

Maryland Department of Health
Issuance of Alcoholic Beverages Licenses to Tobacconists Workgroup Meeting
May 28, 2025
11:00 - 11:30 am

MINUTES

Attendees:

Members:

Steven Arentz
Finnie Pecunes Helmuth
Nilesh Kalyanaraman
Jeffrey Kelly

Staff:

Victoria Marte-Tiburcio
Christopher McGrath
Clifford Mitchell
Dana Moncrief
Megan Sehr
Jody Sheely

Meeting Notes:

Welcome & General Business

- Nilesh Kalyanaraman opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.
- Jody Sheely conducted a roll call and provided an overview of the Open Meetings Act.
- The Workgroup adopted the May 19, 2025, meeting minutes.

Vote to Adopt Workgroup Report

- Jeffrey Kelly made a motion to adopt the Workgroup report.
- Finne Helmuth seconded the motion.
- Nilesh Kalyanaraman asked whether any items in the report required discussion.
- Finnie Helmuth requested clarification on the distance aspect of the recommendation prohibiting tobacconist licensing for properties directly adjacent to a healthcare or childcare/child-related facility.
 - Nilesh Kalyanaraman and Dana Moncrief confirmed the requirement would apply specifically to a tobacconist facility “adjacent to” a healthcare or childcare/child-related facility.
- Steven Arentz asked for clarification on the protections for workers.
- Cliff Mitchell explained that the Clean Indoor Air Act exemption for tobacconists would also exempt employees from its protections, provided they are treated the same as the public within the licensed facility.
- Jody Sheely notified the Workgroup that Senator Clarence Lam’s office sent an email indicating that he would like to support the adoption of the report.
- Nilesh Kalyanaaman put forward a vote to approve the Workgroup report.

- The report was adopted by a unanimous vote of the four Workgroup members present, out of a total of seven members.
- The Workgroup voted to adopt the report for submission.

Public Comment

- Nilesh Kalyanaraman opened the public comment period.
- Lance Kilpatrick, Government Relations Director of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, urges the Workgroup to work towards improvement of public health. He thanked the Workgroup for engaging in this issue.
- Nilesh Kalyanaraman closed the public comment period.

Closing Remarks

- Nilesh Kalyanaraman thanked the Workgroup, members of the public, and staff for their participation and support.