

MAINE BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION  
Meeting Notes  
January 4, 2019  
1 p.m., State House Cabinet Room

PRESENT:

Governor Janet Mills  
Senator Bill Diamond  
Secretary of State Matthew Dunlap  
Sen. Jim Hamper  
Former Sen. Roger Katz  
Representative Jim Handy  
Rep. Mark Bryant  
Heather Perry, Gorham Superintendent of Schools  
Peter Merrill, Maine Cultural Affairs Council (CAC) Chairman  
Hayden Anderson, Maine Humanities Council  
Julie Richard, Maine Arts Commission  
Dana Connors, Maine Chamber of Commerce  
Jim Mitchell, Mitchell Tardy Government Affairs  
Steve Bromage, Maine Historical Society  
James Ritter, Maine State Library  
Jason Libby, Maine Historic Preservation Commission  
Kristen Muszynski, Communications Director, Secretary of State's Office  
Meredith Strang Burgess, Burgess Advertising  
Dave Cheever, Maine State Archives

ABSENT:

Alison Sucy, Maine Tourism Association  
Bernard Fishman, Maine State Museum  
University of Maine System Chancellor Jim Page  
Rep. David Haggan  
Rep. Patrick Corey  
Samantha Warren, University of Maine System  
Nina Fisher, Maine Community College System  
Beth Gibbs, Thomas College

GUESTS:

Julie O'Brien, Soo Parkhurst, Michael Hall, Augusta Committee  
Steve Lyons, Micki Mullen Maine Office of Tourism  
Rebecca Graham, Maine Municipal Association  
Tonya Shevenell  
Alicia Barnes

Chairman Bill Diamond called the meeting to order at 1 pm. He welcomed the Commission members and guests, and spoke to Commission progress and the November election results.

He said that the election returns likely put the Bicentennial on good footing with a number of incoming and continuing political leaders. An early meeting with the Governor-elect provided optimism about the possible level of her support for Commission initiatives. She was presented with an overview of Commission work thus far, and a list of likely events – such as the kick-off in July – in which she would be invited to participate. (See below.)

The turn of the new year also meant that the appropriation from the 128<sup>th</sup> Legislature would be available, and Diamond said that the work load is becoming such that it would help to hire a staff person. A job description has been drawn up, and a search for candidates is underway. Kristen Muszynski broached the possibility of attracting interns, perhaps from the Margaret Chase Smith Center. That idea received support, and Rep. Handy volunteered to check with Bates College for possibilities there.

**MARKETING COMMITTEE:** Kristen Muszynski then spoke to options regarding merchandising. She asked for Commission guidance on whether to set up a Web store that would be contractually managed by an in-state company to do order tracking and fulfillment. The Commission approved that approach.

Maine Office of Tourism Director Steve Lyons offered that marketing for 2020 could be helped through the Governor's Conference on Tourism in April. More than 400 Maine-based tourism-related businesses and individuals participate, and could be asked and expected to spread the word.

Treasurer Peter Merrill informed the Commission that the accounting firm of Baker, Newman Noyes is being asked to provide auditing and accounting services for the Commission. He estimates that the auditing expense will be \$25,000-\$30,000, yet comes with the assurance that the finances are done correctly.

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE:** Chairwoman Heather Perry spoke again to the idea of initiating a Bicentennial Schools competitive grant program where participating schools would undertake bicentennially themed projects to fashion learning modules to be shared or replicated, and which can foster lead roles for students and teachers with the Bicentennial as a springboard. Perry cited Alabama's bottom-up model as something that Maine could adopt. She proposed a layered approach whereby major projects could be funded up to \$20,000, and lesser grants could be awarded as well.

Calling for a \$200,000-\$400,000 program, Perry said that contacting teachers and administrators would need to be done by the summer of 2019 to process applications and allow for undertaking the programs in the 2019-2020 academic year.

She said that the program will be communicated through the Maine Education Association and Maine Superintendents' Association, the Maine Library Association, and the Maine School Library Association. Meredith Strang Burgess volunteered to post the announcement and application details on [Maine200.org](http://Maine200.org).

Entering the meeting at 1:38, Governor Janet Mills greeted commissioners and guests individually, spoke to her enthusiasm for the Bicentennial, mentioned that she is aware that a Supplemental Budget request is needed, and then joined the Commission for photographs. She cited the possibility of a Tall Ships summer and the draw of a Blue Angels precision air drill team event as exciting to contemplate.

Finance Chairman Dana Connors then reported that he has made initial pitches for project funding for such initiatives as the Tall Ships, and has secured substantial commitments, with more on the way. He said that identifying a \$2 million budget for the Bicentennial has not deterred prospective donors.

Hayden Anderson and Steve Bromage spoke to the program they are hosting in Hermon in March. The three-part day will offer an historical presentation of Maine achieving statehood, a consideration of Maine from the Native American perspective, and a tutorial on researching how individual towns came into being to form the panoply of communities.

Jason Libby reported on the Time Capsule progress. The University of Maine's Advanced Structures and Composites program accepted the challenge to design the capsule, with the core questions needing resolution, including what size it shall be, and whether it will be housed in a sheltered or exposed area. The University presented a GANNT chart to identify the project's schedule, which aims for an October 2020 delivery. Libby said all suggestions are welcome.

Dave Cheever spoke to the progress with Tall Ships America and the possibility that Maine will host the sailing vessels for three weeks rather than one, and that Maine could serve as the branded destination for the entire East Coast tour. He also reported that Augusta officials have shown support for installing a Tri-centennial Pine Grove in the city as part of the Bicentennial kick-off in July.

The next Commission meeting will be at the Maine State Library, at 1pm, March 1, 2019.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Dave Cheever, Secretary