

APPROVED Minutes

for the 9/12/2019 Regular Meeting
Comstock Community Center, 180 School Road, Wilton, CT 06897
Chairman Rudy Marconi - Vice Chairman Jim Marpe

Members Attending

Rudy Marconi	Town of Ridgefield - Absent
Jim Marpe	Town of Westport
PJ Prunty	Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce
Brian Griffin	Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce - Absent
Robert E. Mallozzi	Bankwell Financial Group, Inc
Jackie Lightfield	Norwalk 2.0
Tracey Alston	Eversource
Sean Loughran	Western CT University - Absent
Terrence Cheng	UConn- Stamford - Absent
Andrea Rynn	Western CT Health Network - Absent
Tom Long	The WorkPlace
Hal Kurfefs	Coldwell Banker Commercial
Lisa Scails	Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut
Betsy Paynter	CityCenter Danbury - Absent
Mendi Blue-Paca	Fairfield County Community Foundation - Absent
Lisa Mercurio	Business Council of Fairfield County

OTHERS ATTENDING

WestCOG staff members in attendance were Mike Towle, Nick Trabka and Victoria Ricks. Trayvonn Diaz, Outreach Assistant from Senator Murphy's office and Sara Harris, Operations Director in Westport were also in attendance.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:11pm by Vice-Chairman Jim Marpe. On a motion made by Jackie Lightfield from Norwalk 2.0 and seconded by Robert Mallozzi from Bankwell Financial Group, the agenda was amended to add an Action Item to include approval of the June 27th meeting minutes.

ACTION ITEM:

Approval of June 27, 2019 Minutes: After review and on a motion made by Jackie Lightfield from Norwalk 2.0 and seconded by Hal Kurfes from Coldwell Banker Commercial, the minutes of the 6/27/2019 meeting were unanimously approved.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Federal Designation of EDD Status Update: WestCOG Deputy Director Mike Towle gave an update on the application for the *Economic Development District designation*. EDD designation is critical for continued WestCOG efforts in economic development planning. The EDA has provided limited response on EDD Designation status. WestCOG will continue to regularly reach out to EDA for status updates, as the response was expected sometime in September.

Action: WestCOG will seek EDD designation, and if successful begin the process for EDA funding.

CEDS Update Process: WestCOG Deputy Director Mike Towle gave an update on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy plan. WestCOG provided an update on the Performance Measures and the statistics collected thus far. WestCOG received one written response on comments on the goal's objectives, and actions outlined in the CEDS. These comments were in support of the existing plan. No edits to the CEDS will occur at this time.

Regarding the CEDS data update, WestCOG only updated the data associated with the performance measures outlined in the CEDS. The results of which are outlined in the WCEDD Performance Measures Handout. The WCEDD provide comments recommendations on the findings.

Action: WestCOG will address these comments and append this update to the existing CEDS for public access.

Action: WestCOG will look into incorporating 100% of the CEDS policies into its POCD. This includes a policy on Brownfields and another on workforce development training.

Legislative Session Updates: WestCOG Deputy Director Mike Towle gave an update on WestCOG's Legislative Committee meeting. The priorities outlined for the group include transportation infrastructure, efficiency review of the state budget, increased diversity for funding for the towns in our region, and the opioid drug epidemic. The legislative agenda developed by the WestCOG Legislative Committee are a work in progress, and the committee is open to receive concepts from the WCEDD.

Member Updates: Tracey Alston from Eversource gave an update on a partnership between Eversource and Ørsted for off-shore investment in wind technology. Ørsted would be open to present to the WCEDD. Lisa Scails from the Cultural Alliance of Western CT gave an update from the CT Office of the Arts Legislation to develop criteria for municipalities to have designated cultural districts. Tom Long from the Workplace gave an update on federal funding to state governments to get a better idea of overdose data and ways to fight the opioid epidemic. He also gave an update on the creation of a jobs-reentry program.

Upcoming Opportunities WestCOG is attempting to establish a partnership with Conway Graduate School to perform an Agriculture Viability/Implementation Study. The study would look at a whole variety of agricultural options, and identify methods to connect to the large markets

present in the region and within NY. If the project is established, the results of which would be presented during the next WCEDD meeting.

WestCOG Deputy Director Mike Towle also wants to locate a speaker for the next meeting to discuss financial patterns for the region.

Other Business

There was no other business discussed.

Upcoming Meetings

The next meeting will be scheduled in December/January.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 2:09pm.