

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
SOCIAL EQUITY COUNCIL - POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING (DRAFT)  
March 21, 2024, Meeting 10 A.M.  
Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

1) Call to Order

Edwin Shirley called the meeting to order at 10:03 A.M.

2) Attendance

Present:

Michael Jefferson

Ojala Naeem

Edwin Shirley

Shirley Skyers-Thomas

Absent:

Avery Gaddis

Staff: Ginne-Rae Clay, Executive Director; Karen Colebut, Paralegal Specialist; Kristina Diamond, Communications & Legislative Program Manager; Arlene Galindo-Jimenez, Outreach Program Manager; Vera Lembrick, Reinvestment Program Manager; Ana Rosa, Administrative Assistant to SEC Executive Director

3) Approval of the Amended January 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Edwin Shirley asked for a motion to approve the January 18, 2024 meeting minutes.

Motion – by Michael Jefferson

Second – by Ojala Naeem

In Favor – All

Opposed – None

Abstentions – None

Motion passed unanimously.

4) Approval of the February 15, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Edwin Shirley asked for a motion to approve the February 15, 2024 meeting minutes.

Motion – by Michael Jefferson

Second – by Shirley Skyers-Thomas

In Favor – All  
Opposed – None  
Abstentions – None  
Motion passed unanimously.

## 5) Legislative Updates

Edwin Shirley asked Kristina Diamond to provide an update to the Committee. The General Law Committee favorably passed House Bill 5150 with substitute language. The Council was concerned some of the sections undermined the Social Equity intent of RERACA. The Council opposes several sections of the bill, such as allowing hemp manufacturers to apply for a license to be a cannabis product manufacturer as well as allowing hemp producers to cultivate cannabis on lots located outside of a DIA. Kristina Diamond heard there were over 50 hemp manufacturers and has asked DCP to confirm that number.

Kristina Diamond asked Council Members to reach out to their legislative contacts. As of yesterday, there were seven weeks until the end of session. The Appropriations Committee will submit their budget proposal within the next two weeks. Staff hoped to schedule a Town Hall session during the week of April 8 with Social Equity applicants and Council Members regarding legislative concerns and other work the SEC is doing.

There had not been any discussion about adding legislation for the renewal and enforcement of Social Equity plans. DCP was in the process of replacing their former legislative liaison. Staff will follow up with DCP. Staff was approving plans. Staff will put best practices in place to ensure plans are done annually before reports start arriving within the next nine months to a year.

Last session, hemp THC levels were increased. Many enforcement issues or provisions were added to the bill that was introduced. Kristina Diamond was gauging the bill's favorability.

Kristina Diamond heard the House would meet on Monday, March 25 to make judicial nominations and commissioner appointments. The House will meet in mid-April to move forward with legislation. Kristina Diamond was in conversations with Representative Rojas' staff. Kristina Diamond will contact Ojala Naeem this week because she was one of the Council Members appointed by a House Member.

Ginne-Rae Clay reminded the Committee that when cultivators, micro-cultivators or the cannabis industry are removed from the DIAs, it creates barriers for people to get jobs in these companies as well as DIAs lose the 3% municipality tax to other communities.

Edwin Shirley commented that a lot of time was spent on defining and refining DIAs but this bill undermined all that work and effort. Edwin Shirley asked what the timeframe was for voicing concerns about this bill. Kristina Diamond replied that now was the time to contact House Members. This is a House bill, so it goes to the House first and then moves to the Senate. Ginne-Rae Clay wanted to be notified if Council Members contact House Members

and would like to have SEC staff present if anything was scheduled or planned with a House Member. Kristina Diamond offered to provide legislator contact information if needed.

Ginne-Rae Clay was emailing the full Council whenever she had an update. Kristina Diamond typically emailed legislative updates on Fridays but would provide an update sooner if something significant happened.

Ginne-Rae Clay stated that if a lobbyist contacted a Council Member directly to please notify Kristina Diamond and direct the lobbyist to Kristina Diamond for a response to avoid miscommunication.

6) For the Good of the Order (New Business, Updates, Information)

None

7) Adjournment

Edwin Shirley asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion – by Michael Jefferson

Second – by Ojala Naeem

In Favor – All

Opposed – None

Abstentions – None

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:19 A.M.

/mlc

# TRANSCRIPTION *Plus*

LLC  
ESTABLISHED IN 1989

March 22, 2024

**RE: Minutes: March SEC Policy Governance Committee Meeting Minutes Draft 32164**

**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,

*Mary A. Goehring*

Mary A. Goehring  
CEO, Transcription Plus, 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.**

*Michelle L. Coronado*  
Michelle L. Coronado