

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
REINVESTMENT & WORKFORCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – Draft  
APRIL 16, 2025, Meeting :00 P.M.  
Virtual Meeting via Teams

### Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Ojala Naeem called the meeting to order at 2:02 PM and conducted roll call. The following members were present:

- Ojala Naeem (Chair)
- Kyle Abercrombie
- Michael Jefferson
- Corrie Betts
- Avery Gaddis
- Andréa Hawkins
- Anthony Barrett (on behalf of Kelli Vallieres)

Absent: Melvin Medina, Charles Venator, Kelli Vallieres

Quorum was established.

### Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Minutes from January 22, 2025 meeting were presented for approval.

- Motion to approve: Avery Gaddis
- Seconded by: Andréa Hawkins and Corey Betts (simultaneously)
- Approved unanimously, with one abstention by Michael Jefferson due to not having received the minutes prior to the meeting (noted they were included in the agenda email).

### Reinvestment Plan Update

Presented by Brandon L. McGee, Jr., Chief Executive Officer

Key highlights:

- Reaffirmation of SEC's mission and strategic plan.

- **Revitalize and Reimagine Program (R2):** Focus on economic development, re-entry programs, and youth initiatives in six designated Disproportionately Impacted Areas (DIAs): Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, Norwich/New London, Stamford, and Waterbury.
- Funding: \$21.6 million over 3 years (\$7.2 million annually), distributed across the six regions.
- **Grant Manager RFP:**
  - Expected release: Mid-June 2025
  - Up to \$120,000 per grant manager
  - Nonprofit, Connecticut-based entities with at least 5 years of grant management experience
- Oversight:
  - Monthly financial and quarterly programmatic reporting required
  - Emphasis on transparency, accountability, and compliance (targeting 100% compliance with reporting)
  - Standardized reporting templates and a centralized portal in development

### Questions/Discussion:

- Andrea Hawkins inquired about public access to the RFP guidelines – McGee confirmed FAQs will be available on the SEC website.
- Kyle Abercrombie questioned the 95% compliance figure – team clarified it will be revised to aim for 100%.

### Workforce Development Update

Presented by Brandon L. McGee, Jr., Chief Executive Officer

- Goals:
  1. Support for social equity entrepreneurs (e.g., business planning, application assistance, workforce development).
  2. Create access to training pathways (e.g., cannabis and trades like HVAC, plumbing).
  3. Align efforts with broader equity objectives across sectors.
- **Pilot Program: Social Equity Resource Hub**

- Designed to address gaps and pain points in support for social equity entrepreneurs.
- Will include free legal, business, and technical services via partnerships with external incubators and service providers.
- Target launch: End of current fiscal year.

### **Discussion:**

- Andréa Hawkins voiced concerns about potential risks to federally funded partners; supported the SEC-led initiative approach.

### **Announcements**

- Office Hours are open for visits.
- Upcoming full Council meeting: **Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at 10:00 AM**, DEEP Building, 79 Elm Street, Hartford.
- Virtual Roundtables for social equity entrepreneurs scheduled for:
  - Monday, April 21, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM
  - Wednesday, April 23, 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

### **Adjournment**

- Motion to adjourn: Avery Gaddis
- Second by: Andréa Hawkins
- Meeting adjourned at 2:38 PM