



**EVENTS, EXHIBITS, AND TRAILS SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Boston City Hall Boston, MA, 02201

Held virtually via Zoom

OCTOBER 10, 2024

Commissioners Present: *Suzanne Taylor, Imari Jeffries, Konah Brownell for Jay Ash, Dr. Noelle Trent, Sam Tully-Chambers, Celia Richa, Kara Elliott-Ortega, Karin Goodfellow, John Borders IV, Segun Idowu*

Commissioners Absent: *Juan Lopez, Juan Eusebio, Eric Hanson-Plass, Faries Gray, Kyera Singleton, Dave O'Donnell, Nat Sheidley*

Staff Present: *Genesis Pimentel, Commemoration Commission Manager; Dorothy Clark, Assistant Survey Director; Jessica Morris, EEOS Chief of Staff; Amy Yandle, Director of Special Events*

Public/Press Present: *Ester Farah, Embrace Boston*

A full recording of the meeting is available on boston.gov/commemoration-commission

SESSION BEGINS - 2:00 PM

I. WELCOME

- a. Commemoration Commission Manager Genesis Pimentel welcomed attendees.

II. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- a. Meeting minutes approval was held off until the next meeting.
- b. Genesis Pimentel provided insight on how the meeting with the EET co-chairs and the EEOS Chief went.
- c. Commissioner Segun Idowu provided insight on the collaboration between the City and State's 250th efforts, including discussing the standing monthly meeting with the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism.
- d. Commissioner John Borders IV added that the State has affirmed support of local events and ideas through grants and partnerships.

III. MA250 EVENT + GRANT DISCUSSION

- a. Genesis Pimentel opened the conversation up to discuss the MA250 Event and if anyone received a grant during the MA250 Grant's first round of funding.
 - i. The Freedom Trail, The Museum of African American History, Embrace Boston, Massachusetts Historical Society and others received funding.



- b. Commissioners agreed that the MA250 Event was successful in terms of launching its brand, but that what the brand communicated lacked diversity. Commissioner Noelle Trent added that this presented an opportunity for Boston to differentiate itself by including multiple narratives.
- c. Pimentel added that there is an opportunity to make sure the City is connected with community organizations and work alongside them for commemoration planning.

IV. WORKING SESSION

- a. Chair Suzanne Taylor discussed the Field Guide created by the State for cities and towns in Massachusetts to have resources for planning commemorations as something the City could also use.
- b. Commissioner John Borders IV added that although planning around the 250th has been disjointed, there's an opportunity for all groups to find common ground and come under at least one banner.
- c. Commissioner Trent asked how proposed changes will affect how the Commission and subcommittees function. Pimentel discussed an overview of the policy memo, what brought it about, and how the goal is to make the Commission and subcommittees more effective in planning.
- d. Commissioners discussed wanting to support the City and vice versa, how that has been working from the City side to get Mayoral approval before presenting ideas, and from the appointed members side who hear from other cities but know Boston has an opportunity to make a big splash.
- e. Commissioner Sam Chambers expressed concern that even though Boston has a distinct identity for commemoration if it isn't aligned with the State's vision, it may come off as though neither party has communicated effectively.
 - i. Commissioner Segun Idowu agreed, adding that some projects can be undertaken under the existing materials the State has created but that we want to have our own vision because we are a unique and distinct city where the Revolution began. He also added that FIFA and Tall Ships would be coming to Boston, which is going to be very important.
 - ii. Commissioner Kara Elliott-Ortega added that the Mellon funded UnMonuments Project is another important avenue to discuss history, commemoration, and monuments for the 250th in an important deconstruction.
 - iii. Commissioner Karin Goodfellow discussed the work the UnMonument project is doing and how public art leads us to challenge dominant narratives and how the UnMonument work might align for 2026.
 - iv. Chair Imari Jeffries added, based on his work in Western Massachusetts, Boston is often at odds with the rest of the state's ideals and goals, which makes branding for the City especially important.



- f. Commissioner Trent recommended that the 250th is seen as an opportunity to beta test programs for the 400th, adding that Boston is a city of stories so the process of documenting and recording stories can begin for the 250th and be strengthened for the 400th.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. There were no public comments.

VI. ADJOURNMENT - 3:00 PM

- a. Commissioner Sam Chambers made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
- b. Chair Suzanne Taylor seconded.

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