



# WCEDD Meeting Agenda

October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 1:00 pm | Web Conference

Action Items in Red.

## Members Attending

- Rudy Marconi ..... Town of Ridgefield
- Jim Marpe ..... Town of Westport
- PJ Prunty ..... Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce
- Brian Griffin ..... Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce
- 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
- Tom Long ..... The WorkPlace - Absent
- Hal Kurfehs ..... 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 – Absent

John Varamo with Stamford Economic Development attended

Francis Pickering, Mike Towle, Todd Fontanella, and Tucker Beckett were also in attendance with WestCOG.

## Meeting Call to Order 1:09

## Public Participation

No public comment provided

## Approve 4/9/2020 Meeting Minutes

A motion by Hal Kurfehs seconded by Jackie Lightfield. The 4/9/2020 Minutes were unanimously approved.

*For language assistance or other accommodations, contact Western Connecticut Council of Governments at least five business days prior to the meeting at [help@westcog.org](mailto:help@westcog.org). Para asistencia con el idioma y otras adaptaciones, por favor póngase en contacto con WestCOG por lo menos cinco días hábiles antes de la reunión al [help@westcog.org](mailto:help@westcog.org). Para obter assistência língua ou outras acomodações, entre em contato com WestCOG pelo menos cinco dias úteis antes da reunião em [help@westcog.org](mailto:help@westcog.org). Pour obtenir de l'aide linguistique ou d'autres mesures d'adaptation, contactez WestCOG au moins cinq jours ouvrables avant la réunion à [help@westcog.org](mailto:help@westcog.org).*

## Approve 8/13/2020 Meeting Minutes

A motion by Hal Kurfehs seconded by Jackie Lightfield. The 8/13/2020 Minutes were unanimously approved.

## EDD Federal Designation – Grants Update

[EDA Planning Program](#). WestCOG has a sample grant application, to start building this. Expected to apply in November and may lead towards a potential part time or fulltime economic development staffer. The funding (estimated \$70-\$80k annually) would go towards staff time to:

- Coordinate the WCEDD meetings
- Engage with communities and WCEDD members closely.
- Grant applications.
- CEDs Updates.
- Brownfield opportunities (If approved)

[EDA Cares Act Recovery Assistance](#). Francis spoke on this grant application. Following a request for more detailed project descriptions. The following projects were identified.

- High-speed wired and mobile broadband deployment assistance
- Create and adopt a distributed electric generation plan – has been looked at for cost savings, but this is thinking about for more resiliency. Or environmental sustainability.  
**Note:** Tracey Alston mentioned the potential to bring in a generation distribution group to inform some of the requirements.
- Regional outdoor recreation/tourism clearinghouse and portal – There has been a large demand for our recreational areas. The data exists this project would centralize

1. **WestCOG will share the EDA CARES Act letters with the WCEDD.**

## CEDS Updates

- Updates have been delayed due to staff time constraints.
- Updates are expected for completion by November.
- Data updates will be provided within a google sheet.

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/184XbSRcwF9pAO8rpvIFY6o7uutH3y8RD4L\\_TdJnwp5k/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/184XbSRcwF9pAO8rpvIFY6o7uutH3y8RD4L_TdJnwp5k/edit?usp=sharing)

Francis Pickering shares that the next CEDS update may be looking at a new economic climate. Transit ridership for example, is changing rapidly in the pandemic. Maybe we need better connectivity. Do we not need as much transit? How do we change our transit systems?

## WestCOG Brownfield Support (Mike Towle)

**Assessment Applications.** WestCOG is working with Redding, Danbury, and UConn to achieve EPA grant funds to assess and clean properties

**Inventory Needed.** We can learn this with an inventory program set up with CBI. Will be defining “Brownfield” within that initiative.

**Newtown Fairfield Hills Campus.** Newtown is very interested due to their Fairfield hills campus. Not interested in the CBI.

**Revolving Grants Loan Program.** Based on inventory. Decided by the COG. Would establish a WestCOG program.

WestCOG does not have an active inventory of known brownfield or contaminated sites. There are inventories of suspected sites.

Brownfields typically refer to sites that are underutilized. Often not developed based on fear that it is contaminated.

To what extent should WestCOG develop their own programs. Grant assistance, Revolving Grants Program, Navigating Technicalities? Current plan is to explore at small scale grant opportunities and develop an inventory.

The start of a WestCOG Brownfield Program should be shared with the COG.

## Long Term Recovery Update

WestCOG is involved in two Regional Long-Term Recovery (LTR) Committees. These LTR Committees are intended to identify gaps to getting CT back where it was before the Pandemic.

- The state is providing consultants to assist with economic recovery. Francis can speak on this activity

The State hired the Global Resilience Group to develop economic recovery plans. This is long term planning. Will have reports completed by December 31. WestCOG will be serving our contact information

- North LTR has been active.
- South LTR Economic Recovery subcommittee for Wednesday, October 21, 2020 @ 1:00 p.m. Todd Fontanella is the contact. Send culture subgroup contact information to John

## Expanding Membership

Who might be missing that should be present? Who should invite? Have this done through the WestCOG and have the CEO’s encourage, participation

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/17ij\\_ZAeMMHSV2iLBBkuRMm8IMtb4ZNRZEISU94ysqgq/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/17ij_ZAeMMHSV2iLBBkuRMm8IMtb4ZNRZEISU94ysqgq/edit?usp=sharing)

We have representation from geography and north and south side

## Other Business

DMV is now caught up on their back log. Still by appointment only.

## Upcoming Meetings

Jan 14, 2021

### Adjournment

210 adjournment

DRAFT