

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
SOCIAL EQUITY COUNCIL

November 2, 2021 Special Meeting 10 a.m.
Legislative Office Building (LOB), Hearing Room 1D
300 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106

MINUTES

This meeting was recorded by CT-N - To watch, visit: <http://ct-n.com/ctnplayer.asp?odID=19066&jump=0:00:07>

A special meeting of the Social Equity Council was held in person on November 2, 2021.

1. Andrea Comer opened the meeting noting the presence of a quorum, called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.
2. Attendance
Council members present:
 - Ramon Arroyo
 - Andrea Comer
 - Subira Gordon
 - Michael Jefferson
 - Ojala Naeem
 - Edwin S. Shirley
 - Corrie Betts
 - Avery Gaddis
 - Joseph Williams
 - Dr. Kelli Vallieres
 - Marilyn Alverio
 - Christine Shaw, designee for Shawn Wooden (attended virtually)
 - Melissa McCaw
 - David Lehman (attended virtually)

Staff attending/ presenting: Ginne-Rae Clay, Exec. Director, SEC

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes (10/5/2021)
Andrea Comer asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the October meeting on 10/5/21. Edwin Shirley made the motion, Joe Williams seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
4. Committee Reports and Call for Action

- Finance Committee Christine Shaw, Chair
Christine Shaw reported that the Finance Committee met on 10/21. She reviewed the charge of the Finance Committee to create the budget for FY2023 and to ensure expenditures are appropriate. She spoke of the FY 2022 budget that is in place and the operating budget for FY2022. She noted that for FY2023, the committee only need to do adjustments for the biennial budget. She noted that there will likely be funds to carry over to 2023. Melissa McCaw noted that the enacted budget includes a \$5M carry forward to support the operating expenses for operationalizing recreational cannabis, but that that is inadequate to cover all costs, but actual costs is expected to be close to \$16M, so that remains an open item for FY2022.
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- a. Governance Committee Ojala Naeem, Chair
 - Reported that the Governance Committee discussed the process for review of the interim Executive Director, and the group agreed that a 360 degree review should be done, and that will be done in the Feb/March timeframe. The SEC by-laws work is ongoing. Expectations of attendance by council members was discussed.
- b. Outreach Committee Marilyn Alverio & Subira Gordon, Co-Chairs
 - Subira Gordon reported on the income and residency requirements work by the committee and she presented the recommendations from the Outreach Committee as a draft that will continue to be worked on. Marilyn Alverio spoke of the work towards a marketing strategy and that staffing for communications that will likely be in place in the January timeframe and how the committee is looking at areas of focus for the outreach efforts – and targets for that outreach: children/ education, business opportunities, and adult use.

For timing reasons, SEC Chair, Andrea Comer suggested taking the last two committee reports and item 5. From the ED out of order and have the presentations first, with Rick Garza going first.

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- c. Policy Committee Edwin Shirley, Chair
- d. Workforce Committee Kelli-Marie Valleries, Chair
- 5. From the Executive Director Ginne-Rae Clay, Interim Executive Director

7. Presentation II Rick Garza, Colorado
CANNABIS MARKET OVER SUPPLY

Rick Garza described his experience with the Recreational Marijuana Industry operationalization in Washington State. He spoke of the application process and told the Council that CT will likely get many more applications than you might expect and suggested that CT might provide good expectations to the potential applicant pool about how many licenses might be available. He spoke of moratoriums established by many areas – which left relatively few areas open to cannabis establishments. And that there was concern about

saturation in an area. He spoke of the success of Washington's seven state banks/credit unions that fund and provide banking services. He suggested making SEC plans and policies clear and to do phases of licensing, to be sure to match up the supply/demand.

6. Presentation I Scheril Murray Powell, Esq.

CANNABIS EQUITY VERIFICATION

Atty. Powell spoke of evaluation criteria and presented slides regarding considerations for evaluation criteria and background check types for applicants. A discussion ensued.

7. Public Speaking

- George Sutherland III spoke of his work under Peaceful Paradise LLC to be ready for a retail establishment license, creating partnerships and finding locations and developing a workforce, diversity and charitable giving plan. He asked about license application dates and how the money will be spent.
- Shane Kelly spoke as a Hartford business owner who is interested in multiple licenses.

Andrea Comer – spoke about the name of the Outreach Committee, and suggested that it could be changed if the committee would want it changed to Marketing and Outreach, but it was established as the Outreach Committee originally by vote of the Council.

4. & 5. Coming back to the ED report and committee reports (items 4 and 5 on the agenda).

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- e. Policy Committee Edwin Shirley, Chair
Edwin Shirley reported on the work of the Finance Committee and the types of documents that the group would want required for the licensing process for the council to determine whether a Social Equity applicant fits the requirement. A discussion ensued. Andrea Comer noted that the full application will be developed and posted by the Department of Consumer Protection, and the Social Equity Council will vote on the components of the addendum of requirements for Social Equity Applicants (i.e. Income Requirements, Residency Requirements). The draft of that addendum components will be further considered in the committee meetings and discussed in the December 2021 Social Equity Council meeting and the various components will be up for a vote by the Council.
- f. Workforce Committee Kelli-Marie Valleries, Chair
Kelli-Marie Valleries spoke of the work from the Workforce committee and the resource of the Statewide Governor's Workforce Council. The Office of Workforce Strategy is the staff for that board. The group has a strategy for delivering education and training programs for industries where there are job opportunities. She explained that they are working identify industry needs, to develop sector based training programs. She asked about funding (and when it would be available) from SEC to get training programs up and running. A discussion ensued.

5. From the Executive Director Ginne-Rae Clay, Interim Executive Director
Ginne-Rae Clay spoke of the RFP for the study work that will be done. She spoke of her work to add staff to the Social Equity Council with interviews being scheduled and that the first group of staff is expected to be in place by January. She has been delivering webinars and meeting presentations to groups who have requested updates. A media advisory was sent regarding public speaking opportunities at this and the December meeting. A discussion ensued.

State Senator Gary Whitfield gave an encouraging message to the Council and reiterated the importance of the work to bring benefits to the Disproportionately Impacted Communities.

9. For the Good of the Order – New Business, Updates and Information
There was none.

10. Adjourn
A motion was made by Melissa McCaw to adjourn the meeting. Kelli Vallieres seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

Minutes are a draft until approved at a subsequent meeting