

STATE OF CONNECTICUT | SOCIAL EQUITY COUNCIL (DRAFT)

November 8, 2023, Meeting 10 A.M.

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

1. Call to order - Chair Robertson welcomed everyone to the meeting and called the meeting to order at 10:07AM
2. Attendance

Corrie Betts  
Andréa Comer  
Avery Gaddis  
Subira Gordon  
Andrea Hawkins  
Michael Jefferson  
Ojala Naeem  
Marc Pelka  
Paul O. Robertson  
Edwin Shirley  
Shirley Skyers-Thomas  
Kelli-Marie Vallieres  
Kevin Walton

Absent: Melvin Medina

Staff: Ginne-Rae Clay, Executive Director, SEC; Karen Colebut, Paralegal Specialist, SEC; Kristina Diamond, Communications & Legislative Program Manager, SEC; Jennifer Edwards, Program Manager, SEC; Arlene Galindo-Jimenez, SEC; Vera Lembrick, Reinvestment Program Manager, SEC; Komla Matrevi, Staff Attorney.

3. Vote on Social Equity Applications Recommended for Approval
  - a. ACRE 0015682 Insa CT Retail 1 LLC
  - b. ACRE 0015678 Insa CT Retail 2 LLC
  - c. ACRE 0015679 FFDC EJV LLC
  - d. AMHF 0008273 FFD Pink EJV LLC
  - e. ACRE 0015680 FFD BLUE EJV LLC
  - f. AMHF 0008274 Connecticut Retail Solutions 1 LLC
  - g. AMHF 0008275 Connecticut Retail Solutions 2 LLC

Paul Robertson asked for a motion to approve the above Social Equity applications.

Motion – by Michael Jefferson  
Second – by Subira Gordon  
In Favor – All

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Opposed – None  
Abstentions – None  
Motion passed.

4. Executive Session
5. Vote on Social Equity Applications Recommended for Approval.
6. Executive Director's Report and Recommendation

GINNE-RAE CLAY DELIVERED THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

An administrative assistant was hired and will begin working on November 20. Today is Komla Matrevi's last day. Staff is evaluating Council's legal needs.

Three Social Equity applicants were approved via lottery for the Canna-Business Revolving Loan Fund. All Social Equity approved or provisionally licensed businesses were notified they are eligible to apply to the Canna-Business Revolving Loan Fund as of December 1. Applications are available on the SEC website. Jennifer Edwards is the Revolving Loan Fund Program Manager.

Community Reinvestment Grant Pilot Program funds were decided at the local level. All grant award applicants were notified if their grant request was approved or denied. Grant makers will make public announcements of award winners.

Social Equity Plan approvals during October: Fresh Perspective Connecticut Company, LLC; Fine Fettle (Norwalk); Fine Fettle (Old Saybrook); Nutmeg London; CT Pharma, Newington; and New England Edibles.

Community Conversations are ongoing. As of November 3, there were over 630 attendees. Staff will issue an RFQ for the next round of community conversations in Bridgeport, Stamford, Ansonia, Bristol, Meriden, Norwalk, and Norwich-New London. Through November 3, over 380 people have taken the community survey.

Staff's November goals include the following: Complete Community Conversations Round I, update the Reinvestment Plan, issue RFQ for Community Conversations Round II, update Notice of Availability of Funds (NOFA) for grant makers, update SEC Organizational Chart, post legal positions, and present updated Social Equity Plan (SEP) criteria at the next Policy and Governance Committee meeting. Ginne-Rae Clay would like to hire someone to manage and interpret data collected from Community Conversations and surveys as well as the impact grants will have on the community.

Upcoming Committee Meetings: Outreach, November 10; Reinvestment/Workforce, November 15; Policy/Governance, November 16. The Finance Committee meets quarterly. Full Council will meet on December 5.

Staff is working on an SEC Newsletter draft. An Outreach Program Manager was hired. Staff purchased a subscription to Constant Contact to send announcements and an SEC newsletter.

Ginne-Rae Clay thanked Staff Attorney Komla Matrievi for his work on behalf of the Council. Council thanked Komla Matrievi for his unwavering commitment to the SEC, being helpful to the SEC and Social Equity applicants, as well as for his passion and enthusiasm.

Ginne-Rae Clay noted most Community Conversations start with comments about trauma the community has faced. The next round of conversations may incorporate a brief discussion on trauma and the affect the war on drugs had on community members. Many people spoke about the lack of community facilities for teenagers or kids. Many people are personally funding and running community programs and want help for their organizations.

Kelli-Marie Vallieres announced the Office of Workforce Strategy had a new Workforce Development Coordinator, Tiffany Araujo. Her background included working for the Department of Consumer Protection for several years on the medical usage of cannabis.

Staff is updating the Reinvestment Plan Development Timeline, so it was not included in this month's report. Ginne-Rae Clay will present the timeline at the Reinvestment Committee's meeting and then to Council on a regular basis.

Michael Jefferson made a motion to create a personnel Committee.

Motion – by Michael Jefferson  
Second – by Andréa Comer  
In Favor – All  
Opposed – None  
Abstentions – None  
Motion passed.

Council discussion ensued on selecting a Chair for the Personnel Committee. Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Andrea Hawkins and Michael Jefferson offered to serve on the Personnel Committee. Michael Jefferson was willing to chair.

## 7. Committees' Recommendations

- a. Policy Committee Recommendation
  - i. Discussion and Vote on Revised Social Equity Criteria

Chair Edwin Shirley stated the Policy Committee met in October to review the revised Social Equity criteria presented by staff. The Committee agreed to recommend Council approve the criteria as presented in Council's meeting materials. Upon Council approval, SEC staff will host a series of webinars to explain the criteria and provide necessary guidance to the public.

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Chair Edwin Shirley asked for a motion to approve the revised Social Equity criteria to become effective February 1, 2024.

Motion – by Michael Jefferson

Second – by Avery Gaddis

In Favor – All

Opposed – None

Abstentions – None

Motion passed.

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

None

9. Adjourn

Chairman Paul Robertson made a motion to adjourn.

Motion – by Chairman Paul Robertson

Second – by Councilwoman Kelli-Marie Vallieres

In Favor – All

Opposed – None

Abstentions – None

Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned. At 11:41AM

/mlc

November 11, 2023

**RE: Minutes: November SEC Council Meeting 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,

*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