field Inspector position, the next step would be to work with human resources to develop a job description and determine the qualifications and salary range for the position so that the Commission could evaluate the position from a budgeting perspective.

Sodeke stated that the Commission could pursue that process through its permanent staffing authority or could first explore whether a Secretary of State temporary position would be available.

Commissioner Synhorst stated that the Commission will ultimately need permanent staff and expressed concern about relying on temporary staffing indefinitely. He asked whether the Commission's available PSL authority would change in the following fiscal year.

Sodeke clarified that the Commission is already working toward transitioning its existing Secretary of State positions to permanent MCC positions. Commissioner Synhorst asked whether transitioning those positions would affect the Commission's PSL authority in the following fiscal year and whether the PSL would automatically increase. Sodeke explained that an increase in PSL authority would require legislative action and that the Commission would need to request additional authority through the legislative process. She stated that she had been discussing the issue with legislative budget personnel and understood that an increase would need to be requested through the legislative process, including justification for the additional authority.

Sodeke clarified that the Commission's existing PSL authority would cover the anticipated Director position and other positions currently included in the staffing plan, but that only a limited amount would remain available for additional positions. She explained that the Commission would not have sufficient remaining PSL authority to establish both the Administrative Assistant and Field Inspector positions as additional permanent positions without reevaluating the staffing structure or pursuing additional authority.

Sodeke requested that the Commission authorize her to discuss the available staffing options with the appropriate state personnel and budget offices, including the options for temporary Secretary of State positions, permanent positions, and other available staffing mechanisms, and return to the Commission with additional information before a final decision is made.

Commissioner Synhorst moved to direct staff to return to the Commission with options for establishing the additional positions through Secretary of State temporary staffing, PSL-funded permanent positions, or other available mechanisms, for further discussion at the Commission's next meeting. Commissioner Coffey seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the Commission directed staff to return with available options for moving forward.

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11. Next Meeting Reminder

The Chair reminded the Commission that the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting will be held September 14, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. in the same location.

These minutes have not been approved by the commission.

12. Closed Executive Session, if Necessary

The Chair stated that the final item on the agenda was consideration of whether the Commission needed to enter into a closed executive session to discuss matters of imminent litigation and security personnel and devices, as permitted under the Nebraska Open Meetings Act. The Chair clarified that the Commission would take no action during the executive session and that any action the Commission wished to take would be taken in the public meeting following the executive session.

The Chair requested a motion to enter into executive session for the limited purposes of discussing imminent litigation and security personnel and devices. Commissioner Synhorst moved to enter into executive session, and Commissioner Elworth seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The Coordinator called the roll, and the motion was adopted, with Commissioners Synhorst, Elworth, Mueting, and Coffey voting in favor.

The Commission entered into closed executive session at 2:25 p.m. for the limited purposes of discussing imminent litigation and security personnel and devices.

The closed executive session concluded at 3:35 p.m. The Chair asked whether the Commission wished to take any action as a result of the executive-session discussion. Commissioner Synhorst moved to proceed with negotiations with the preferred candidate for the Director position as discussed in executive session and to work with the Department of Administrative Services to determine the process for moving forward. Commissioner Coffey seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The Coordinator called the roll, and the motion was adopted, with Commissioners Synhorst, Elworth, Mueting, and Coffey voting in favor.

13. Adjournment

The Chair requested a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Synhorst moved to adjourn, and Commissioner Elworth seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The Coordinator called the roll, and the motion was adopted, with Commissioners Synhorst, Elworth, Mueting, and Coffey voting in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 3:36 p.m.