

Minutes – Maine Commission for Community Service Commission Business Meeting
October 2025

PRESENT: Scott Adams, Aleyne Aular-Torres, F. Celeste Branham, Jennifer Burke, Kelly Day, Chelsey Forin-Trimble, William Guidon Jr., Necole Janczura, Mary Krebs, Diane Lebson, Janet May, Kelsey Preecs, Pamela Proulx-Curry, Betsy Sawyer-Manter, Luke Shorty, Ruben Torres, Michael Williams

STAFF AND GUESTS: Maureen Kendzierski, Jamie McFaul, Michael Ashmore, Brittany Gleixner-Hayat, Panthea Burns

PUBLIC COMMENT:

PRESENTATION:

Panthea Burns, Program Manager of Wabanaki Reach, presents about the organization and its educational programming.

CALL TO ORDER:

Pamela Proulx-Curry called the meeting to order at 10:51 AM. After the introductions of Commissioners, staff, and guests, the quiz answer was given. Four Commissioners answered the quiz question prior to the meeting. Ninette Irabaruta and Scott Adams answered the quiz correctly. The protocols for a hybrid business meeting were covered after Public Comment opened. The chair did remind members that conflicts of interest should be declared as agenda items come up.

RECOGNITIONS:

F. Celeste Branham recognizes Luke Shorty's service to the Commission as immediate past chair:

"I want to enter into the record a tribute for Luke Shorty, immediate past chair. for the main Commission for Community Service on this date, October 17th, 2025. When we are led with compassion. With respect, with intelligence, with optimism, we must count upon that as great good fortune. That has been our fate under the leadership of Luke Shorty as our Commission Chair for the last two terms. His were not easy travels through three transitions - the long-term director's retirement, the hiring of a new Executive director, and the decision to transfer to MOCA, all of this during the chaos of federal government retreats from funding. Yet, Luke was steady throughout, never wavering, ever assured that we would arrive at the right points. And so it was. Eleanor Roosevelt opined that, "A good leader inspires people to have confidence in themselves." Luke is remarkable in his positivity, his inquisitiveness, his kindness to others. He believes that leadership and learning are interdependent, and so he is a man of many timely and important questions, hoping to understand fully any issue or circumstance before him. Moreover, he has a natural instinct for humor and goodwill, from which we all derived benefit and comfort. We are indebted to Luke for his wise stewardship during a time of turmoil and opportunity, always leading with a sense of purpose and competence. On behalf of the Maine Commission for Community Service, we thank you for your committed service and for the honorable person who you are."

APPRECIATIONS:

Jennifer Burke appreciated William Guidon Jr., who is serving with MEMA in Alaska after the devastating disaster they are navigating in that state.

Diane Lebson appreciates F. Celeste Branham for arranging the programing from Wabanaki Reach this morning.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Moved by Luke Shorty to approve the consent agenda, SECONDED by Michael Williams – Vote on the motion (roll call) In favor: Scott Adams, Aleyne Aular-Torres, F. Celeste Branham, Jennifer Burke, Kelly Day, Chelsy Forin-Trimble, William Guidon Jr., Necole Janczura, Mary Krebs, Diane Lebson, Janet May, Kelsey Preecs, Pamela Proulx-Curry, Betsy Sawyer-Manter, Luke Shorty, Ruben Torres, Michael Williams
Opposed: None. Motion Passed.

Under the motion the following minutes were approved and reports accepted:

Commission Business meeting minutes of September 2025 and Executive Committee Report from October 2025.

PLANNING AND FUTURE INITIATIVES

Update on federal issues.

Brittany Gleixner-Hayat provided a brief update on the government shutdown, noting that there is no substantial update at this time. Luke Shorty asked if the AmeriCorps staff were laid off or furloughed, Brittany Gleixner-Hayat will research this and share that information with the Commission. Michael Ashmore notes that the shutdown has impacted some Vista volunteers, whose stipends will begin being cut in half as of today if the shutdown continues – this impacts the 4 out of every 5 Vista volunteers who are funded through AmeriCorps grant funding, the fifth is funded through local cost share.

ServeMaine.Org

A discussion of outreach opportunities to promote the website. Kelly Day suggests having training workshops at larger conferences. Michael Ashmore presented an overview of the site and how registration works, and partners with Kelsey Preecs to answer Commissioner questions about the functions and attributes of the site. There is a discussion about the collaboration with United Ways around sharing their volunteer websites on ServeMaine, talks are in process.

Maine Municipal Association Convention

Maureen Kendzierski shares a readout of Volunteer Maine exhibition at the Maine Municipal Conference

Maine Volunteer Foundation

MOU is signed and circulated. The board met and welcomed new member Vicky Restbald, formerly with EMDC, who brings expertise in grant writing and grant management. No finance report is available at this time from MVF. Brittany Gleixner-Hayat shares an appreciation of F. Celeste Braham and Diane Lebson for their work with MVF to get the MOU to this point. Recruitment for MVF board members is ongoing.

BUSINESS REPORTS

Public Policy Task Force

Ruben Torres reports that Tade Sullivan has left the Chair position on this task force, and Ruben Torres has taken up the chair. The communication Task Force has been merged into the Public Policy Task Force. PPTF has identified a number of leadership legislators that they are reaching out to – the goal is to have meetings

with leadership in the lead up to the new year and as the session starts they will meet with more legislators to identify more heroes for their causes. Ruben will be giving a presentation next month to support and train Commissioners in how to talk to our legislators.

Grants Selection and Performance Task Force

Jamie McFaul notes that the Commission has one application, from the Hospice Volunteers of Somerset County. If they get out of committee they will move forward for approval.

Executive Committee

Minutes are posted on the Volunteer Maine website. Pamela Proulx-Curry sent a survey regarding the retreat, please respond if you have not yet done so.

Three Year Service Strategy

Update on membership - Put together a Strategic Planning planning group – Scott Adams volunteers to join, F Celeste Branham, Chelsey Fortin-Trimble, William Guidon Jr., and Pamela Proulx-Curry are current members. The team welcomes anyone else who would like to join. This task force has been stood up on basecamp.

Vacancies on the Commission

The seats that the Commission is looking to fill are Service Program for Youth, someone with expertise with education dev training needs for youth - this is for an adult involved with youth, Expert in the delivery in education to communities or people- Representative of native American tribes and natives or a Representative of out of school or at risk youth. We have a statutory requirement to have no more than 50% of members be from one political party. Extra emphasis of seeking them out, if you know that colleagues you are talking to are republicans.

Communications Task Force

Has been acquired by Public Policy Task Force.

Service Program Task Force

Maureen Kendzierski shares a report out of the Maine Service Fellows retreat which occurred on November 12 & 13 of this year.

AmeriCorps Conference: Jamie McFaul share information about the Life After AmeriCorps conference. Very successful, well attended. Jamie McFaul notes that Andres Velez of Maine Conservation Corps was pivotal in the success of the conference due to his involvement in the planning and implementation of the day. Brittany Gleixner-Hayat attended an AmeriCorps Alumni event in Portland where she was a featured guest, invites Commissioners to attend similar AmeriCorps Alumni events.

Kelly Day notes that the Commission has not yet rescheduled the AmeriCorps service luncheon that was canceled during the AmeriCorps hold. A suggestion was made that this be a summer picnic.

Brittany Gleixner-Hayat will be completing this year's Ambassador assignments for commissioners.

Michael Ashmore asks if Commissioners would like program staff to be provided with their contact information as ambassadors. He will send an email to the group to get responses to this question.

Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability

F. Celeste Branham arranged for the presentation from Wabanaki Reach today and this task force will debrief the presentation and determine what next steps the commission might take as a result of the presentation.

Pamela Proulx-Curry asks how people feel about the monthly lift-ups, response is positive.

Finance Task Force

Finance task force did not meet this month, there was no access to the necessary data due to the move from DOE to MOCA. There was a review of the start of the new fiscal year and the is information from the Commission staff and Brittany Gleixner-Hayat that makes the task force comfortable with their fiscal standing at this moment. Luke Shorty commends the work of Brittany Gleixner-Hayat in making sure that the finance spreadsheet is easy to read. The Task Force will meet on 11/17.

Commission staff reports.

Commission staff reports are available on the Commission page of the Volunteer Maine website.

Agenda addition

Brittany Gleixner-Hayat notes that the transition to MOCA has been very good in terms of support that the Commission and staff have had from Samantha Horn, who addressed all issues seriously. Prism transition is complicating the posting of the Management Analyst position, we have limited access to financial data, contracts are not all in the right department yet.

BUSINESS WRAP UP

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

Next scheduled business meeting is **November 21, 2025**

Motion was made to adjourn it

The meeting adjourned at 12:55 pm.