

1/11/2017 MINUTES

**WESTERN CT ECONOMIC
ADVISORY GROUP**

Held at the Comstock Community Center
180 School Rd, Wilton, CT 06897

MEMBERS

Janice Chrzescijanek	Bethel Economic Development Commission
Joe Ercolano	Small Business Development Center
Hal Kurfehs	VP Coldwell Banker Commercial, Brookfield Economic Development Commission

ALSO ATTENDING

Tom Long, Workplace Inc.; Ed Musante, Norwalk Chamber of Commerce; Betsy Paynter, Brookfield Economic Development; Liz Stocker, Norwalk Economic Development; WestCOG staff members Elizabeth Esposito and Will Kenny.

WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 PM by Associate Planner Elizabeth Esposito.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

DISCUSSION

Staff presented the results of the Survey. There were 86 responses at the time of the survey, although more have been received. All towns in the region had at least one respondent. The majority of responses can from the region's 3 cities and the town of Bethel. The presentation highlighted responses that identified the regions strengths and weaknesses. The presentation will be available online and the full results will be made available to members.

Attendees discussed next steps with the survey. The group reached consensus that the survey will remain open while the Focus Groups are being held. A larger effort would be put forth to send our press releases about the survey to local papers, the Business Journal, and the Society for Human Resources.

Attendees discussed the format, topics, moderators, and attendees of the Focus Groups. The group reached consensus that more time is needed to prepare for the Focus Groups, the scheduled ones will be postponed until further notice.

After further consideration and in light of survey responses, the topics of the Focus Groups were changed. The list of Focus Groups now stands as:

- Real Estate
- Small Business, Entrepreneurs, and Workforce (2 meetings)
- Health Technology
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Finance Technology (Fin. Tech.)

Moderators were identified for Real Estate and the 2 Small Business Groups. Suggestions for moderators of the other Focus Groups should be sent to Liz Esposito. One meeting and a central location were decided upon for all Focus Groups except Small Business. Small Business will have 2 meetings, one in Danbury and one in Stamford.

To improve attendance at the Focus Groups, the group chose to invite participants and also keep the meeting open to the public. Instructions will follow via email.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Moderators: Suggestions for Moderators should be sent to Liz Esposito by January 27th. The moderator and Ms. Esposito will then schedule the Focus Group.

Next Meeting: They next meeting will be held after the first focus group.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM.