

STATE OF CONNECTICUT | SOCIAL EQUITY COUNCIL (DRAFT)

July 12, 2022, Meeting 10 A.M.

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

This meeting was recorded and posted to YouTube - To watch, visit:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85701459527?pwd=THRPSGNudlpEMHFvajiU5dXI3RnBsUT09>

Webinar ID 857 0145 9527

Passcode: 2022

MEETING MATERIALS

- July Agenda
- June Meeting Minutes
- Policy Document
- Bylaws

1. Call to order

Meeting was called to order by Andréa Comer at 10:29 a.m.

2. Attendance

Corrie Betts
Andréa Comer
Avery Gaddis
Subira Gordon
Michael Jefferson
David Lehman
Ojala Naeem
Marc Pelka (Designee for Jeffrey Beckham, OPM)
Christine Shaw (Designee for Shawn Wooden, OTT)
Edwin Shirley
Kelli-Marie Vallieres

Council members absent:

Marilyn Alverio
Ramón Arroyo
Kevin Walton

Staff: Ginne-Rae Clay, Executive Director, SEC; Jennifer Edwards, Program Manager, SEC; Komla Matrevi, Staff Attorney, SEC; Kristina Diamond, Communications & Legislative Program Manager, SEC; Crystal Morris-Crenshaw, Administrative Assistant, SEC; Kyle Abercrombie, Director of Government Affairs, DECD.

Andréa Comer welcomed the council and the public. She discussed that the actions of the Council today will begin to bring change to communities that have been harmed by the war on drugs. She thanked council members, the SEC team and CohnReznick for their efforts to ensure the process was done with fidelity and purpose. Chairwoman Comer also thanked Governor Lamont, legislative leaders, advocates and community stakeholders for their feedback and support of the Council's work.

She also addressed the review schedule for applications, with cultivators being reviewed first due to the required to grow and process the plant, as well as the need to identify space that is suitable for this endeavor. Other license types both through the lottery and equity joint ventures will be considered in future meetings.

Following the vote, the SEC team will send a communication to all applicants notifying them of their determination. Approved applications will subsequently be contacted by the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP). Those applicants who were not approved have the option to appeal this decision to the Superior Court. Chairwoman Comer stated that applicants that were not approved, recognizing the Sec. 149 cultivator application was a one-time opportunity, might consider applying for other license types in future lotteries.

Approval of the June Meeting Minutes

Andréa Comer asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Councilmember Shaw informed the Council that the June meeting minutes didn't reflect the Finance Committee's report of May 19, 2022. In that report, the Finance Committee decided to move to a quarterly schedule for meetings or on an as-needed basis. Chairwoman Comer stated the June minutes had been updated by Crystal and she indicated the revised minutes would be sent to the full council. If the minutes have not gone out to the full council, SEC staff make the necessary changes indicated by Councilmember Shaw.

Councilmember Shaw requested the minutes be amended on her previous suggestions.

Chairwoman Comer ask for a motion to approve the amended June meeting minutes with Councilmember Shaw's comments.

Motion – by Edwin Shirley
Second – by Michael Jefferson
In Favor – All
Opposed – None
Abstention – None
Motion passed.

3. 149 Application Approval

Chairwoman Comer moved to the approval for the section 149 applications. She stated the Council was joined by staff from CohnReznick. The CohnReznick staff gave an overview of the selection process for the 149 applications. From the applications reviewed, 16 were recommended for approval and we have provided ADR reports with those 16 applications.

Chairwoman Comer asked for a motion to approve the recommendation for the 16 Social Equity Cultivators.

Motion – by Michael Jefferson

Second – by Ojala Naeem

Councilwoman Shaw asked, “Is there a way in which we can see what the geographic distribution of the applicants or where these applicants have indicated where their intended sites will be established?”

Discussion ensued.

All in favor – All

Opposed – None

Abstention – None

Motion passed.

Chairwoman Comer asked for a motion to approve the recommendations for the 25 applicants who did not meet the social equity criteria.

Motion – by Michael Jefferson

Second – by David Lehman

Councilwoman Gordon asked to amend the motion to separate those applicants who were denied on the basis of residency only so that those applicants who were denied based on ownership and control could be considered separately.

Councilwoman Gordon raised questions regarding ownership and control and how the determination was made. Councilwoman Gordon felt many of the applicants lacked clarity or information. She requested for CohnReznick to provide clarification on her question. Discussion ensued.

Chairwoman Comer has asked Council member Jefferson to accept the friendly amendment.

Councilman Jefferson has accepted the friendly amendment.

Discussion ensued.

Chairwoman Comer asked Council member Jefferson to rescind his motion.

Council member Jefferson rescinded his motion to accept the friendly amendment.

Councilwoman Shaw asked for a motion for the Council to deny the applications that CohnReznick evaluated and recommended for denial. To the extent that the denials or the recommendations were based on insufficient information or for failure to meet the requirements related to residency and or income requirements.

Motion – by Corrie Betts
Second – by Subira Gordon
All in favor – All
Opposed – None
Abstentions – None

Councilwoman Shaw made the motion for the Council to deny the applications that were evaluated by Cohn Reznick and determined to be insufficient based on ownership and control as a sole ground for denial of the application.

Second – by Michael Jefferson
Discussion ensued.

Councilwoman Gordon asked for a roll call vote.

Council Member Betts	No
Chairwoman Comer	Yes
Council Member Gaddis	Yes
Council Member Gordon	No
Council Member Jefferson	Yes
Council Member Lehman	Yes
Council Member Naeem	Yes
Council Member Pelka	Yes
Council Member Shaw	Yes
Council Member Shirley	Yes
Council Member Vallieres	Yes

Motion has passed.

Councilmember Shaw requested the order of the Committee reports be changed. As she had a number of comments regarding the bylaws. Chairwoman Comer agreed to the change in order regarding the Committee reports.

- Finance Committee Christine Shaw
Councilmember Shaw informed the Council there were no new items to report from the committee at this time. As the committee has not met since the last council meeting.
- Governance Committee Ojala Naeem
Councilmember Naeem discussed the bylaws that were put together and reviewed by

the Committee and Attorney Matrievi. The bylaws were corrected based on feedback from the Committee. Councilmember Naeem stated that she did receive some questions and they were addressed ahead of the Council meeting. Councilmember Naeem turned the conversation to Councilmember Shaw for her comments. Councilmember Shaw stated the following:

- Section 2.1 of the draft, references made to Article 11 section. There is no section number, and the number would need to be added.
- Section 6.2 references evaluation of the bylaws at least every three years. Councilmember Shaw stated the reference of frequency during those three years should be noted.
- In the second section of the second sentence, should begin with a capital letter.
- In Article 8, there is reference to all the standing committees of the SEC, except for finance. Councilmember Shaw questioned the intentional omission of the Finance Committee.
- Councilmember Shaw also asked why there is a delay for implementation of the attendance requirement. The attendance requirement will begin in January 2023. Councilmember Shaw suggested that the application of this section apply upon approval of the council and not be delayed until January 2023.
- Section 7.4 of the bylaws refers to conflicts of interest. Does the code of ethics to which members of this Council and state employees are bound, would this extend those conflicts to spouses and immediate family members?
- Section 3.5 speaks to signature authority. Councilmember Shaw wanted to know if the Committee has considered the circumstances under which signatures will be required.

Councilmember Naeem made a motion to approve the bylaws with the corrections from Councilmember Shaw.

Motion – by Michael Jefferson

Second – by Edwin Shirley

All in favor – All

Opposed – None

Abstentions – None

Motion passed.

- Workforce Committee Kelli-Marie Vallieres

Councilmember Vallieres reported to the Council that the committee has been working on the approval process for the workforce development plans. A Request for Proposals was issued through the Social Equity Office under Director Clay. The

request for quotes was for an outside entity to review the workforce development plan based on the criteria and scoring rubric. The bids closed yesterday.

Councilmember Vallieres asked the Council for a special meeting of the Workforce Committee to review the responses, choose an entity and make a recommendation back to the Council. Councilmember Vallieres also requested a special meeting of the Council.

Discussion ensued.

- Outreach Committee Marilyn Alverio/Subira Gordon
Councilmember Gordon opened discussion regarding the SEC logo. She asked Camelo Communications to share both logos.

Discussion ensued.

Motion was made by Councilmember Gaddis to vote on option 2.

Second – by Michael Jefferson

All in favor – All

Opposed – None

Abstentions – None

- Accelerator Ad hoc Committee Ojala Naeem
Councilmember Naeem reported the committee is finalizing review of applications for the accelerator program. The Committee narrowed down the applicants to three finalists, and they were interviewed last week. The Committee is discussing some working points and the goal is to have a final presentation for the Council to approve at the special meeting.

- Policy Committee Edwin Shirley
Councilmember Shirley shared with the Council that the Policy Committee had a special meeting to discuss the document regarding transfer of SEC licenses during the restricted period. During the restricted period, the social equity licensee may not enter into any contract or agreement that would transfer the sale or the legal beneficial ownership or control of a license. Councilmember Shirley also addressed a transfer of a social equity license in the event of illness, loss of skill due to aging, emotional disorder, or mental illness.

Councilmember Shirley made a motion regarding the information mentioned regarding provisions and prohibitions for the transfer of SEC licenses.

Second – by Councilmember Gaddis

All in favor – All
Opposed – None
Abstentions – None
Motion passed

4. For the Good of the Order – New Business, Updates, and Information

5. Adjourn

Andréa Comer asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion – by Edwin Shirley
Second – by Michael Jefferson

The meeting adjourned at 12:27pm.

Minutes are a draft until approved at a subsequent meeting.