

STATE OF CONNECTICUT | SOCIAL EQUITY COUNCIL

January 4, 2022 Special Meeting 10 A.M.
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

MINUTES (DRAFT)

A special meeting of the Social Equity Council (SEC) was held virtually via Zoom on January 4, 2022.

This meeting was recorded by CT-N - To watch, visit:
<http://ct-n.com/ctnplayer.asp?odID=19229>

MEETING MATERIALS (drafts) are posted with the agenda, at:
https://portal.ct.gov/social-equity-council/Social-Equity-Council-Information/Articles/January-4-2022-Agenda---Council-Meeting?language=en_US
[Minutes - 12/7/2021](#)
[Technical Assistance Outreach Framework](#)
[DCP-SEC Application Extension Request Approved letter from DCP](#)

1. Call to order and welcome

Meeting was called to order by Andréa Comer at 10:01 a.m.

2. Attendance

Council members present:

Marilyn Alverio
Corrie Betts
Andréa Comer
Avery Gaddis
Michael Jefferson
David Lehman
Melissa McCaw
Ojala Naeem
Kelli Vallieres
Joseph Williams
Christine Shaw (Designee for Shawn Wooden)

Council members absent:

- Ramón Arroyo
- Fabian Durango
- Subira Gordon
- Edwin Shirley

SEC staff presenting: Ginne-Rae Clay, Interim Executive Director, and Jennifer Edwards, Program Manager

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes (12/7/2021)

Andréa Comer asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December meeting on 12/7/2021.

Motion -Corey Betts
2nd – Joe Williams

Discussion – one edit was requested. 1. Change attendance for Christine Shaw to ‘in person’.

All In Favor - All.
Nays - None
Abstentions - None
Motion passed

The minutes were approved, with that one change.

4. From the Executive Director Ginne-Rae Clay, Interim Executive Director

Ginne-Rae Clay spoke of her work to add staff to the Social Equity Council and introduced project manager, Jennifer Edwards. She described recent SEC outreach events and media interviews,

Ginne-Rae Clay described the Technical Assistance and Business Accelerator Plan outline of programming, supportive services and business resource information. She reported a budget of a million dollars to host and support technical assistance and business acceleration for the rest of the year, with the funding and other resources used for marketing, training and workshops, consulting services, such as accounting, legal, and startup information for cannabis businesses and general business information support. She spoke of interactive events and webinars specifically.

In addition to the supportive services that will be offered, a call center will be opened, so that individuals will have a hotline to call for questions that they may have.

a.Resolution: Technical Assistance Plan Approval

Andréa Comer asked for a motion to approve the Technical Assistance Plan.

Motion - Joe Williams
2nd – Michael Jefferson

Discussion – Christine Shaw asked about the \$1M for Technical Assistance for FY2023, and what is included? Ginne-Rae Clay answered that access to capital and workforce development efforts will be separate from this proposal. A discussion

ensued about the work managed through the SEC office and resources from outside organizations and service providers. Ginne-Rae Clay described how supportive services will be presented to those who want to get into the cannabis market. She explained there will be a webinars with information and a full marketing effort to let people know how to find that information. A discussion ensued about the importance of the online website with information and webinar recordings.

All In Favor - All
Nays - None
Abstentions - None
Motion passed

5. Committee Reports / Requests for Action

a. Outreach Committee Marilyn Alverio & Subira Gordon, Co-Chairs

Marilyn Alverio said that at the next upcoming meeting, the committee plans to continue to develop the marketing & outreach strategy which includes a summary of work the committee wants to engage in.

b. Finance Committee Christine Shaw, Chair

Christine Shaw spoke of the biennial budget for FY23. OPM asked for recommendations for adjustments to the budget. The adjustments will reflect the learning of the need for Technical Assistance and Workforce Development. Working with Interim ED, Ginne-Rae Clay and with OPM, DECD, SEC, DCP staff, Chair Shaw has focused on where there might be additional expenditures for both the SEC and the Office of SEC as well as the costs that have been allocated to the various state agencies. Total State Agency Related Expenditures are approximately at \$22.7M for F23. The council costs are approximately at \$3.6M. The estimates will continue to be refined as other statutory responsibilities are developed and resources are identified.

All told, the available revenues to cover cannabis related expenses for FY23, is expected to stand at \$33.4M.

Secretary Melissa McCaw noted that over two years, for purposes of our work in FY22 and FY23, revenue is less than the cost. FY22 cost was almost \$22M, FY23 is expected to be \$22.4M Over two years, that would be almost \$55M in costs, with revenues expected at \$38M.

c. Governance Committee Ojala Naeem, Chair

Ojala Naeem stated that at upcoming meetings, the Governance Committee will address Ethics Training for councilmembers and the committee structure. The process for review of the interim Executive Director will start in late January. She reported that the SEC MOU with DECD is completed. A discussion ensued about delegation of authority and governance documents.

d. Policy Committee Edwin Shirley, Chair

No update.

e. Workforce Committee Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Chair

Kelli-Marie Vallieres spoke of the work at the Office of Workforce Strategy researching resources and needs to support the industry to help ensure that applicants are utilizing quality training programs in Connecticut, that there is a wide range of training programs that lead to jobs, and that there is a clear career ladder for workers – for Cultivation, Production, Distribution and Retail. A discussion ensued about timing for the training programs and how those programs intersect with the workforce plans.

6. Public Speaking - Members of the public addressed the Social Equity Council during the public speaking period. The following spoke at the meeting.

John Haddock asked a number of business structure/ licensing questions. 1. Can an individual be on more than one application, and can he have more than one person apply from one household under social equity? 2. Can a parent company have other companies that goes after licenses? 3. Can you have two different organizations utilize the same facility?

William Hartley criticized that persons convicted for cannabis were specifically left out of the socially equity program. He suggested this group be allowed to participate.

Tyler Crespo spoke on behalf of Ripple Wellness, and said he has researched the real estate market. He has found it hard to find a space because of zoning and limited DIA areas. He looks forward to working with a location that will host.

Alexandra Williams with partners, Cole Williams, Kevin Willaby and John Handel, spoke of their plans as micro-cultivators and retail establishment. They encouraged the council to continue the process to start the recreational marijuana industry.

Emily Sabo UFCW local 919 with local 371 and Jessica Petronella spoke of their interest in working with the workforce development committee regarding training for cannabis workers and the benefits of a union to workers.

Tom Antonez spoke of his work with John Haddock and his difficulty finding the right property. He asked several questions about square footage and security requirements. Chair Comer mentioned the best place to submit questions is to email: dcp.cannabis@ct.gov And Ginne-Rae Clay mentioned the SEC contact email is: sec@ct.gov

Ivelisse Correa spoke of the role of the SEC and criticized the lottery fee.

Ameilia Teape spoke of her interest in entrepreneurship and community and asked about requirements for a social equity application. Chair Comer mentioned the best place to submit questions is to email: dcp.cannabis@ct.gov

Louis Rinaldi is a medical patient. He raised the issue of yeast and mold standards in Connecticut and was critical of the changes to Connecticut testing standards. He suggested large producers subsidize testing costs for micro-producers, and suggested an ombudsman-led patient advocacy council for the medical program. He asked about the RFP process for contracts going forward.

Olivia Rinkes suggested inclusion of people who have criminal records in the social equity program. She asked about the mold level changes at DCP.

7. For the Good of the Order – New Business, Updates and Information

Andréa Comer noted that with the approval of the Technical Assistance Plan, the DCP starts a 30 day window for them to post the applications. A timeline will be provided asap to give clarity to when each additional step for the application process will take place.

8. Adjourn

Andréa Comer asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion -Michael Jefferson
2nd – Corrie Betts

All In Favor - All
Nays - None
Abstentions - None
Motion passed

Meeting was adjourned at 12:29 P.M.

The next meeting of the Social Equity Council will be held on February 1, 2022.

Minutes are a draft until approved at a subsequent meeting