



WCEDD **Approved** Meeting Minutes

November 10, 2021, 2021 at 1:00 pm | Web Conference

Note: Meeting details such as member attendance, call to order and adjournment times, and action approving previous meeting minutes is not available.

Members

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| - Rudy Marconi | Town of Ridgefield |
| - Brian Griffin | Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce |
| - Robert E. Mallozzi | Bankwell Financial Group, Inc |
| - Hal Kurfehs | Coldwell Banker Commercial |
| - Lisa Scails | Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut |
| - Thomas Madden | City of Stamford |
| - Chrystal Preszler | Economic & Community Development, Newtown |

Francis Pickering, Mike Towle, Betsy Paynter, and Cricket Carpenter were also in attendance with WestCOG.

Meeting Call to Order: 1:05

Public Participation: There was no public participation.

Welcome Betsy Paynter as WestCOG's Project Manager

WestCOG Deputy Director Mike Towle introduced Betsy Paynter.

Approve 07/15/2021 Meeting Minutes:

In discussion Francis Pickering raised the point that the WCEDD can consider instead recording meeting notes, which would not require District approval. After review and on a motion made by Hal Kurfehs and seconded by Thomas Madden the 07/15/21 meeting 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. 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. Para obter assistência língua ou outras acomodações, entre em contato com WestCOG pelo menos cinco dias úteis antes da reunião em 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.

Approval of Maritime Aquarium ARPA Tourism Project

Mike Towle provided an update regarding this proposed project. It is currently not ready for approval. WestCOG is providing support for the Maritime Aquarium to put their application.

Action. Brian Griffon will reach out to the Maritime Aquarium.

This led to discussion regarding outreach to organizations to apply for EDA funds and seek approval from WCEDD.

Lisa Scails raised a project concept to create a cultural map system using GIS. Francis proposed to include other tourism factors as well. Chrystal noted the CTVisit.com site which provides similar services.

Action. WestCOG will set up a time to speak with Lisa Scails to discuss project concepts.

Rudy Marconi raised the question regarding 501c3 organizations and if they are eligible to receive municipal formula funds. Francis shared that the eligibility is highly dependent on the use of the funds.

Action. WestCOG will research the types of funds available to 501c3 organizations with ARPA formula funds.

Vice Chair Appointment

Rudy shared that Jim Marpe did not run for reelection and is now no longer vice chair of the WCEDD. WestCOG is to appoint a new chair at the November COG meeting. This contact does not have to be a CEO, however connections to the COG and representation of both North and South of the district is desirable. Most important is an interest to engage with the WCEDD.

Action. Betsy Paynter will email WestCOG CEOs to gauge interest for potential vice chairs of the WCEDD or to recommend a contact

CARES Act Funds Update

Francis provided an update of WestCOG's status regarding CARES act funds. These funds are expected in a December timeframe. Will include efforts in broadband and a CEDS update.

Build Back Better Regional Challenge

Francis provided an update regarding the BBB grant application. WestCOG, on Behalf of the City of Stamford, applied for funding in the BBB RC program. The Data Science Innovation Regional Campus Initiative will lay the groundwork for Connecticut to become the Innovation State, a place that is the preferred location for corporate headquarters, research and development units, startups, and technology jobs. The project will support bottom-up economic development by advancing equity, helping workers to develop in-demand skills, and creating good-paying jobs.

FEMA Grant Project Matching

Francis provided an update on the status of submitted projects. Over 300+ projects were submitted to the state and are being categorized for recommended funding sources.

Action. WestCOG will be receiving this list of projects. This will be useful to apply for various grants.

Next Generation Regional Sector Partnership

Francis provided an update; it is expected the next meeting is scheduled for December.

WCEDD Member Representation

Rudy shared that the COG will appoint members to the WCEDD to fill existing vacant spaces.

Action. WestCOG will provide a list of potential candidates for WestCOG's council to consider.

Process for Grant Project Approvals

Mike provides a recommendation on how to handle project approvals through the WCEDD for EDA funded projects that do not align with the quarterly cycle of the meetings. A tiered approach was accepted such that, the WCEDD annual schedule is made available, and applicants aim to obtain support and approval within the quarterly system. If required, the WCEDD will approve projects via email. If discussion is needed, WestCOG staff would coordinate a special meeting for the WCEDD.

This led to a discussion on the types of grants available and what grants this rule applies to. Chrystal and Rudy requested the COG provide a list distilled list/table/spreadsheet of funding opportunities timelines, requirements, topical areas to assist municipalities strategically pursue grant funds.

Action. WestCOG will distribute existing ARPA grant lists and resources.

Action. WestCOG will create an inventory/summary of funding opportunities. ??

Other Business

No business raised.

Upcoming Meetings

January 13th, 2022, 1:00 PM

Adjournment

2:12 Motion made by Hal Kurfehs and seconded by Robert Malozzi.