

MAINE BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION

Meeting Notes

June 14, 2018

2 p.m., Maine State Library

PRESENT:

Senator Bill Diamond

Representative Jim Handy

Rep. Mark Bryant

Samantha Warren, University of Maine System

Nina Fisher, Maine Community College System

Dana Connors, Maine Chamber of Commerce

Heather Perry, Gorham Superintendent of Schools

Alison Sucy, Maine Tourism Association

Esther Anne, Wabanaki Reach

Peter Merrill, Maine Cultural Affairs Council (CAC) Chairman

Hayden Anderson, Maine Humanities Council

Jim Mitchell, Mitchell Tardy Government Affairs

James Ritter, Maine State Library

Bernard Fishman, Maine State Museum

Steve Bromage, Maine Historical Society

Jason Libby, Maine Historic Preservation Commission

Kristen Muszynski, Communications Director, Secretary of State's Office

Dave Cheever, Maine State Archives

ABSENT:

Governor Paul R. LePage

Secretary of State Matthew Dunlap

Rep. David Haggan

Rep. Patrick Corey

Sen. Jim Hamper

Sen. Roger Katz

Jim Page, University of Maine System Chancellor

Beth Gibbs, Thomas College

Julie Richard, Maine Arts Commission

GUESTS:

Steve Lyons, Director, Maine Office of Tourism

Leif Dahlin, Community Services Director, City of Augusta

Chairman Bill Diamond called the meeting to order at 2:02.

The Minutes from the April 11 meeting were accepted.

Esther Anne addressed the Commission, first in the Passamaquoddy language, and then in English, saying that she hoped that the Bicentennial would “change the trajectory of the relationship” with the four remaining tribes of the Wabanaki Confederacy, and that the Bicentennial would lead to a “more

just future.” She cited the fact that the tribes have history extending back 13,000 years in what is now Maine.

From the tribes’ perspective, Anne said, the path to Maine statehood was marred, marked in its progress by the dislocation and killing of Native Americans. It is “painful to think of celebrating 200 years when there has been so much pain,” she said. Although she offered that the 200th anniversary of statehood could be a moment where the relationship to the tribes could shift, Anne declared that she could not serve on the Commission and resigned. She provided a list of recommendations for the Commission to consider in the Bicentennial planning, and she suggested that the tribal chiefs might be more appropriate to be Commission members.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: Chairman Dana Connors identified a fundraising target of \$2 million for the Bicentennial and the levels of giving that he and sector “ambassadors” will present to prospective donors. The sectors include: banking, construction, health care, real estate, manufacturing, casinos, tourism, retail, and technology. He said that leaders in each area will make appeals on behalf of the Commission.

Bill Diamond added that the Finance people intend to raise \$50,000-\$60,000 as start-up money as soon as the Commission’s tax status is resolved, the marketing packet is available, and the account set up where donations can be made and whence expenses can flow.

Kristen Muszynski reported that Assistant Attorney General Phyllis Gardiner determined that the Commission by definition is a government entity and thus a non-profit organization. The commission elected to pursue a distinct non-profit status anyway, to allow private donors to make tax-exempt donations. Kristen Muszynski volunteered to pursue the non-profit status with the Corporations division.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE: Heather Perry revisited the Committee’s matrix to the Commission:

1. Maine’s role as a leader,
2. Business in Maine,
3. Living in Maine, and,
4. Maine character

From those general themes, the Committee proposes that the outcomes of educational activities lead to successful futures, embrace diversity, have lasting use, respect past practices and products but identify emerging technologies, work at the community level, and understand key sustainables.

Within the themes, and applying the outcomes, the Committee and full Commission could share events, evaluate proposals, set guidelines, and serve as a resource site for educational use.

Samantha Warren said it is not the intent to create educational content but to set a usable framework for educators as they seek or prepare curricula for whatever the target achievement level.

Nina Fisher remarked that a large portion of Maine history is unavailable where it is needed most, at the 4th and 8th Grade level.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE: Alison Sucy reported that the Committee has taken the three dates identified as Commission-run events and begun the flesh out the activities for each. She added that assignments have been made to help expedite the process leading the presenting the proposals to the Commission.

Because the Program Committee was combined with the Events Committee, Sucy said, one advisable path to progress is to assign tasks to sub-groups within the larger committee to provide structure to address ideas as they percolate. She said that the Committee needs help from the field statewide and would be recruiting regional ambassadors from counties, towns, and communities to help spread the word and engage in programs.

MARKETING and SOCIAL MEDIA COMMITTEE: Jim Handy offered a package of recommendations from the Marketing group, including:

1. A revised logo design,
2. A tag line – Leading the Way,
3. A Vision Statement,
4. A Mission Statement,
5. Official letterhead, and
6. An application for those seeking to use the Bicentennial logo.

Bill Diamond announced that Peter Merrill, chairman of the Cultural Affairs Council, agreed to serve as Treasurer of the Commission. Diamond also announced that he has appointed State Archivist Dave Cheever to serve as Commission Vice Chairman.

Adding to Alison Sucy's report, Diamond repeated the request that members identify and recruit organizations and individuals to help with the Bicentennial, and asked that names be forwarded in time for the next Commission meeting.

He then invited Augusta Community Services Director Leif Dahlin and Maine Office of Tourism Director Steve Lyons, to speak to the Commission. Each expressed the willingness to assist the Bicentennial initiative where and when possible.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave Cheever, Secretary

Next Commission meeting: August 30, 2018, 2 p.m., Maine State Library