

**Cannabis Public Health Advisory Council Ad Hoc meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, December 10, 2025 · 3:00 – 4:00 PM**

**Members Present:**

Dr. Madhumi Mitra  
Dr. Deondra Asike  
Dr. David Gorelick  
Dr. Leigh Vinocur  
Jocelyn Bratton-Payne  
Karrissa Miller  
Sen. Benjamin Kramer  
Dr. Elizabeth Kromm  
Del. Terri L Hill  
Dr. Nishant Shah  
Audrey Johnson  
Christine Nizer

**MDH Staff Present:**

Erin Portillo  
Dana Moncrief  
Kate Natafji  
Alexandra Nowalk  
Bethan Haaga

**Members from Public:**

Ann Ciekot  
Jacques Thompson

**Members Not Present:**

Martin Proulx  
Dawn Berkowitz  
Jason Semanoff  
Arinze Ifekauche

**1. Open Meeting. 3:00 PM.**

- a. The meeting was called to order by Dr. Deondra Asike, Council Chair, at 3:00 PM on Wednesday, December 10, 2025.
- b. Kate Natafji from MDH called roll and noted that a quorum of members was present. (12 members)
- c. Dr. Asike reviewed the meeting minutes from October 16, 2025. Citing the inclusion of minor clarifying edits from Dr. Gorelick, Dr. Asike requested a motion to approve the minutes for the September meeting. Dr. Vinocur motioned to approve the minutes, David Gorelick seconded the motion. The Council voted to approve the revised minutes; there were no objections or abstentions.

## 2. Bylaws Review (and vote)

- a. Dr. Asike opened discussion on the primary agenda item: making final changes to the Council bylaws to ensure they adequately support the Council's essential functions. Members were reminded that failure to approve the bylaws at this meeting would require convening an ad hoc work group and additional meeting. The proposed bylaws and tracked edits were shared for discussion. The Council agreed to proceed one section at a time, reviewing issues and reaching decisions before moving on.

### **b. Vice Chair Role, Succession, and Removal Process**

- The group revisited prior discussions regarding the Vice Chair role, succession, and removal language. Dr. Asike summarized outstanding issues, including:
  - Clarifying the removal process for the Chair and Vice Chair
  - Clarifying succession when a Chair steps down or is unable to serve
  - Addressing the scenario in which there is no runner-up for the Chair position
- Dr. Gorelick noted that the bylaws previously lacked an explicit removal process and suggested mirroring language used elsewhere in the bylaws, such as the process for dissolving a work group. He raised the idea of removal “for cause,” but expressed concern about overly broad or arbitrary standards.
- Ms. Miller cautioned against “for cause” language, noting it could be interpreted too broadly and potentially enable unjust removal. After reviewing the highlighted (yellow) language—which reflected edits discussed earlier in the year—Dr. Gorelick withdrew his earlier concern and expressed comfort with the proposed wording.
- Consensus Reached:
  - The Council agreed to retain the proposed removal language as drafted.
  - No additional “for cause” language would be added.

### **c. Chair Term Length and Election Timing (Section 4.4.2)**

- The group discussed clarifying the Chair's two-year term and specifying that elections occur during the second quarterly council meeting. Dr. Gorelick raised a hypothetical concern about what would happen if an election meeting did not occur, suggesting language such as “until a successor is elected” to avoid a leadership gap.

- Ms. Miller and others noted that the bylaws already address interim leadership through the Vice Chair and that the Council is required to meet at least four times annually. While the scenario was considered unlikely, the concern was acknowledged.
- Staff suggested minor wording changes, including potentially removing the phrase “through April” to allow flexibility if meeting timing shifts.
- Consensus Reached:
  - The Council agreed that the existing language sufficiently addressed succession concerns.
  - Minor wording edits (e.g., removing “through April”) were acceptable to improve flexibility, but no substantive changes were required.

***d. Work Group Membership and Attendance Expectations***

- Dr. Asike explained that work groups are distinct from formal Council meetings and are critical to carrying out the Council’s work. The group discussed whether the bylaws should:
  - Require a minimum number of members per work group
  - Establish attendance expectations for work group participation
  - Address low participation scenarios
- Staff clarified that Council members are already required to participate in at least one active work group. Dr. Gorelick expressed a preference for minimal attendance requirements and suggested requiring attendance at at least one work group meeting per year.
- Ms. Miller strongly supported a higher expectation, emphasizing that work groups are “where the magic happens” and recommended attendance at at least two meetings, including those embedded in full Council meetings.
- Dr. Mitra shared scheduling constraints due to teaching obligations and stated she could not reliably commit to more than one meeting per year.
- Regarding minimum membership size, members expressed concern that setting a numeric minimum could hinder productivity and flexibility. Dr. Shah noted that small or asynchronous work groups can still be effective and that productivity concerns could be addressed by the full Council if needed rather than codified in the bylaws.

- Consensus Reached:
  - Attendance expectation set at one work group meeting per year.
  - No minimum number of members per work group will be specified in the bylaws.
  - Existing limits on maximum membership (to avoid quorum) remain.

**e. *Discontinuation of Work Groups***

- The Council reviewed language clarifying that discontinuation of a work group requires a majority vote of the Council. Discussion focused on whether the listed criteria for discontinuation should be read as cumulative or independent.
- Dr. Gorelick noted that using “and” instead of “or” could unintentionally prevent discontinuation unless all criteria were met, including completion of work, which would defeat the purpose.
- Consensus Reached:
  - The language as drafted was deemed clear and acceptable.
  - No further edits were required.

**f. *Quorum and Voting Flexibility***

- The group reviewed new quorum language developed in response to challenges experienced during the legislative session. Staff explained the concept of a “roving quorum,” which allows members who are present for discussion and state their vote before leaving to be counted, enabling timely votes during frequent legislative meetings.
- Members discussed how this approach had been used sparingly and intentionally to respect members’ schedules while maintaining transparency and integrity in decision-making.
- Consensus Reached:
  - The quorum and roving quorum language was accepted as written.
  - Meetings may be held without a quorum, but no votes may occur without one.

**3. Final Review and Approval of Bylaws**

- a. After confirming that all outstanding issues had been addressed, Dr. Asike called for a motion to approve the bylaws with the discussed amendments. Karrisona Miller motioned to approve the bylaws. A roll call vote was

performed and the bylaws were approved with 10 yays, 0 nays, and 0 abstentions.

#### **4. Announcements and Upcoming Meetings**

a. Dr. Asike shared the following updates:

- Upcoming meetings will remain virtual.
- Legislative workgroup meetings are scheduled from 3:00–4:00 p.m. on Tuesdays through April 13, 2026
- The first full Council meeting of 2026 will follow on January 21, 2026.
- Planned presentations in early 2026 include evidence-based policy on high-potency cannabis products.

b. Members were invited to suggest additional topics or presenters by emailing Dr. Asike and Dana Moncrief.

#### **5. Public Comment**

There were no comments from the public.

#### **6. Adjournment**

Dr. Asike thanked members for their work, wished them a safe and enjoyable holiday season, and expressed appreciation for the Council's service and collaboration. Delegate Hill motioned to end the meeting and David Gorelick seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:38 pm.