

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
SOCIAL EQUITY COUNCIL | Policy/Governance Committee **(Draft)**

Meeting Date: August 17, 2023 at 10:00 AM

Meeting of the Policy/Governance Committee - Virtual Meeting via Microsoft TEAMS

1. Call to Order 10:01 AM

SEC Chairman Paul O. Robertson called the meeting to order and took roll.

2. Attendance

Members Present: Edwin Shirley, Julianne Avallone, Avery Gaddis, Michael Jefferson, Andrea Comer, Ojala Naeem

SEC Staff: Executive Director, Ginne-Rae Clay, Program Manager, Jennifer Edwards, Legislative & Communication Program Manager, Kristina Diamond, SEC Staff Attorney, Komla Matrevi, SEC Paralegal Specialist, Karen Colebut.

3. Election of the New Chair of the Committee

I am Paul O. Robertson Chair of the Social Equity Council. The council has consolidated its committees with the intention of streamlining and increasing resources for the focused work of the council. Chairman Robertson added that his role at this meeting was to call for the nomination and vote for the committee chair of the Policy/Governance Committee.

Vote to Select Committee Chair

Chairman Robertson posed the question, “any nominations for chair of the Policy/Governance Committee”?

Chairman Robertson motioned for a vote on the committee chair:

Councilor Michael Jefferson nominated councilor Edwin Shirley.

Chairman Robertson asked, “are there any other nominations?”
Chairman Robertson motioned for the vote.

In favor - All
Opposed – None
Abstention - None

The vote carried – Councilor Edwin Shirley was elected Chair of the Policy/Governance Committee.

Chair Shirley thanked Chairman Robertson, and councilors Jefferson and Gaddis for their support. Chair Shirley stated that they have a really strong committee that is both challenging and supportive. I appreciate the nomination and I will do my best to serve the Council and this committee as well as I can. Now, let's move onto the next agenda item.

4. Social Equity Application Criteria Updates

- a. Residency and Income
- b. Ownership and Control Criteria

SEC Attorney Matrevi stated that the statute has been amended. Public Act 21-1 has been amended, a few things have changed with regard to the criteria. It was important for the SEC to update these criteria and provide notice to the public of these updates.

This is the current residency criteria we've changed - the statutory language and reference as the law has changed. The major change here is in the previous criteria it was indicated that the applicant must have resided in a disproportionately impacted area for at least nine of the ten years immediately before applying for the license. Or nine years before they turn eighteen. Throughout the application process last year, we found that many Social Equity applicants were confused because they (some of them) alleged in complaints that they didn't know that they had to be there the full five years of those past ten years or nine years before the age of eighteen. They thought that if they lived there for a shorter period of time, so long as it was part of that time frame, it meets the criteria - that is not the case. We updated the criteria to clarify that it is five full years, and nine full years in the DIA during the times referenced in the statute. We went over the documents that were required by the Council, last year in light of the Administrative Court decisions that came down last year. We were able to remove the social security card requirement from the current proposed residency criteria. And we provided birth certificate clarification as well as affidavit.

So, with all those changes, the current language we are proposing with regard to those documents will be as follows:

Applicant must submit a long-form birth certificate or if not available, a birth certificate that shows at a minimum, the name of the child, and the names of the parents.

An applicant whose birth certificate is not in the English language, must submit a copy of the original birth certificate accompanied by a certified English translation. It is our belief that this clarification will be very helpful to the applicant and the entire industry as well.

With regard to affidavits, The Social Equity Council may consider third-party affidavits. Council will determine if the affidavits meet the requirements.

When it comes to income requirements, we removed the previous statutory language because the statutory references have changed, but nothing has really changed.

Household income requirements are the same as before. No new documents have been added.

Discussion ensued.

Councilor Gaddis motioned to table the matter until the September 12th meeting to get everyone brought up to speed.

Chairman Shirley stated thank you Councilman Gaddis, there is a motion on the table. Councilor Comer seconded the motion.

Vote:

Motion – Avery Gaddis
Second – Andrea Comer
In Favor: All
Opposed: None
Abstained: None

Executive Director Clay stated there will be office hours available to the Council.

Councilor Jefferson asked, are we tabling this motion until the next Policy/Governance Committee meeting on September 21?

Executive Director Clay stated that there will be office hours to all members of the Council.

5. Discussion on Legislative Recommendation Process -Kristina Diamond

Kristina Diamond began the discussion by stating that the SEC staff is recommending that the process remain the same as last year. Each council member will have the opportunity to provide feedback and submit their recommendations. The deadline for submitting recommendations is September 1, 2023.

The SEC staff's recommendations will be combined with the Council's recommendations which will be forwarded to the entire council. The SEC staff will offer office hours for any council members that may have questions about the recommendations. The Office hours will be scheduled before the next Policy/Governance Committee meeting. At the September 21, 2023 meeting, the Council will vote on the recommendations. Then, the full council will vote on the recommendations after the staff receives feedback from the OTG and OPM.

Discussion ensued.

6. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

Motion – Paul Robertson
Seconded – Andrea Comer

Adjourned at 10:56 AM