



Connecticut Clean Economy Council
Q1 2026: February 6, 2026
DRAFT Minutes
(Video recording available at: portal.ct.gov/ccec)

Council Members Present:

Andrew Lavigne for Daniel O’Keefe, Joseph DeNicola for Katie Dykes (designee Bruce Ho), Dr. Kelli-Marie Vallieres (designee Tracy Ariel), Ed Howell for Dante Bartlomeo, Joe Carbone for Martin Looney, Zachary Alexander for Bryan Cafferelli, Sara Harari for Bryan Garcia, Robert Maddox for Stephen Harding, Charlotte Moller, Joseph Toner for Vincent Candelora, Catherine Awwad, Racquel Ocasio for Garrett Eucalito, Aziz Dehkan

Council Members Absent:

Matt McCooe, Joanna Wozniak-Brown for Joshua Wojcik, Adrienne Farrar Houël for Matthew Ritter, Bob Duff

Co-Chair Andrew Lavigne calls the meeting to order at 10:01am.

Leah Fuhs is introduced and roll call at 10:02am.

Commissioner Kelli-Marie Vallieres provided remarks at 10:04am. Commissioner Vallieres welcomed all members to the second meeting of the Connecticut Clean Economy Council. Appreciation was extended to members for their continued engagement and commitment to advancing Connecticut’s clean economy. Commissioner Vallieres reported that the first major deliverable, an intentional report to Legislature, has been successfully completed and shared with members for review. The Council’s next priority is to integrate the efforts of state agencies with industry partners to develop a Regional Sector Partnership aimed at identifying industry priorities and creating practical, outcome-driven strategies, particularly for businesses in the energy and construction sectors that are most impacted by evolving skill requirements related to the clean economy transition. The Council reaffirmed its commitment to aligning workforce development efforts with employer needs to support a resilient, future-ready economy and expressed enthusiasm for continued collaboration in this work.

Co-Chair Andrew Lavigne Introduces the item to be voted on. Committee motions on voting items.

1. Q4 Clean Economy Council Meeting Minutes from November 21, 2025. Motion to vote made by Aziz Dehkan; seconded by Dr. Kelli-Marie Vallieres. No discussion. No nays. Motion passed at 10:07am.



<i>Item</i>	<i>Yay</i>	<i>Nay</i>	<i>Abstentions</i>	<i>Result</i>
1. Meeting Minutes from November 21, 2025, Q4 2025	15	0	0	<i>Motion passes at 10:07am</i>

2. Clean Economy Council Biannual Report. Motion to vote made by Joe Carbone; seconded by Cathy Awaad No discussion. No nays. Motion passed at 10:11am.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Yay</i>	<i>Nay</i>	<i>Abstentions</i>	<i>Result</i>
2. Biannual Report	15	0	0	<i>Motion passes at 10:11am</i>

Co-Chair Andrew Lavigne introduced Joseph DeNicola (DEEP) on a discussion of Council Priorities at 10:12am.

Joseph DeNicola provided an overview of the Clean Economy Council’s next major deliverable, the Statutory Worker Transition Report due July 1. He explained that the report will leverage two ongoing EPA-funded workforce initiatives. The first is the Heat Pump Accelerator program, a \$450 million EPA grant led by Connecticut in partnership with four other New England states, with a significant workforce development component focused on HVAC and heat pump technologies. Through this initiative, a statewide workforce gap assessment has been completed and is transitioning into a planning phase to address identified training gaps. The second effort is a broader EPA-funded study conducted by ICF in partnership with state agencies, including OWS, examining projected workforce shortages across climate-related occupations. Although the final deliverables from both initiatives will not fully align with the July 1 reporting deadline, interim findings will be incorporated into the Council’s Worker Transition Report.

Joseph DeNicola (DEEP) opened the floor for comments at 10:16am.

Council members discussed the scope of the ICF climate workforce study, with questions raised about whether it would include related sectors such as finance, green building, and architecture. Co-chairs noted the study will review approximately 160 industry and occupation codes and is broad in scope, with an opportunity for the committee to suggest additions once the code list is finalized. Members highlighted Connecticut’s potential role in green finance and requested that the forthcoming Clean Energy Industry Report be shared, noting early findings of record sector employment, strong growth, and significant economic impact. Several members emphasized the importance of worker protections, prevailing wage standards, and livable wages in clean economy investments, particularly within the building trades. Questions were also raised about reducing geothermal heat pump installation costs and engaging institutions such as UConn, with staff noting that both air-source and geothermal technologies are being considered in current initiatives.



Joseph DeNicola (DEEP) introduced Co-Chair Tracy Ariel to go over The Council’s working definition at 10:24am.

Co-Chair Tracy Ariel introduced a proposed working definition of Connecticut’s clean economy for committee discussion, noting it builds on prior conversations. Members suggested several additions and refinements, including explicitly incorporating climate mitigation, which staff agreed aligns with statutory language and current initiatives such as the Heat Pump Accelerator. Discussion also emphasized the importance of affordability, diversification of energy sources, and articulating the business case for climate investments to strengthen economic competitiveness. Members further recommended referencing environmental justice and reducing energy burden, given Connecticut’s high household energy costs. Staff agreed to incorporate the feedback and circulate a revised draft to the committee for additional input.

Co-Chair Tracy Ariel introduced the Clean Economy Sector RSP at 10:30am.

Co-Chair Tracy Ariel provided an overview of regional sector partnerships as business-led collaboratives that bring together industry, workforce, education, and government partners to address shared priorities and strengthen sector competitiveness. She noted that OWS will conduct a landscape analysis, led by Leah Fuhs, to identify stakeholders and existing clean economy efforts across the state, with the structure—regional or statewide—to be determined based on findings. Members emphasized the importance of including labor and the building trades, and staff confirmed that participation will be inclusive. Discussion also clarified that sector partnerships are not federally mandated and differ from prior industry cluster models by being employer-driven and workforce-focused.

Co-Chair Andrew Lavigne gave closing remarks, and the meeting concluded at 10:45am.