



## Maine Semiquincentennial Commission 250

Meeting Minutes

October 9, 2024

3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Location: Maine State Archives (17 Elkins Lane, Augusta, ME) and Zoom

**Commission Members Present:** Secretary Shenna Bellows, Kate McBrien, Bernard Fishman, Gregory Pierce (for Governor Mills), Abbe Levin, Julia Gray, Richard Labelle, Alison Maxell (for Lori Fisher), Peter Merrill, Kelli Deveaux, Jamie Kingman-Rice, Marcia Minter

**Commission Members Absent:** Chief Clarissa Sabattis, President Troy Jackson, Earle Shettleworth, Kirk Mohny, Robin Talbot

**Members of the Public in Attendance:** Pat Claus, Kim Smith, Mike Ceceve, Steve Worven, Jeanette Watts, Todd Martin, Jeanette Wattses, Lincoln County Historical Society, Captain Jonathan Bratten, Speakers Office

**Staff in Attendance:** Sarah Hansen

### Approval of August 14, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Marcia Minter moved to accept the meeting minutes, and Peter Merrill seconded: the Commission unanimously approved with Jamie Kingman-Rice abstaining.

### Introduction of New Member

During the meeting, Secretary Bellows introduced Jamie Kingman-Rice, the new Deputy Director, and head of collections at the Maine Historical Society. Jamie was welcomed to the committee, and Secretary Bellows encouraged everyone to get to know her better.

### Introduction

Secretary Bellows welcomed the Commissions and acknowledged a quorum.

### Update

Sarah attended the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) Conference in Mobile, AL, where she connected with other state commissions. The focus was on initiatives related to America 250, highlighting the second installment of America's Field Trip program with an April deadline and a new Your Story initiative for collecting oral histories. Julia and Kate presented at the Maine Archives Museum Conference, emphasizing the Commission's three pillars, encouraging attendees to incorporate 250th themes into existing programs, and fostering discussions on local government engagement strategies. Mollie Cashwell of the Cultural Alliance of Maine encouraged further thinking on how to use the 250th to help increase participation in town meetings. At the conference the AASLH 250th Program Handbook was distributed, which will be shared electronically with the Commission.

### Executive Committee Formation

Secretary Bellows updated the Commission on the Executive Committee's activities, thanking members: herself, Kate McBrien, Marcia Mentor, Gregory Pierce, and Julia Gray. The committee will meet

independently to review budget submissions and discuss the website and logo, with updates scheduled for December. Secretary Bellows invited all Commission members to submit agenda items to Sarah for executive committee consideration.

### **Biennial/Supplemental Budget Requests**

Secretary Bellows provided an update on the biennial and supplemental budget requests. The Commission approved a combined budget request of \$350,000, structured as \$250,000 for 2025-2026 and \$50,000 for the supplemental (emphasizing the need for startup funds in 2024) and another \$50,000 for 2026. Secretary Bellows outlined the budget process, noting that all agencies submit their requests to the Budget Office, which proposes a balanced budget to the Governor, and highlighted the challenges ahead due to flattened revenues and decreased federal funding. Secretary Bellows encouraged collaboration among Commission members and discussed the possibility of independent bills if their requests were not included in the Governor's budget.

### **Partnerships**

The Commission discussed how to engage state agencies and departments in supporting America 250 by identifying opportunities for collaboration. Key agencies/departments included: Economic & Community Development, Education, Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry, Bureau of Parks & Lands, and the Bureau of Veteran Services. Commission members will conduct informal outreach to gauge each agency's interest in integrating America 250 themes into their programs. Secretary Bellows will reach out to the BMV and DOT, and Kelli to the Department of Education. Additionally, Greg will assess the Governor's willingness to issue a formal challenge or invitation to enhance agency involvement. Sarah will prepare an overview of what it could mean for agencies/departments to be involved in the Semiquincentennial commemoration.

The Commission moved into a discussion on developing clear criteria for selecting partners, programming, and events and how they want to allow use of branding. The goal is to establish a structured approval process that ensures alignment with the core pillars while promoting inclusivity and collaboration. This involves learning from successful models in other states, such as Washington, New Jersey, and Kentucky, which utilize distinct approaches to partnership selection and logo usage. To streamline the process, a smaller program group may review proposals and make recommendations, ensuring that the criteria are accessible and effective in preventing misuse by inappropriate groups. Abbe and Bernard volunteered to lead a smaller discussion group with Sarah to outline possible criteria the Executive Committee can review for Commission approval in December.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for December 11, 2024.