

Governor's Council on Women and Girls Meeting
Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity & Workforce Equity
February 8, 2022 @ 3pm
Virtual Meeting

Minutes

- I. Lt. Governor offers greetings and opening remarks
 - a. Acknowledges Black History Month and encourages support for our state's black-owned businesses.
 - b. Notes that DECD will provide an update on resources available to women-owned businesses.
 - c. Reminds people to post any announcements in the chat function.

- II. Subcommittee Updates
 - a. Lt. Governor notes that the Financial Literacy subgroup is led by Kathleen Titsworth from the Department of Banking and Catherine Blinder from the Department of Consumer Protection and introduces C. Blinder for an update.
 - b. C. Blinder explains that the work group is preparing a survey for the full council to collect resources on any financial literacy training programs and speakers with a hope to create a financial literacy database of resources. She further notes that they are also working on preparing an excel document with national and statewide resources that offer financial literacy training.
 - c. Lt. Governor introduces Subcommittee Co-Chair Office of Health Strategy Executive Director Victoria Veltri, to share about CoveredCT.
 - d. Dir. Veltri presents:
 - i. Explains that CoveredCT is an expansion of healthcare coverage eligibility for caretaker relatives with children and adults to up to 175% of the federal poverty level.
 - ii. Notes that apx. 30,000 more people may enroll in healthcare plans offered at Access Health CT through the exchange, covering any remaining premiums and out of pocket costs, and further notes that dental and non-emergency medical transportation coverage would be available through Medicaid.
 - iii. Explains that the State can apply for federal funds through a waiver program; that OHS, DSS, Access Health and the Insurance Department have worked on a proposed waiver application; and that public hearings on the application will be held on 2/10 and 2/16 from 9:30 – noon.
 - iv. Lt. Governor notes that coverage through Access Health is also available for small businesses and that they are trying to get the word out.
 - v. Dir. Veltri further notes that since ARPA passed the cost of coverage has come down on the exchange and she encourages people to look at enrollment eligibility

- e. Lt. Governor introduces DECD Deputy Commissioner Alexandra Daum for updates on resources available for women-owned businesses, noting that we will also hear from DECD's Sheila Hummel and Susan Chen.
- f. A. Daum notes that the goal is to make sure women owned businesses are getting the most access they can to the many resources available to them. She further notes that there are supports for minority owned businesses as well.
- g. S. Hummel and S. Chen present (see Attachment 1), including:
 - i. S. Hummel notes that an RFP was awarded to National Development Council (NDC) and contract is being negotiated and prepared.
 - 1. S. Hummel explains that this is a hub and spoke model – NDC will serve as one point of entry for small businesses for both financial assistance and technical assistance - community lenders and technical providers that want to participate will create a profile and businesses will be matched up
 - 2. Lt. Governor asks if organizations like SAMA, HEDCO, and WBDC are involved, given some existing trusting relationships, and S. Hummel explains that they will be able to sign up as providers
 - 3. S. Hummel notes that if a business is not matched up with a lender, then a technical provider will be assigned to help them with the process and that the system includes monitoring and accountability to make sure that people get a response
 - 4. Lt. Governor notes that when PPP was available a lot of small business and women- and minority- owned businesses were left behind due to lack of technical assistance
 - 5. S. Hummel notes that 50% of the financial assistance will be directed to minority-, women-, disabled-, veteran-owned businesses and businesses located in distressed municipalities
 - ii. S. Hummel describes second RFP to supplement the loan-based program
 - 1. 50% of the financial assistance will be directed to minority-, women-, disabled-, veteran-owned businesses and businesses located in distressed municipalities
 - 2. Allocating \$50 million over 5 years
 - 3. Lt. Governor notes, and S. Hummel confirms, that this is to help people with an idea for a business even if they haven't already been in business – start ups
 - iii. S. Hummel highlights some technical providers and particularly notes:
 - 1. WBDC's Equity Match Grant program and thanks Lt. Governor for being so instrumental with the program - Lt. Governor mentions that the current grant application round ends February 13th
 - 2. HEDCO's minority business revolving loan fund is still available – up to \$500,000 at 4% for 10yrs
 - iv. S. Chen begins presenting at slide 14 and notes the enterprise zone certification program with extra financial benefits

- v. S. Chen describes one stop business portal at <https://business.ct.gov>, including the virtual assistant chat function
- vi. Lt. Governor thanks DECD and notes how important it is to know whether the town or city you are in is a distressed municipality

III. Presentation from Steering Committee Member

- a. Lt. Governor introduces Felicia Rubinstein, Founder and Chief Collaborator of HAYVN in Darian, CT.
- b. F. Rubinstein presents (see Attachment 2)
- c. Lt. Governor thanks F. Rubenstein and all Steering Committee members and Council members

IV. Announcements

- a. Lt. Governor shares that we are planning a Black History Month women’s leadership panel for Monday February 28th at 2pm themed “Preserving Our History; Preparing for Our Future: A Conversation with Black Women Leaders in Education”.
- b. Lt. Governor reminds that the 2022 subcommittee meeting schedule is posted on the Council website; that the next subcommittee meeting is March 15th at 3pm; and that there is a full council meeting in April.
- c. Lt. Governor looks for announcements in chat and confirms there are none.

V. Adjournment

- a. Lt. Governor adjourns at apx. 3:53pm.

Attendance Report

Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz	Co-Chair
Exec. Dir. Victoria Veltri & Deputy Exec. Dir. Kim Martone	Office of Health Strategy, Co-Chair
Deputy Commissioner Shante Hanks	Department of Housing, Co-Chair
Commissioner Michelle Seagull	Department of Consumer Protection
Commissioner Amy Porter	Department of Aging & Disability Services
Deputy Commissioner Alexandra Daum	Department of Economic & Community Development
Kathleen Titsworth	Department of Banking