

Board of Commissioners
Regular Business Meeting June 20, 2025
Minutes

PRESENT: F. Celeste Branham (Remote), Pamela Proulx-Curry, Kelly Day, Diane Lebson, Jenifer Tilton-Flood, William Guidon Jr., Kelsey Preecs, Janet May, Michael Williams, Chelsey Fortin-Trimble, Thomas Meuser

STAFF AND GUESTS: Lucy Martin, Jamie McFaul, Tilan Copson, Michael Ashmore, Kofi Bofah, Brittany Gleixner-Hayat, John Portela (MVF, Remote), Steve Niles (Goodwill NE), Maureen Kendzierski (Remote)

PUBLIC COMMENT: Steve Niles from Goodwill Northern NE thanked the Commission for the approval of their application. Steve Niles has had the opportunity to advocate for AmeriCorps to Senator Collins' staff and discussed the impact of OMB on AmeriCorps and Conservation Corps in particular. One of their partners also has a personal relationship with Senators King and Collins and will be engaging with Goodwill Northern New England in the coming weeks on the importance of AmeriCorps. Steve expressed excitement at the prospect of working with the Commission once again and the work they hope to accomplish with the support of the Commission.

CALL TO ORDER

Pamela Proulx-Curry (chair-elect) called the meeting to order at 10:08 AM. After the introductions of Commissioners, staff, and guests, the quiz answer was given. No Commissioners answered the quiz question prior to the meeting. The protocols for a hybrid business meeting were covered. The chair did remind members that conflicts of interest should be declared as agenda items come up.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Jacinda Goodwin has ended her service with the Commission.

The Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability Task Force (IEA) is introducing a new practice in the Announcements section of the Committee meeting to recognize a group represented in the state of Maine.

The IEA Task Force recognized that June is Pride Month, Men's Health Awareness Month, and Children's Awareness Month and that multiple organizations exist within the state of Maine to support mental and physical health including Northern Light and the National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI).

There are also Pride celebrations in the form of parades, dances, festivals, musical performances, etc. throughout the month of June in Maine.

APPRECIATIONS: William Guidon Jr. appreciates the work of the Commission in their communication regarding federal issues

CONSENT AGENDA: MOVED by Chelsey Fortin-Trimble to approve the consent agenda. SECONDED by Michael Williams. Vote on the motion (roll call): in favor –Branham, Burke, Day, Fortin-Trimble, Guidon, Lebson, May, Meuser, Preecs, Proulx-Curry, Sullivan, Tilton-Flood, Williams. Opposed – none. Motion passed.

Under the motion, the following minutes were approved and reports accepted: Commission business meeting minutes of May 16, 2025 and Executive Committee reports from June 10, 2025.

PLANNING AND FUTURE INITIATIVES

Update on federal issues.

Preliminary injunction was afforded to Maine and the other states that were participating in the lawsuit. All grantees are reinstating their programs and members are back in service. Can process member hours for invoicing from grantees. Chelsey asked about the potential redistribution of the funds that MCC is not utilizing because they did not onboard all of the members that they have funding for. Michael clarified that funding cannot be moved from one grant to another for many of the funds because they are federally controlled but that there are some funds available in Formula funding so another competition could be run in the fall. Other ways to utilize the additional funds was also discussed including expanding current programs later in their grant cycle.

Discussion regarding FY25 funding, reallocation, and use and how it would be impacted by future federal decisions was held.

Further discussion was held on other funding from the federal government and how loss of that funding would impact the operations of Volunteer Maine.

The Commissioners spoke about the rescission package that is currently being assessed by the federal government.

Foundation.

John Portela reported on their monthly meeting. None of the grant applications succeeded. Moving forward, the Foundation is going to have a conversation with each funder to ask for feedback on grant applications. John noted that because of the uncertainty of federal funding, many private and philanthropic funders are receiving an overwhelming number of

applicants. The Foundation is also establishing a joint committee to reach the agreed upon amount of 50,000 raised by MVF for MCCS and discussed other tactics for reaching the \$50,000 that was agreed upon in their MOU. John mentioned increasing the size of the Board and adding members who have experience fundraising.

Commissioner Recruitment.

Need to resubmit for Commissioner status and there are also several vacancies. One opening for a youth representative.

Motion to take a straw poll that the Executive Committee can make a decision on Vice President once nominated.

MOVED by Chelsey Fortin-Trimble to take a straw poll that the Executive Committee can approve Vice President nominee. SECONDED by Michael Williams. Vote on the motion (roll call): in favor –Branham, Burke, Day, Fortin-Trimble, Guidon, Lebson, May, Meuser, Preecs, Proulx-Curry, Sullivan, Tilton-Flood, Williams. Opposed – none. Motion passed.

Ad Hoc committee for organizing the September Retreat was established and discussion around rescheduling the cancelled luncheon for the fall was held.

FOCUS ON MISSION RESPONSIBILITIES

BUSINESS REPORTS

Public Policy. Advocating LD876 and 1344 and creating a letter that will be sent to minority and majority leadership on the importance of those two bills. Working on setting up meetings with members of the Appropriations Committee to showcase the value of Volunteer Maine. Going to be reaching out to Commissioners to understand their potential connections with the State government. Future collaboration and relationship building with the Chambers of Commerce was discussed as an avenue for funding the Maine Climate Corps and the Service Fellows. A meeting between Peggy Rotundo and Britt Gleixner-Hayat is also being planned in the coming weeks.

Grant Selection and Performance Task Force.

William Guindon Jr. (Bill) moved to thank grant application reviewers.

MOVED by William Guindon Jr. (Bill) SECONDED by Chelsey. VOTE In favor: Branham, Day, Fortin-Trimble, Guindon Jr., Lebson, May, Meuser, Preecs, Proulx-Curry, Sullivan, Tilton-Flood, and Williams. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion to empower the staff to transition and submit the continuation application to new applications.

MOVED by William Guindon Jr. (Bill) SECONDED by Chelsey. VOTE In favor: Branham, Day, Fortin-Trimble, Guindon Jr., Lebson, May, Meuser, Preecs, Proulx-Curry, Sullivan, Tilton-Flood, and Williams. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Committee. The Public Policy, Communications, and Financial task forces have been collaborating and working together on understanding the fiscal and political landscape that Volunteer Maine is experiencing. They note that people who are not direct Commissioners are also able to serve on Task Forces and asked Commissioners to invite others who might be interested in participating.

Communications Task Force (and Public Policy Task Force). Diane acknowledged Britt and Tilan's work on the Communications plan. Tilan reported on a proposed year-long communications plan called Serve Maine. Part of the communications plan includes having Brittany Gleixner-Hayat going on a listening tour throughout Maine as the new Executive Director. Tilan discussed how the document is a working document that will continuously evolve as Volunteer Maine makes further connections and identifies opportunities. Diane discussed how the goal is to reposition Volunteer Maine as the go-to for all volunteer initiatives and questions in the state of Maine. The new platform for locating volunteer opportunities, spearheaded by Volunteer Maine, Serve Maine, will be hosted on the Galaxy platform and launched at the Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference on August 6th.

Feedback on the Communications Plan was requested before July 3rd.

Service Programs Task Force. Kelsey reported on the Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference that will be on August 6th and that registration is live on the website. Kelsey invited the Commissioners to attend for visibility. Kelsey asked the Commissioners to assist in sourcing sponsors for the conference.

Motion to approve the new logo for the Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference was brought to the Commission for vote.

MOVED by Chelsey Fortin-Trimble SECONDED by Diane Lebson VOTE In favor: Branham, Day, Fortin-Trimble, Guindon Jr., Lebson, May, Meuser, Preecs, Proulx-Curry, Tilton-Flood, and Williams. The motion passed unanimously.

Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability. Each board meeting, the Task Force will highlight a sociodemographic in the state that is being celebrated that month and any events that are attributed to it. The Task Force continues to reach out to Wabanaki Reach to introduce their programming efforts to the Commission. Initiative to assess the distribution of census categories across the state of Maine and how the Commission reflects those categories.

Financial Task Force. No substantial update but that it is the end of the fiscal year. Reports are currently unavailable in Excel. Doing a review on all the reports currently being done by Volunteer Maine.

AmeriCorps (federal agency). No federal agency update.

Commission staff reports. Michael will be gone for two weeks at the end of July

BUSINESS WRAP UP

Pamela checked in on the hybrid meeting experience and all members that were online reported that the audio and visual were good and all members present in person were also good.

Recruit new Commissioners

Next business meeting is not until September.

Motion was made to adjourn it was moved and accepted unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:22 pm.