

Governor's Council on Women and Girls
Full Council Meeting (Virtual)
January 11, 2022 @ 3pm

Minutes

- I. Greetings and Opening Remarks
 - a. Lt. Governor offers New Year's greetings and thanks state agencies, community partners, and municipalities for their work and support during the pandemic.
- II. Report from Council Leadership
 - a. Response to Legislative Proposals
 - i. Lt. Governor introduces Vice Chair Sec. McCaw for updates about proposals for the 2022 legislative session.
 - ii. Sec. McCaw reviews proposals submitted noting that some are being explored through administrative abilities
 - iii. Sec. McCaw further notes that the Council is in the process of understanding utility practices with respect to credit reporting while customers are in a payment arrangement plan and evaluating whether this needs to / should be addressed through policy or legislation
 - iv. Sec. McCaw thanks subcommittee leadership for ideas
 - b. Introduction of New Council Member
 - i. Lt. Governor introduces Chief Workforce Officer Kelli-Marie Vallieres to share information about new agency, Office of Workforce Strategy
 - ii. K. Vallieres presents overview of Governor's Workforce Council (GWC) plan and its connectivity to Council on Women and Girls [*see Attachment 1*]; noting:
 - 1. Focus of GWC plan is on ensuring that their work meets demands of industries, building supply chain of qualified trained people to enter jobs in demand and growing - many in STEAM areas
 - 2. Currently there are eight regional sector partnerships: five in manufacturing; two in IT; and one in bio-science. Two more are forthcoming in healthcare. Sector partnerships are working on skill-based hiring practices, which helps address equity issues, and creating quality jobs
 - 3. Working with State Department of Education, higher education institutions, and adult education on education and career building pathways including: i) creating programs for students to explore career options and have a better idea of what meets their interests and skills; and ii) providing opportunities for stackable programs with credit and dual enrollment. The goal is for students to graduate college and career ready; work-based learning opportunities is an important component

4. \$70 million of ARPA funding is allocated to OWS - programs to upskill and reskill workers affected by COVID and underserved and marginalized populations – [Career Portal](#) to apply for these funds
5. Working with Council on Women and Girls and other partners on reducing barriers to employment including employer involvement in high quality and affordable childcare, transportation legislation passed expanding UPASS program, and addressing benefits cliffs.
6. Realized they needed a robust committee focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion and have engaged over 40 community organizations to ensure that GWC work is through the lens of equitable access and inclusion.
7. Working with Department of Labor to measure outcomes

III. Special Presentations

- a. Lt. Governor introduces DSS Commissioner Deidre Gifford, noting the following:
 - i. In preparation of the 2020 legislative session, two proposals from the Health & Safety Subcommittee were with respect to Medicaid reimbursement for Certified Nurse Midwives and Doulas and, at that time, Commissioner Gifford noted that DSS was looking into the matter administratively. Commissioner Gifford has updates today.
- b. Commissioner Gifford presents [*see Attachment 2*] and acknowledges that she is joined by Brad Richards (Medical Medicaid Director) and Fatmata Williams (Senior Nurse Consultant)
 - i. D. Gifford notes that the planned new payment structure can lead to more use of doulas, breast feeding consultants, birthing centers and other things than can improve outcomes
 - ii. B. Richards presents [*starting on p. 4 of Attachment 2*]
 - iii. F. Williams presents [*starting on p. 7 of Attachment 2*] and then introduces Chris Andresen from DPH
 - iv. D. Gifford thanks B. Richards and F. Williams for their work in keeping the project moving and thanks all the stakeholders who have supported
- c. DPH's C. Andresen presents [*see Attachment 3*] and further:
 - i. Notes that diversity, equity, and inclusion has been at the heart of SOP Committee discussions
 - ii. Thanks DSS for discussing reimbursement model through this lens
- d. Lt. Governor thanks Commissioner Gifford, Ms. Williams, Dr. Richards, Mr. Andersen and Commissioner Juthani
- e. Lt. Governor introduces State Department of Education Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker for presentation on FASFA Challenge initiative and:
 - i. Notes that two of the legislative proposals received for this session pertained to educating students and parents on college debt, including how much they need to borrow and what they will ultimately pay back
 - ii. Thanks financial literacy subgroup for recommendations and SDE for responses

- f. Commissioner Russell-Tucker Presents *[See Attachment 4]* and:
 - i. Notes that challenge gives many students the chance to learn about new sources of funding that they don't know are available, especially those who don't currently have the resources to pay.
 - ii. Introduces John Scianimanico, Governor's Office Fellow, to present
 - iii. J. Scianimanico presents and further notes:
 - 1. FAFSA website portal is particularly important because it offers students virtual and in-person workshops with financial aid administrators from across Connecticut colleges and universities to help with FAFSA completion, understanding the cost of college, applying for other types of scholarships, and other services *[C. Phoenix-Sharpe shares <https://fafsact.org/> via chat]*
 - 2. As of today, we're about 29.3% completion
 - 3. Council can help meet the goal in the following ways:
 - a. Talk to your family, friends and colleagues who have seniors in high school about the importance of FAFSA and the opportunities for aid
 - b. Invite people to visit website *[shares website on screen]*
 - iv. Commissioner Russell-Tucker thanks Lt. Governor for invitation to share and notes that they will keep the council updated.
- g. Lt. Governor introduces Carolyn Alessi, State Chair of Million Women Mentors (MWM) noting that the goal of MWM is to encourage more young girls and women to be involved in STEM education and careers
- h. C. Alessi presents *[See Attachment 5]*, noting that she is joined by Julia Jack
 - i. J. Jack presents Stand Up for STEM Awards *[pg. 2 of Attachment 5]*
 - ii. C. Alessi presents upcoming MWM events and explains how people can get involved *[pg. 3 of Attachment 5]*

IV. Announcements

- a. Lt. Governor announces that the Hispanic Heritage celebration women leaders panel is rescheduled for January 28th at 2pm; that she will co-moderate with DOH Commissioner Seila Mosquera-Bruno; and that panelists include:
 - i. Carmen Colon, Executive Director of Alpha Community Services in Bridgeport
 - ii. Gabriela Garcia-Perez of Guilford, founder of Community Integration Mentoring Program and University of New Haven student class of 2024;
 - iii. Catheryne Montano, News Anchor for Connecticut En Vivo; and
 - iv. Valeria Lopez, founder of OnBeat Consulting.
- b. Lt. Governor announces that the Women's Business Development Council is starting a new round of funding in the Equity Match Grant program *[C. Phoenix-Sharpe shares <https://fafsact.orghttps://ctwbdc.org/equity-match-grant-program/> in chat]*
- c. Lt. Governor announces upcoming launch of third annual Lt. Governor's Computing Challenge: Coding for Good - Inspiring Health and Wellness for All *[C.*

Phoenix-Sharpe shares <https://www.ltgovcc.org/> and email contact info@ltgovcc.org in chat] and thanks State Department of Education; sponsors; and supporters, particularly Commissioner Russell-Tucker; Jennifer Michalek; Noele Kidney; and all of the members of the tech team.

- d. Lt. Governor announces that the next Full Council Meeting is scheduled for April 12th; that subcommittees will meet in both February and March; and to visit [Governor's Council on Women and Girls](#) [shared via chat] to pre-register for the next full council meeting, see subcommittee meeting schedules and for information and minutes from previous meetings
- e. Lt. Governor notes that any questions about what was shared today should be directed to her office or to the presenters directly

V. Lt. Governor adjourns at apx 4:09pm.

Council Member / Designee Attendance Report

Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz	Council Chair
Sec. Melissa McCaw	Council Vice Chair
Kelli Vallieres	Office of Workforce Strategy
Manisha Juthani	Department of Public Health
Charlene Russell-Tucker	State Department of Education
Deidre Gifford	Department of Social Services
Michelle Seagull	Department of Consumer Protection
Katie Rock-Burns	Department of Developmental Services
Jorge Perez	Department of Banking
Timothy Larson	Office of Higher Education
Tara Downes	Office of State Comptroller
Clare Kindall	Office of State Attorney General
Sharonda Carlos	Department of Corrections
Kim Martone	Office of Health Strategy
Vannessa Dorantes	Department of Children & Families
Alexandra Daum	Department of Economic & Community Development
Beth Bye	Office of Early Childhood
Jennifer Putetti	Office of State Treasurer
Thomas Saadi	Department of Veterans Affairs
Katherine Grady	Department of Motor Vehicles
Shelly Nolan	Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services
Dr. Shanté T. Hanks	Department of Housing
Andrew Mais	Insurance Department
Senator Marilyn Moore	Senate Democrats
Heather Somers	Senate Republicans