

Cabo Verdean Cultural Center Feasibility Commission

Meeting Minutes (Draft)

Date: April 13th, 2026

Time: 4:00–5:00 PM

Location: Virtual (Microsoft Teams)

Recording: <https://malegislature.gov/Events/Hearings/Detail/5677>

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

- Senator Liz Miranda - Yes
- Senator Patrick M. O'Connor - Yes
- Senator Michael D. Brady - Yes
- Senator Dylan A. Fernandes - No
- Representative Antonio F. D. Cabral - Yes
- Representative Kip A. Diggs - Yes
- Representative Rita A. Mendes - Yes
- Representative David T. Vieira - Yes
- Manuel Lopes - Yes
- Monica Veiga - Yes
- John Cruz III - Yes
- Senator Virato "Vinny" deMacedo - Yes
- Angelo Lopes Barbosa - Yes
- Tanya Lobo - Yes
- Josephine "Djofa" Tavares - Yes
- Dr. Abel Djassi Amado - Yes
- Representative Evandro Carvalho - No
- Barbara Monteiro Burgo - Yes
- Councilor Tina Cardoso - No
- Tchintcia Barros - No
- Dina Dray - No
- Ana Fidalgo - No
- Jeanne Maria Costa - Yes
- Dr. Aminah Pilgrim - Yes

Staff Present:

- Rashelle Centeio, Office of Senator Liz Miranda
- Ironдина "Dina" Abreu, Office of Representative Cabral
- Elizabeth Vader, Office of Senator O'Connor
- Matthew Connolly, Office of Senator Fernandes
- Grigsby Lovas, Office of Representative Diggs

II. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (March 11, 2026)

A summary of the March 11 meeting minutes was provided. Minor corrections were noted.

Motion: Jeannie Costa

Second: Senator Michael Brady

Vote: Approved unanimously

III. Legislative and Funding Updates

Rashelle reported that the Commission's statutory deadline remains **December 31, 2026**. An amendment to extend the deadline to **December 31, 2027** and allow additional time for commissioner appointments was filed during the Fair Share budget process but was not adopted. The office will continue pursuing alternative legislative avenues, including the House and Senate budget process and potential supplemental or deficiency budgets.

Senator Miranda outlined potential funding strategies, noting prior feasibility funding requests ranging from **\$75,000 to \$150,000**, and a previous **\$5 million bond authorization** tied to the broader cultural center concept. She also noted that future fundraising opportunities may depend on the Commission's recommendation regarding a nonprofit or governance structure. Commissioners may be asked to support advocacy efforts as needed.

IV. Community Engagement Framework Discussion

The Commission continued discussion on a proposed engagement framework, including:

- Site visits
- Traditional listening sessions
- Engagement at existing Cabo Verdean events
- Expanded digital outreach (e.g., social media, surveys)

Commissioners emphasized the importance of:

- Historical accuracy and documentation
- Youth engagement
- Community visibility
- Inclusive and culturally responsive engagement methods

V. Commissioner Input and Recommendations

Commissioners provided the following input:

- **Best Practices:** Recommendation to review models from other cultural institutions and commissions.
- **Geographic Priorities:** Strong support for engagement in New Bedford, Cape Cod, Boston, Brockton, Taunton, and Rhode Island.
- **Existing Institutions:** Emphasis on incorporating existing Cabo Verdean organizations, museums, and cultural centers as partners.
- **Community Outreach:** Suggestions included surveys, canvassing, event-based engagement, and oral history collection.
- **Digital Engagement:** Recommendation to incorporate virtual participation options to include the broader diaspora.
- **World Cup Opportunities:** Noted upcoming events as potential engagement opportunities.
- **Language Considerations:** Recommendation to standardize use of the official Cabo Verdean alphabet when applicable.
- **International Coordination:** Suggested future coordination with Cabo Verde following upcoming elections.

VI. Next Steps

Commissioners were asked to:

- Share additional engagement ideas, events, and potential locations
- Provide input on outreach tools and strategies
- Assist in identifying priority sites for initial engagement

Staff will compile feedback and begin developing a more structured engagement plan for future meetings.

VII. Adjournment

Motion: Senator Michael Brady

Second: Barbara Burgo / Representative Cabral

Vote: Approved unanimously

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:03 PM.
