

Latest Leadership Changes in the Ever-Evolving Cannabis Industry

The U.S. Hemp Roundtable Taps Two Prominent Executives in Hemp Beverage Space Into Its Ranks

In a major development for the hemp industry, the **U.S. Hemp Roundtable** announced the addition of two key leaders from the fast-growing hemp beverage sector to its officer ranks in early September. The board welcomed **Art Massolo**, Vice President of Business Development at **Cycling Frog**, as its new Executive Vice President, and **Aaron Nosbisch**, founder of **BR?Z**, as Vice President of E-Commerce.

This leadership shift comes at a critical time, as the hemp beverage market is expanding rapidly, with more companies tapping into the potential of cannabidiol (CBD) and hemp-derived products for consumers.

Cannabis Leadership Shake-Ups in New York

In a separate development, **New York's cannabis regulatory landscape** saw significant changes. **Damian Fagon**, Chief Equity Officer at the state's **Office of Cannabis Management (OCM)**, announced his resignation, effective **November 27**. Fagon had been cleared earlier this year in an inspector general investigation related to allegations of retaliation against a cannabis company. The lawsuit, filed by cannabis processor Jenny Argie, was dismissed in July.

Simultaneously, the **New York Cannabis Control Board** added **Crystal J. Rodriguez-Dabney** as a new member in September. Appointed by **State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie**, following a recommendation from **Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes**, Rodriguez-Dabney replaces former board member **Adam Perry**.

Legal Saga Around Massachusetts Regulatory Body Continues

In Massachusetts, a legal dispute involving the state's **Cannabis Control Commission (CCC)** took another turn. Former chair **Shannon O'Brien** lost her battle against **State Treasurer Deborah Goldberg**, leading to her dismissal last month. O'Brien, who was appointed to a five-year term in 2022, faced allegations of making racially insensitive statements, which she has denied.

Goldberg replaced O'Brien with **Bruce Stebbins**, who now serves as the acting chair. O'Brien plans to appeal her firing to the **Supreme Judicial Court**, signaling that the legal battle is far from over.

Cannabis Board Changes Across the Industry

As the cannabis industry continues to evolve, companies are seeing significant changes within their leadership ranks:

Aurora Cannabis Inc. CEO **Miguel Martin** has taken on an additional role as Executive Chairman. Outgoing chairman **Ron Funk** will serve as lead independent director moving forward.

IM Cannabis Corp., a key player in the medical cannabis industry, announced the appointment of **Shmulik Arbel** to its board of directors, effective September 9.

Rubicon Organics Inc. welcomed **Jesse McConnell** to its board of directors after obtaining security clearance from **Health Canada**.

Canopy Growth Corporation confirmed that shareholders re-elected all directors, including **David Klein**, **Willy Kruh**, **David Lazzarato**, **Luc Mongeau**, and **Theresa Yanofsky**, at the company's annual general meeting on September 24.

TILT Holdings Inc. saw **Adam Draizin** step down from its board of directors, effective October 1. He was replaced by **Marshall P. Horowitz**.

Flora Growth Corp. appointed **Harold Wolkin** as an independent director, with Wolkin also taking on the role of chair of the audit committee. Additionally, Flora Growth CEO **Clifford Starke** joined the board of directors at **HoshiCap**, a subsidiary of **Hoshi International** with cannabis operations in Portugal.

Other Appointments and Resignations in Cannabis Leadership

Several other prominent changes took place within the cannabis industry's leadership structure:

CANNAVIGIA, a Swiss cannabis tech start-up, announced that founder and CEO **Luc Richner** has transitioned into the role of Chief Strategy Officer, with **Timo Bongartz**, Chief Commercial Officer, stepping in as CEO.

Nextleaf Solutions Ltd. promoted **Emma Andrews** to CEO after serving as Interim CEO since September 8, 2023. Andrews has been with the company for six years, previously leading its marketing efforts.

Endexx Corporation appointed **Doug Williams, CPA**, as its fractional CFO through his consulting firm, **Alexander & Williams PLLC**, in early October.

AYR Wellness Inc. saw its President and CEO **David Goubert** step down from the company last month. The board approved the appointment of **Steven M. Cohen** as interim CEO.

Cresco Labs Inc. announced that CEO **Dennis Olis** will retire after a planned transition to **Sharon Schuler**, a financial and strategy executive.

SNDL Inc. reported that **Taranvir (Tank) Vander**, President of the liquor division, has retired to pursue new opportunities after two decades of leadership in the liquor industry.

Cannabis Industry's Leadership Evolution

The rapid changes in leadership within the cannabis and hemp sectors reflect the fast-paced and evolving nature of these industries. As key players like the **U.S. Hemp Roundtable**, regulatory bodies, and leading companies in cannabis refine their strategies and adjust their leadership, the future of the industry will likely see continued innovation and regulatory developments, particularly as more focus is placed on the growing hemp beverage market and advancements in cannabis regulation across the United States and internationally.

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