Commission on Connecticut’s Future

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 23, 2014
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Burroughs Community Center
Community Room
2470 Fairfield Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06605

Members Present: Commissioner Catherine Smith (Chair), John Harrity, Henry Lowendorf, Rich McCombs, Commissioner Sharon Palmer, Steve Paulone, Andrew Zehner

Meeting commenced at 9:07 AM

1.) Welcome by Commissioner Smith and Introductions
   a. Government funded research in the Department of Defense is often where innovation happens
   b. Emphasis in Connecticut should be on manufacturing commercialization (of that innovation as well as other academia-driven innovations)
   c. Small-midsize defense contractors sometimes have a hard time diversifying; may need support
3.) Presentation by Liddy Karter, Managing Director, Enhanced Capital Partners, “Status of Venture Investing in CT”
   a. Connecticut as a state drew 4th largest amount of capital until 2005, dropped to 20th
   b. Connecticut is now around 9th in the country because of investment in early stage companies
   c. Connecticut number 4 in the U.S. in dollars managed by venture capitalists
d. Need more angel groups in Connecticut, currently only 1

4.) Presentation by Dr. Heidi Garrett-Peltier, Assistant Research Professor, Political Economy Research Institute - University of Massachusetts, “Revitalizing Manufacturing: Climate Policy and Industrial Policy”
   a. A centralized electric grid is a national security threat
   b. Because of renewable commitments there is nearly a guaranteed demand for green technologies
   c. Renewable energy sources are more labor intensive, so a shift means more jobs created
   d. Challenge is to get those new green jobs in CT

5.) Presentation by Susan Winkler, Executive Director, Connecticut Insurance & Financial Services (IFS), “Strengthening and Advancing the Industry”
   a. Connecticut still a leader in insurance and a hub of talent in industry-related skills (actuaries, accountants, etc)
   b. Focus of the industry (through IFS) is on workforce development to ensure we stay competitive on talent

6.) Discussion of presentations by Commission members

Meeting adjourned at 12:02 PM.