

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

SOCIAL EQUITY COUNCIL | MEETING OF THE OUTREACH COMMITTEE - DRAFT

May 10, 2024 Meeting 11:00 A.M.

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft TEAMS

1) Call to Order and Welcome

Subira Gordon called the meeting to order at 11:06 A.M. and called the roll.

Attendance

Subira Gordon
Corrie Betts
Andrea Hawkins
Melvin Medina
Kevin Walton

Staff: Kristina Diamond

2) Review and approval of the March 8, 2024 meeting minutes

The meeting proceeded with the approval of minutes from the March 8th, 2024 session, which was motioned by Corrie Betts and seconded by Kevin Walton, followed by unanimous approval.

Motion – by Corrie Betts
Second – by Kevin Walton
In Favor – All
Opposed – None
Abstentions – None
Motion passed unanimously.

3) Pre-Lottery Education Outreach Update

Subira Gordon started the discussion by introducing the agenda item and indicating that either Arlene or Ginne-Rae would provide an update on the Pre-Lottery Education Outreach. Kristina Diamond took over the update as Arlene and Ginne were absent due to illness.

Kristina mentioned that they are collaborating with CohnReznick for the Pre-Lottery Education Outreach. CohnReznick is working on creating informational packages that outline the social equity criteria. These documents are currently in progress.

Kristina also shared plans for future activities, mentioning that once the documents are finalized, they will organize "lunch and learns" informational sessions. Additionally, they plan to offer evening sessions to accommodate different schedules.

The key points discussed during the update were:

Collaboration with CohnReznick for creating informational packages.
Progress on preparing documents outlining social equity criteria.
Plans for organizing "lunch and learns" and evening informational sessions for outreach purposes.

4) Community Conversations Update

Kristina Diamond provided an update on the contracts signed with various organizations for community conversations:

ANU Foundation for Norwalk

ANU Foundation for Stanford

Shiloh Development for New London

Alliance for Community Empowerment for Bridgeport (final contracts pending)

She mentioned that contracts are finalized for Norwalk, Stanford, and New London, with discussions ongoing for Bridgeport. These conversations are scheduled to take place either at the end of May or in June.

Kevin Walton asked for clarification on the type of community conversations these groups would host. Kristina explained that these conversations are similar to those held previously in Hartford, Waterbury, and New Haven. They aim to gather community input on fund distribution, important issues, and survey feedback. Kevin further inquired about funding for these meetings, which Kristina confirmed with a budget of \$20,000 allocated for each organization.

Subira Gordon raised concerns about the ANU Foundation in Norwalk, questioning its legitimacy as there was limited online information available. Kristina mentioned conversations at previous meetings with legislators and mayors regarding these organizations.

Kevin expressed interest in knowing if these groups had gone through the RFQ process and if their recommendations were considered. Kristina clarified that all organizations mentioned had undergone the RFQ process, including interviews and application submissions.

Subira sought confirmation regarding the inclusion of these updates in written reports, which Kristina indicated were likely included in Ginne's Executive Director's updates to the Council.

5) For the Good of the Order

Kevin Walton brought up a topic regarding the cannabis industry and recent political developments related to cannabis legalization at the federal level. He mentioned a new political party advocating against the rescheduling of cannabis and shared information about a petition circulating among senators. Kevin expressed interest in discussing the potential impact of these developments on the state and the social equity initiatives.

Jennifer Edwards confirmed awareness of these developments, mentioning recent progress in cannabis rescheduling discussions at the federal level.

Kevin elaborated on various viewpoints within the cannabis industry and highlighted concerns about potential monopolization by larger corporations if federal regulations change.

Melvin Medina provided insights from discussions with Jason Ortiz, a member of the cannabis reform movement, emphasizing concerns about interstate commerce implications once cannabis is federally legalized.

Subira Gordon and other members expressed interest in learning more about the topic and its potential impact on social equity initiatives. Andrea Hawkins suggested exploring the Outreach Committee's role in gathering community input and raising awareness about the issue.

Subira Gordon proposed organizing a town hall or informational session to gather insights from industry experts and community members, aiming to formulate a collective position or response from the council regarding cannabis legislation.

Kristina Diamond inquired about the format (in-person or virtual) for the proposed town hall or informational session.

Subira Gordon also suggested holding a general town hall on the Social Equity Council's activities and potentially releasing the strategic plan publicly once completed.

Kevin Walton and other members supported the idea of gathering information from industry experts and community stakeholders to inform the council's position on cannabis legislation.

6) Adjourn

The discussion concluded with Subira Gordon motioning for adjournment, which was moved by Andrea Hawkins, seconded by Corrie Betts and approved by the members present.

Motion – by Andrea Hawkins

Second – by Corrie Betts

In Favor – All

Opposed – None

Abstentions – None

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 11:06 A.M.



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Date: May 10, 2024

RE: Minutes: May SEC Outreach Committee Minutes (Draft)

Please be advised that the above-referenced typewritten minutes are a true and accurate description of the proceedings obtained from the recorded conversations to the extent that the audio could be clearly heard/understood. Portions that could not be heard/understood have been notated with a (an “inaudible” or “?...”).

Sincerely,

Brenda LaFleur

Brenda LaFleur
Owner, A Plus Reporting Service, LLC

I certify that this document is a true and accurate description of the proceedings obtained from the recorded conversations contained in the listed audio file.

Boden Truitt

Boden Truitt,
Transcriber