

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

SOCIAL EQUITY COUNCIL | REINVESTMENT/WORKFORCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - **DRAFT**

OCTOBER 16, 2024 Meeting 2:00 P.M.

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft TEAMS

1) Call to Order and Welcome

Ojala Naeem initiated the session with a greeting and proceeded to begin the roll call.

2) Attendance

Kyle Abercrombie
Avery Gaddis
Subira Gordon
Andréa Hawkins
Michael Jefferson
Ojala Naeem
Corrie Betts

3) Reinvestment Plan Update

Ojala Naeem announced the absence of a quorum and the tabling of prior meeting minutes. She introduced Brandon McGee, the Executive Director, to provide updates.

Brandon McGee shared key developments since the last meeting, including his collaboration with Andrea Hawkins and Daniel on strategic planning efforts. Slalom was hired as the consultant, with a report due shortly.

He emphasized the importance of separating community reinvestment from workforce development and shared updates on a virtual roundtable held with grant makers such as the Hispanic Federation, Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut, United Way of Coastal and Western Connecticut, Prosperity Foundation, and NEST. This roundtable focused on feedback about the initial \$6 million community impact allocation, highlighting best practices, pain points, and capacity-building needs.

McGee raised concerns about social equity and workforce development plans lacking clear ties to reinvestment goals, citing a lack of measurement systems. He stated that the committee would need to work on this and mentioned that \$5.6 million in the budget for reinvestment would grow in the coming years.

Ojala Naeem asked about key takeaways from the grant makers' meeting, to which McGee noted that many felt excluded from initial conversations and raised issues like insufficient funding for community-based organizations and a need for capacity-building resources. Andrea Hawkins added concerns about nonprofits, particularly in Hartford, being unaware of the funding opportunities.

McGee reassured the committee that, while informational sessions would be held, they should wait until the strategic plan was finalized to avoid premature announcements.

Avery Gaddis then expressed dissatisfaction with being “guided” by the Comptroller's audit, arguing that the SEC should not be tethered to the audit's recommendations and criticizing the slow, committee-driven process.

4) Good of the Order

Councilman Avery Gaddis inquired whether Director Brandon McGee required any support for his strategic planning efforts. McGee responded that, while no immediate assistance was needed, he encouraged members to make themselves available during the ongoing strategic planning process, emphasizing the importance of their input.

Gaddis then expressed frustration, voicing concerns about the SEC being singled out for special scrutiny by a state agency, while other state entities with significant deficiencies had not faced the same level of oversight. He mentioned multiple instances where other agencies had ongoing issues, such as data breaches and improper approvals of tax credits, yet did not receive the same attention. He also shared his dissatisfaction with being treated unfairly and implied potential racial bias, though he chose not to elaborate publicly.

5) Approval of June 18, 2024, Minutes

Naeem acknowledged the presence of Councilman Betts, who had joined the meeting. Before adjourning, she entertained a motion to approve the June 18th meeting minutes.

Motion – by Avery Gaddis
Second – by Andrea Hawkins
In Favor – All
Opposed – None
Abstentions – None
Motion passed unanimously.

6) Adjourn

Avery Gaddis called a motion to adjourn.

Motion – by Andrea Hawkins
Second – by Kyle Abercrombie
In Favor – All
Opposed – None
Abstentions – None
Motion passed unanimously.



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Date: October 16, 2024

RE: Minutes: October SEC Reinvestment/Workforce Committee 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,

Brenda LaFleur

Brenda LaFleur
Owner, A Plus Reporting Service, 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.

Boden Truitt

Boden Truitt,
Transcriber