

Cabo Verdean Cultural Center Feasibility Commission

Meeting Minutes (Draft)

Date: May 11th, 2026

Time: 4:00–5:00 PM

Location: Virtual (Microsoft Teams)

Recording: <https://malegislature.gov/Events/Hearings/Detail/5695>

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

Commissioners Present

- Senator Liz Miranda
- Representative Antonio F. D. Cabral
- Representative Kip A. Diggs
- Representative Rita A. Mendes
- Monica Veiga
- John Cruz III
- Senator Virato “Vinny” deMacedo
- Angelo Lopes Barbosa
- Tanya Lobo
- Josephine “Djofa” Tavares
- Dr. Abel Djassi Amado
- Representative Evandro Carvalho
- Barbara Monteiro Burgo
- Tchintcia Barros
- Dina Dray
- Jeanne Maria Costa
- Dr. Aminah Pilgrim

Commissioners Absent

- Senator Patrick M. O'Connor
- Senator Michael D. Brady
- Senator Dylan A. Fernandes
- Representative David T. Vieira
- Manuel Lopes
- Councilor Tina Cardoso
- Ana Fidalgo

Staff Present

- Irondina “Dina” Reis Abreu — Representative Cabral’s Office
- Elizabeth Vater — Senator O’Connor’s Office

- Rashelle Centeio — Senator Miranda’s Office
- Matthew Connolly — Senator Fernandes’ Office
- Grigsby Lovaas — Representative Diggs’ Office
- Nadia Monteiro — Senator Brady’s Office

Quorum was confirmed with 13 commissioners present.

II. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the [April 13, 2026 meeting](#). Corrections needed for name spelling.

Motion: Tanya Lobo

Second: John Cruz III

Vote: Approved unanimously

III. Review of Commission Models and Best Practices

Commissioners reviewed several Massachusetts special commissions to better understand potential approaches for the Commission’s work.

1. Special Commission on Combating Antisemitism

Discussion included:

- 16 meetings held over approximately 13 months;
- More than 50 hours of meetings;
- Over 200 individuals providing testimony;
- Use of both invited expert testimony and open public testimony.

Senator Miranda noted that commissions often receive significant outreach from community members outside of formal meetings and encouraged commissioners to anticipate similar engagement.

2. Special Commission on Racial Inequities in Maternal Health

Commissioners reviewed how this commission:

- Held public meetings and regional listening sessions;
- Organized work into smaller subcommittees;
- Produced over 130 recommendations;
- Ultimately informed major maternal health legislation in Massachusetts.

Senator Miranda emphasized the effectiveness of working groups and community-driven testimony in shaping policy outcomes.

3. Special Commission on the Official Seal and Motto of the Commonwealth

Discussion highlighted:

- Extensive public engagement efforts;
- Six listening sessions across the Commonwealth;
- Partnership with the Center for Survey Research at UMass Boston;
- Multilingual public surveys and over 1,100 design submissions.

Commissioners discussed the importance of designing culturally responsive and accessible surveys.

Senator Miranda encouraged commissioners to review these commission models before the next meeting and identify strategies that may benefit this Commission's work.

IV. Planning for May, June, and Summer Engagement

Commissioners discussed planning priorities for the coming months, including:

- Creating a comprehensive calendar of Cabo Verdean cultural and community events;
- Attending events to increase visibility and gather public input;
- Exploring virtual focus groups and listening sessions;
- Developing surveys and oral history tools;
- Building stronger engagement with diaspora communities and cultural institutions.

Senator Miranda shared that:

- FY27 Budget Amendment #237 seeks to extend the Commission deadline to December 31, 2027;
- The amendment also includes funding for consultant support, feasibility work, listening sessions, and outreach;
- Senate budget debate would occur the following week.

Senator Miranda also informed commissioners that the President of Cabo Verde is expected to visit Boston around June 12–13 and encouraged commissioners to remain available for potential engagement opportunities connected to the Commission's work.

V. Survey, Oral History, and Community Data Collection

Commissioners discussed the purpose and design of future surveys and engagement tools.

Topics included:

- Determining what information the Commission hopes to gather;
- Whether surveys should focus on feasibility, public priorities, cultural preservation, or future programming;

- Ensuring surveys are brief, multilingual, accessible, and available digitally and in paper format;
- The importance of oral history collection, particularly from elders and longtime community members.

Commissioners shared existing oral history initiatives underway in communities including Cape Cod, Scituate, Rhode Island, and New Bedford.

VI. Proposed Subcommittees

Commissioners discussed creating smaller working groups to continue work between meetings. Proposed subcommittees included:

- Fundraising and Resource Development;
- Communications and Outreach;
- Survey, Oral History, and Data Collection Tools.

Preliminary Subcommittee Sign-Ups

Communications and Outreach

- Tanya Lobo
- Nadia Monteiro (on behalf of Senator Brady)
- Monica Veiga (2nd choice)
- Josephine Tavares
- Dr. Aminah Pilgrim
- Jeanne Costa

Survey and Data Collection Tools

- Monica Veiga (1st choice)
- Dr. Abel Djassi Amado
- Tchintcia Barros

Fundraising and Resource Development

- Senator Liz Miranda

Commissioners who have not signed up:

- Representative Antonio F. D. Cabral
- Representative Kip A. Diggs
- Representative Rita A. Mendes
- John Cruz III
- Senator Virato “Vinny” deMacedo
- Angelo Lopes Barbosa
- Representative Evandro Carvalho
- Barbara Monteiro Burgo

- Tchintcia Barros
- Dina Dray
- Senator Patrick M. O'Connor
- Senator Dylan A. Fernandes
- Representative David T. Vieira
- Manuel Lopes
- Councilor Tina Cardoso
- Ana Fidalgo

Commissioners are encouraged to submit their preferences following the meeting.

VII. Outreach and Communications Strategy

The Commission discussed several outreach priorities, including:

- Developing a one-page informational overview of the Commission;
- Creating and organizing social media accounts;
- Maintaining the Commission webpage on the Massachusetts Legislature website;
- Publishing upcoming Cabo Verdean cultural events and engagement opportunities.

Commissioner Aminah Pilgrim volunteered to assist with the one-pager, and Commissioner Tanya Lobo volunteered to assist with social media efforts.

Senator Miranda also discussed opportunities to engage with Cabo Verdean cultural centers and institutions abroad, including potential virtual engagement with organizations and leaders in Cabo Verde and Portugal.

VIII. Upcoming Events and Community Engagement Opportunities

The following events were shared for awareness and potential Commission engagement:

- **Saturday, May 24, 2026 | 1:00 PM – 7:00 PM**
Cape Verdean Festival
Howard Brown Park, Norwich, Connecticut
- **Saturday, June 6, 2026 | 6:00 PM**
Cabo Verde in Frames: From the Archipelago to the World Cup
44 Moultrie Street, Dorchester
- **Saturday, June 7, 2026 | 5:00 PM**
Cabo Verdeans United Tubarões Azuis World Cup Gala
Venus de Milo — Swansea, Massachusetts
- **Tuesday, June 9, 2026 | 10:30 AM**
Heritage Day of Portugal Celebration
Massachusetts State House
- **Friday, June 12 – Saturday, June 13, 2026**
Visit of the President of Cabo Verde to Boston
- **Monday, June 15, 2026 | 12:00 PM**
FIFA World Cup — Spain vs. Cabo Verde

- **Sunday, June 21, 2026 | 6:00 PM**
FIFA World Cup — Uruguay vs. Cabo Verde
- **Wednesday, June 24, 2026**
São Juan Celebrations
- **Friday, June 26, 2026 | 8:00 PM**
FIFA World Cup — Cabo Verde vs. Saudi Arabia
- **Sunday, July 5, 2026**
Cabo Verdean Independence Day Celebrations
- Sunday, July 5th, 2026
CV Celebration for New Bedford
Parade starts at Buttonwood Park 11:00 a.m. and the parade ends at the CV Vets Hall.
- **Saturday, July 18, 2026 | 12:00 PM – 6:00 PM**
Harwich Cabo Verdean Festival
1 Oak Street, Harwich MA 02645
- **Saturday, August 8, 2026**
Onset Cape Verdean Festival

Commissioners were encouraged to continue sharing additional events for inclusion in future outreach planning.

IX. Open Discussion and New Business

Representative Cabral noted he could provide additional reflections at a future meeting regarding his experience serving on the Special Commission on the Official Seal and Motto of the Commonwealth.

The Commission also discussed the upcoming Day of Portugal Heritage celebration at the State House and related community engagement opportunities. Senator Miranda encouraged

X. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Representative Cabral and seconded by Representative Diggs. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioners were reminded to:

- Submit upcoming event information;
- Share preferred subcommittee assignments;
- Watch for follow-up communication regarding the next meeting date and scheduling poll.

The meeting was adjourned.