

Western Connecticut

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT



WCEDD Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 10 at 1:00 pm

Meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

Members in attendance

- Shannon O'Toole Giandurco Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce, Executive Director,
- Andrea Rynn Nuvance Healthcare
- Leah Kagan City of Stamford, Economic Development Director
- Ashley Gaudiano Chief Operating Officer United Way of Coastal and Western Connecticut
- Jennifer Orlikoff Stamford UConn
- Janice Chrzescijanek Town of Bethel, Economic Development Director
- Eric Erdtmann Fairfield County Bank
- Maura Ruby Danbury Chamber of Commerce
- Rudy Marconi Town of Ridgefield
- Julia Pemberton Town of Redding
- Zhara Salehi UConn
- Hal Kurfels Scalzo Realty

Mike Towle, Francis Pickering and Betsy Paynter were in attendance from WestCOG

Meeting Call to Order

Rudy Marconi called the meeting to order at 1:04pm

Public Participation

There was no public participation

Approval of April 2025 Meeting Minutes

Motion: *Andrea Rynn made a motion to approve the April minutes, Ashley Gaudiano second the motion, all in favor.*

Farm Viability – Next Steps

Zahra Salehi, UConn PhD student. Provided an update on viable land for agriculture.

Marking sites for farmland, there will be some municipal properties that could be activated. Farmers are available with UConn Extension and Aspetuck Land Trust.

Andrea Rynn shares that New Milford Hospital can connect as a food purchaser. Danbury Chamber of Commerce is willing to support outreach and call to action.

United Way ALICE update

Ashley Gaudino, Chief Operating Officer United Way, provides an update of Coastal and Western Connecticut, followed by questions and discussion.

Stamford Economic Development Update

Leah Kagan, Stamford Economic Development Director discussing Building a Fintech Business Sector in Stamford followed by discussion.

Danbury Economic Development Update:

No Update, will reschedule with Farley Santos

Member Discussion

Betsy Paynter shares update on preparing for the next CEDS update.

Upcoming Meetings

- Quarterly 2025 WCEDD meeting schedule, 1pm via WestCOG Zoom:
 - October 9, 2025, at 1pm
 - January 8, 2026 at 1pm

Adjournment

Rudy Marconi made motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:52

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.