

Serving Hamilton Heights, Manhattanville, Morningside Heights and Sugar Hill

Cannabis Taskforce (CTF) Meeting

Thursday, September 25, 2025

MINUTES

Task Force Members

In attendance: Monique Hardin-Cordero (Co-Chair) and Shaunte Styles (Co-Chair)

Public Members: Leonel Arias (Midnight Moon), Pascale Bernard (Office of Cannabis Management), Deborah Levine (Harlem Health Initiative), Karl Reynoso (resident), Justin Stewart (Strains for Life),

Meeting called to order at 6:50 pm

The agenda and June notes were adopted

Task Force Goals:

The Cannabis Task Force held its first fall meeting to discuss community engagement and industry updates. Monique and Shaunte, the co-chairs, introduced themselves and outlined the task force's goals, including educating and empowering the community through events and meetings.

Past Projects/Events

The co-chairs reviewed past projects and events, emphasizing the need for more medicinal cannabis options uptown. Justin and Leo, representatives from cannabis dispensaries, shared insights on product quality and licensing. Our task force was very busy in 2025. We look forward to building on these events and engaging more in the community in the new year.

Updates:

- 30th Precinct was invited but was not able to attend
- Harlem Health Initiative: Deborah Levine shared that her organization plans to develop and share a toolkit for community board members to track cannabis licensing issues in the community. Deborah emphasized the importance of educating consumers and holding businesses accountable.

Old Business

Resolution/letters - Cannabis tax revenue

- We reached out to Assemblymember Micah Lasher on September 5, 2025, to follow up regarding Cannabis tax revenue and the rollout plan to communities. We plan to invite him to join our meeting.

Presentation:

Office of Cannabis Management, Pascale Bernard, Deputy Director of Intergovernmental Affairs (please see PPT)

The CB 9 CFT had two questions

- OCM new rules regarding distance for legal dispensaries
- OCM Implementation of new system for cultivators and retailers.

Pascale shared:

- OCM identified that the previous process for assessing adult use retail dispensary location distances to schools did not comply with cannabis law, and will now measure straight-line distance from dispensary entrance to school property line. The office is working with the Governor's office and state legislature to address licensees at non-compliant locations through proposed legislation, while also implementing an \$15 million Applicant Relief Program for impacted applicants.
- OCM temporarily suspended seed-to-sale license integration deadlines to assess new partnership opportunities and determined that transitioning to Metrc's STS solution is in the best interest of New York's cannabis market, with implementation planned for early 2026.

Comments

Deborah Levine expressed concerns about the financial burden on businesses and the need for legislative intervention. Leo shared that this new legislation may force him to relocate, which would be challenging. Karl and others expressed support for Leo, a Latino dispensary owner, to remain in the community.

Additional Topics Discussed:

- OCM continues to work on regulations for consumption lounges
- OCM will hold a medical symposium on November 7th on Long Island
- OCM will continue processing November and December queue applications for retail licenses

Next Steps

- Secure PPT presentation from Pascal to share with community board members.
- CTF plans to host two task force meetings in the community to engage residents.
- CTF will follow up with Micah Lasher regarding the allocation of tax money secured for cannabis-related initiatives.
- Community Board 9 to explore ways to bring medical cannabis resources to CB9 community.
- Share article about cannabis and schizophrenia.

The task force agreed to meet again before the holidays on November 20th, but realized that this date conflicts with the regularly scheduled CB9 General Meeting.

We will schedule the next **Cannabis Task Force meeting on Tuesday, 11/25 @ 6:30 pm**. More details to come.

Meeting concluded at 8:00 pm