

STATE OF CONNECTICUT | REINVESTMENT COMMITTEE (DRAFT)

March 10, 2023, Meeting 11:30 A.M.

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Welcome

Ojala Naeem called the meeting to order.

2. Attendance

Corrie Betts
Andréa Comer
Avery Gaddis
Subira Gordon
Michael Jefferson
Ojala Naeem
Paul O. Robertson

Staff: Ginne-Rae Clay, Executive Director, SEC; Kristina Diamond, Communications & Legislative Program Manager, SEC; Jennifer Edwards, Project Manager, SEC; Komla Matrevi, Staff Attorney, SEC; Jennifer Stevens, Associate Accountant, SEC

3. Outreach Update

The Outreach Committee and SEC staff have prepared a draft RFQ to select a vendor to have community conversations. The intention of community conversations is to gather information for the SEC to be strategic in our future investments. Discussion ensued regarding timing concerns. Ojala Naeem will follow up with the Outreach Committee on the timelines for the RFQ and community conversations. There will be notification of when the community conversations will take place for interested council members to sit in and listen.

4. Review of Funding RFP and Guidelines

The SEC will create a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and a plan on how to evaluate responses. Ojala Naeem requested staff to provide a draft based on conversations on areas of importance and interest for reinvestment. Ginne-Rae Clay will have the drafts to Ojala Naeem by early next week for review. Ojala Naeem would like to schedule a Special Meeting for this Committee to review and approve those drafts. The document will include the investment parameters, the areas where we are looking to spend our funds and the criteria to evaluate incoming requests.

Subira Gordon suggested that the Outreach Committee work with anchor nonprofit organizations for listening sessions in different cities. Marc Pelka asked if there was funding in the budget for payment to organizations hosting the community conversations. Discussion ensued. Subira Gordon will follow up with Ginne-Rae Clay regarding the budget.

Subira Gordon asked about conflicts of interest and wanted to make sure that if she sits on a board of an organization that it did not preclude them from accessing these resources. Chair Naeem reiterated to Ginne-Rae Clay and staff to ensure that the evaluation criteria included the process we would take when there were conflicts of interest.

Edwin Shirley requested clarification of the timelines and what it means to spend the money before the end of the fiscal year. A discussion ensued. Ojala Naeem asked Ginne-Rae Clay to report back to the Committee with the options for disbursement of the funds. Ojala Naeem requested Attorney Komla Matrevi to provide a clear explanation if organizations were in jeopardy of losing their federal funding if they receive our funds because it is tax revenue from the sale of cannabis.

Ojala Naeem asked Ginne-Rae Clay for a timeline regarding the next steps. Ginne-Rae Clay will follow up with Ojala Naeem by mid-week. There was a discussion about asking the legislature for an extension and the use of funds appropriated to the SEC.

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

Michael Jefferson discussed the hemp farmers bill its implications to social equity cultivators. A discussion ensued.

Ojala Naeem asked Kristina Diamond to provide the Council detailed information on the hemp bill so Council can have a plan of action and to notify our Social Equity cultivators of this bill.

7. Adjourn

Chair Naeem asked for a motion to adjourn.

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

The meeting adjourned.

Minutes are a draft until approved at a subsequent meeting.