



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
REINVESTMENT AND WORKFORCE MEETING MINUTES - **Draft**
AUGUST 20, 2025, Meeting 2:00 P.M.
Virtual Meeting via Teams

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair: Ojala Naeem called the meeting to order at 2:02 PM.

Members Present: Kyle Abercrombie, Corrie Betts, Andrea Hawkins, Avery Gaddis, Kevin Walton, Ojala Naeem (Chair), Charles Venator

Absent: Ándrea Comer, Michael Jefferson, Shirley Skyers-Thomas, Kelli-Marie Vallieres

Quorum: Achieved (6 of 10 members present)

2. Approval of Minutes – April 16, 2025

Motion to approve: Corrie Betts

Second: Andrea Hawkins

Vote: Unanimous approval

3. Executive Director's Report – Brandon McGee

A. Community Reinvestment Updates

- RFP issued to hire qualified grant managers (first step in two-step process).
- One contract per targeted region, covering ~194 of 237 disproportionately impacted areas (DIAs).
- Proposals due: September 3, 2025, by 4:00 PM.
- 5 proposals received to date; additional outreach underway.
- Once grant managers are selected, SEC will issue a Notice of Funding Opportunity for community-based organizations.

B. Workforce Development & Educational Opportunities

- Guided by statute and SEC strategic plan.
- Three pillars: support for social equity entrepreneurs, accessible/sustainable training pathways, alignment with equity goals.
- Current phase: research and planning.

- Partnerships with CT College System, industry partners, and DIA residents underway.
- Goal: ensure training leads directly to employment opportunities.

C. Data Collection & Impact Tracking

- Development of a 'DIA nonprofit map' to monitor investments, community partnerships, and commitments.
- Will measure outcomes against social determinants of health.

D. 2025 Council Market Outlook

- Launching multi-sector working group to explore cannabis and non-cannabis opportunities.
- Kickoff meeting: September 24, 2025, 10:00 AM at the Legislative Office Building.
- Focus areas: cannabis workforce certifications, municipal benefits, youth awareness and prevention.

4. Member Questions & Discussion

- Charles Venator: Requested templates to share RFP.
- Corrie Betts: Stressed importance of linking training to jobs.
- Kevin Walton: Urged youth prevention messaging on cannabis/vaping.

5. Upcoming Meetings & Events

- Council Meeting: September 9, 2025 (Virtual)
- Roundtable – Social Equity Entrepreneurs: September 9, Noon
- Policy & Finance Committees: September 18
- Legislative Committee: September 24
- Council Market Outlook Kickoff: September 24, 10 AM (LOB)

6. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Kyle Abercrombie
Second: Kevin Walton
Meeting adjourned at 6:32 PM.