

Minutes - DRAFT
Maine Bicentennial Commission
Maine State Library
February 25, 2019, 3:00 p.m.

Present: Sen. Bill Diamond, Chairman; Rep. Chris Babbidge, Rep. Dick Campbell, Secretary of State Matthew Dunlap, David Cheever, Hayden Anderson, Steve Bromage, Dana Connors, Kristen Muszynski, Bernard Fishman, Jason Libby, Peter Merrill, Heather Perry, Julie Richard, Alison Sucey, Jamie Ritter, Samantha Warren, Joanne D’Arcangelo

Absent: Rep. Jim Handy Rep. Mark Bryant, Becky Smith, Donna Loring

Guests: Meredith Strang-Burgess, Leslie Oster

Staff: Alyssa Wood

Chairman Bill Diamond called the meeting to order at 3 p.m. and welcomed new Commission members Joanne D’Arcangelo and Rep. Dick Campbell.

The Minutes of the October 25, 2019 meeting were approved.

Dave Cheever previewed for the Commission a Power Point overview to be presented to the Governor’s Office of the Commission and the accomplishments to date.

Treasurer’s report: Peter Merrill reported that the Commission has received \$1,754,843 in revenue from all sources, has expended \$919,050.86, and has approximately \$192,000 in pledges. Based on recommendations from the Allocation Sub-Committee on re-distributing revenue and recalculating projected expenses, the Commission faces a Revised Budget of \$1,909,400. After subtracting the expected program expenses, the Commission needs \$1,047,817.14 to finance the projected budget.

Chairman Diamond expressed optimism that the difference between the revenue and expenses – just under \$20,000 could be met with additional fundraising. With the assent from the Commission in discussion, any revenues above expenses could be targeted to the Community Grant Program.

The Treasurer’s report was approved.

Fundraising report: Dana Connors reported that Maine200 recently secured underwriting support from Penn National and Enbridge. Those underwriters

joined other companies in contributing to the Bicentennial – including LL Bean, Casella Waste Management, Goodwill of Northern New England, MaineHealth, MEMIC, the DiMillo family, Oxford Casino, the Maine Technology Institute, and Poland Spring/Nestle.

Connors said that additional meetings with prospective donors will be held soon and he is confident that private contributions will exceed \$1 million.

Marketing: Bicentennial license plate sales have raised \$53,258.01 for the Cultural Affairs Council.

Meredith Strang Burgess provided a website analytics update, noting that a second overhaul was done before Kickoff Day. There have been more than 23 thousand sessions of the site from more than 16 thousand visitors. 50% of the traffic has been from mobile devices. A large spike in visits occurred after Kickoff Day.

The Commission accepted a proposal by Jamie Ritter (seconded by Sen. Diamond) to add a marketing line within the existing budget, and unanimously approved an expense of \$25,000.

Jamie Ritter then asked if the Commission would discuss reallocating money previously designated to specific programs. These include:

- The Flag Program - \$75,000
 - To distribute the Bicentennial flag to every school and municipality. Julie Richard proposed reallocating the money to the Community Grants program. The Commission unanimously approved. Richard moved to reallocate the money. Perry seconded and the Commission approved unanimously.
- The Blaine House Concert Series
 - The initial budget of \$200,000 was halved, (moved by Connors and seconded by Perry,) with the \$100,000 targeted for Community Grants. The Commission unanimously approved.
 - Dave Cheever reported that the Boston Pops holiday concert will be held on December 18 at the Augusta Civic Center and that the promoter for the concert wishes to acknowledge the Bicentennial.

Roger Katz is the intermediary between the promoter and the Commission.

- State of Maine Air Show
 - The Commission cut its allocation from \$40,000 to \$10,000 and placed the \$30,000 into Community Grants.
- Tri-Centennial Pine Grove Program
 - From the initial budget of \$50,000, the Commission cut \$40,000 and moved it to support Community Grants.
- Time Capsule Program
 - From the initial request of \$110,000, the Allocation sub-committee proposed adjusting the budget to \$50,000. During discussion, Jason Libby disclosed that indirect costs incurred thus far were more than \$50,000. Samantha Warren and other Commission members expressed confidence that the University of Maine would consider an in-kind donation to address some – and perhaps all – of the indirect costs. Jamie Ritter proposed adding \$10,000 to the \$50,000 budget line. (Seconded by Perry.) The Commission accepted that proposal and placed the unallocated funds into the Community Grants program. The \$60,000 budget from the commission, plus up to \$50,000 of in-kind donations from the University of Maine brings the budget total back up to \$110,000.
- Community Grant Program
 - Requests for the second round added up to more than \$795,000. Grant Review Committee Chair Heather Perry reported that the Executive Committee had approved committing the remaining balance of the program funding following the first round of awards to the second round. The Executive Committee agreed to hold the \$50,000 donation from LL Bean to finance the third round.

The Review committee exhausted the remainder of the initial allocation of \$375,000, and Heather Perry offered that to reach a goal of providing funding to 70 percent of the successful applicants in round two, the Commission needed to commit \$193,944 in additional funding. The Commission unanimously approved the adjustments.

Sen. Diamond noted that the Community Grants commitment now exceeds the original target of \$500,000 for the entire program.

Diamond also noted that the Commission goal has been met of assuring at least one large grant (\$10,000) would be awarded to each county.

Statehood weekend: March 15 will feature the bicentennial ceremony with the Governor, Congressional delegation, State Legislators, and other dignitaries attending. The Bangor Symphony Orchestra will perform the world premiere of a commissioned composition; and State Historian Earle Shettleworth and Poet Laureate Stuart Kestenbaum will speak.

The United States Postal Service will launch a Maine Bicentennial commemorative stamp.

Bicentennial Parade: Kristen Muszynski announced that The State of Maine Bicentennial Parade's website has been launched to provide information to participants, volunteers, and spectators: www.Maine200Parade.com. The May 16 parade in Auburn and Lewiston has Poland Spring/Nestle Waters as the Presenting Sponsor, and Casella Waste Systems and Goodwill of Northern New England as contributing sponsors for what could become the largest parade in Maine history. More than 100 units are participating, including a multi-generational marching band. The Maine Army and Air National Guard will be featured participants, as will the Anheuser Busch Clydesdale horses.

Sailing Ships: Cheever reported that the coastwide maritime project has evolved into a multi-port, multi-week event to be marked with distinctly local flavor, beginning in Boothbay on June 26, Rockland on July 2-4, Bangor, Bucksport, Searsport and Castine, July 8-14, and Portland, July 16-20.

Rep. Dick Campbell shared the news about the Penobscot Maritime Heritage 4-Port Loop.

Innovation Expo: Kristen Muszynski reported that the original proposal to host an event in Bangor had been frustrated, and that the new plan was to conduct an innovation-oriented, public-facing program on December 12 in Portland.

At Sen. Diamond's suggestion, the Commission did not set a date for the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:29.