

STATE OF CONNECTICUT | SOCIAL EQUITY COUNCIL REINVESTMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
(DRAFT)

June 26, 2023, Meeting 2 P.M.  
Virtual Meeting via Ms. Teams

1. Call to order

Co-chair Naeem welcomed all to the meeting. She took roll and declared there was a quorum.

2. Attendance

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

Staff: Executive Director Ginne-Rae Clay

3. Approval for the May 11, 2023, Meeting Minutes                      Ojala Naeem, Co-chair

Co-chair Naeem asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Motion – by Michael Jefferson  
Second – by Paul O. Robertson  
In Favor – Julianne Avallone, Corrie Betts, Avery Gaddis, Subira Gordon, Michael Jefferson, Ojala Naeem, Paul O. Robertson  
Opposed – None  
Abstention – Andréa Comer  
Motion passed.

4. Update on FY2023 Reinvestment Funding                                      Ginne-Rae Clay, Executive Director

Executive Director Clay noted that six community grant-making organizations had been selected, and all contracts had been executed and all funds transferred to those organizations. SEC staff met collectively with the organizations last week and provided some technical assistance for putting together a project management plans. The plans will be reviewed to ensure the program would run as consistently as possible throughout the State. The Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut had asked that funding be combined with Willimantic, Norwich, New London. She announced that the United Ways of Coastal Fairfield County and Western Connecticut had merged into one for efficiency purposes, and

they would maintain all service delivery areas. Co-chair Naeem asked if investments would be tracked separately. Director Clay confirmed that they would.

Co-chair Naeem understood project plans, timelines, and processes were being developed and that the SEC would review the proposed recommendations before making a final decision. Director Clay confirmed that the timelines would come with the project plans. She asked how much information Council wanted to make its decisions and the format of such.

A discussion about scoring matrixes ensued. Council Member Robertson agreed and recommended that Executive Director Clay reach out to Director of Small Business Development Sheila Hummel for an example of a scoring matrix from another DECD program.

Council Member Jefferson asked about the grant-makers scoring processes and if they had their own templates or if templates would be provided to them. Director Clay explained that it would depend on the process used, which she would investigate. Executive Director Clay suggested that the Council could provide a form for each grant, which would provide consistent information back to the Council. Council Member Jefferson was concerned about delaying the process and asked if the Committee or the Full Council would oversee this.

Co-chair Naeem voiced that the recommendation would be reviewed by the Full Council, but the grant-making organizations were submitting projects and timelines that would be recommended to the Committee, and Council would make all recommendations together, not one at a time. She noted that the Committee would review the applications. Council Member Avallone thought there should be clear rules related to requirements for Council denials. Co-chair Naeem suggested the criteria set forth for grantees be put in a document for the Full Council. She noted that there was no clear specifications for denial, but she explained the key areas of focus. Council Member Avallone suggested there be a monthly report to Council versus preapproval. Co-chair Naeem was open to that suggestion.

Executive Director Clay remarked that it had not been determined how organizations would roll out grants. She could provide an email update of the process and timeline and stated the applications should be done by October. Discussion ensued regarding the Committee voting on the issue, and Co-chair Naeem asked Director Clay to look at the proposed project timelines and plans and come back to the Committee with a proposal to address the “approval” which could be reviewed next month and a clear process agreed upon, which would be shared with the Full Council.

5. Planning for Additional Reinvestment Funding Ojala Naeem, Co-chair

Co-chair Naeem asked if there were reinvestment dollars for 2024/2025. Executive Director Ginne-Rae Clay confirmed there are. Co-chair Naeem noted that the Committee and the Council wanted to take a more strategic approach on future funding and to have a plan ahead of time which she thought should be started in order to have a plan by late fall or early winter. Co-chair Naeem proposed there be a discussion related to the plan for reinvestment for the next fiscal year.

Council Member Jefferson asked if there was feedback on outreach. Director Clay expressed that there had not yet been community conversations. They were working on the contract with the Attorney General's office, and once the contract was done, the organizations could engage. Executive Director Clay noted that she is also working on finding organizations to serve Stamford, Bridgeport, and New London. Council Member Comer spoke of the value of this and reinforced the importance of getting information from the community and hoped it would be front and center for the Committee.

Co-chair Naeem understood that the Committee wanted to have a plan in place before the end of the year, but would wait on an updated timeline as contracts were executed. She asked Director Clay to email notify the Committee the timeline for community conversations. She did not think another Committee meeting should be scheduled until after the conversations.

She felt the proposal on process for reinvestment dollars being made this year could be reviewed via email and a special meeting scheduled if there needed to be discussion. Director Clay noted that staff would be meeting in July to go over a strategy for future investment.

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

Council Member Jefferson understood that there would be \$25M going into the Social Innovation Fund account for use at the sole discretion of the Social Equity Council, which he thought was excellent news.

Executive Director Ginne-Rae Clay indicated she would keep the Committee updated of community conversation happenings and invited the Committee to participate.

7. Adjourn

Co-chair Naeem entertained a motion to adjourn.

Motion – by Michael Jefferson  
Second – by Andréa Comer  
In Favor – All.

The meeting adjourned at 2:35.

*Minutes are a draft until approved at at subsequent meeting.*