

Cabo Verdean Cultural Center Commission

Meeting Minutes — November 06, 2025

Time: Called to order at **12:05 PM**

Location: Virtual (Teams)

1) Call to Order & Welcome

Sen. Liz Miranda convened the meeting and noted the Commission requires **six (6)** members for quorum. Initial attendance reflected fewer than six; discussion proceeded until additional members joined.

2) Roll Call

Members present:

- Sen. Liz Miranda - Present
- Rep. Kip Diggs - Present
- Rep. Antonio Cabral - Present
- Rep. Rita Mendes - Present
- Sen. Dylan Fernandes - Present
- Monica Vega - Present
- Sen. Michael Brady - Absent
- Sen. Patrick O'Connor - Absent
- Rep. David Vieira - Absent
- Manuel Lopes - Absent (Communicated ahead of time)

Staff/Support present:

- Rashelle Centeio (Sen. Liz Miranda)
- Matthew Connolly (Sen. Dylan Fernandes)
- Irondina Abreu (Rep. Antonio Cabral)
- Gregory Denton (Sen. Patrick O'Connor)
- Tobias Cowans (Sen. Michael Brady)

***Note on designees:** Staff may attend to observe and report back, but **do not count toward quorum and cannot vote.**

3) Commission Mandate (Recap)

- Establish a **Cabo Verdean Cultural Center in Boston** to reflect 200+ years of Commonwealth history.
- Evaluate **organizational structures** (e.g., nonprofit), oversight of construction, and related **costs**.
- Membership structure: 3 Senators (Senate President appointees), 1 Senate Minority appointee; 3 Representatives (Speaker appointees), 1 House Minority appointee; 1 Mayor of Boston appointee; 1 Governor appointee; **up to 15 additional members** selected by the Commission co-chairs.

- **Report deadline: No later than December 31, 2026.**

4) Approval of Prior Minutes

- While below quorum early on, members reviewed the **draft minutes** (re-posted in chat).
- After Sen. Fernandes joined and quorum was achieved, **motion to approve** last meeting's minutes **PASSED** by voice vote ("aye"); members were invited to send any **corrections** to staff.

5) Election of Co-Chairs

- **Motion** to elect **Sen. Liz Miranda** and **Rep. Kip Diggs** as **Co-Chairs PASSED** (voice vote).
- **Vice Chairs:** Deferred. The Commission will consider up to **two Vice Chairs** (potentially including the Governor's/Mayer's appointees or community members) **after** expansion seats are filled.

6) Discussion: Quorum/Designees

- A member asked whether **designated representatives** could count toward **quorum**. Staff will research and report back. (Consensus understanding: designees cannot vote; quorum question to be confirmed.)

7) Expansion of Commission Membership (up to 15)

Previously submitted nominations:

- **Barbara Burgos** — Cape Verdean Museum (Falmouth/Harwich)
- Former Sen. **Vinny deMacedo** — Bridgewater State University; born in Brava

New nominations discussed (non-exhaustive):

- **John Cruz** (Cruz Companies; development) — with possible flexibility for a Cruz Companies representative if needed
Manuel da Luz and/or **Josephine Tavares** (Míli Míla dictionary; language/culture)
Ana Fidalgo (community leader/entrepreneur; radio & business legacy; Roxbury)
Sydné Marrow (Brockton City Hall leadership; resides in Boston)
- **Angelo Barbosa** (Bridgewater State University, Cape Verdean Studies) or a representative of the **CV Studies Center**
- **Councilor Maria Tavares** (Brockton)
- **Soraya DoSantos; John Andrade** (community leaders, South Coast/region)
- **Candida Rose** (artist/culture bearer; music)

Guiding criteria reiterated:

- **Regional balance** (Boston, Brockton, New Bedford, Fall River, Taunton, Cape/Wareham/Onset, etc.)
- **Gender diversity**
- **Expertise** spanning arts/culture/history, philanthropy/fundraising, **construction/development**, education, and language
- Consider higher-ed partners beyond BSU (e.g., UMass Boston/Amherst/Dartmouth, Harvard)

Submission process & timeline:

- **Each commissioner to submit 2–3 names by Thursday, November 13** (email to staff - Rashelle.centeio@masenate.gov).
- Aim to finalize an initial slate and issue **invitation letters** promptly so nominees can accept/decline.

8) Meeting Cadence, Subcommittees & Field Work

- Suggested Structure:
 - Hold **formal Commission meetings every other month** (e.g., **Jan/Mar/May**).
 - Use alternating months (**Feb/Apr/Jun**) for **site visits** and/or **listening sessions** across key communities (Boston, Brockton, New Bedford, Fall River, Taunton, Cape/Wareham/Onset; consider Providence/Pawtucket models).
 - Consider forming a **small number of subcommittees** to research and report between meetings.
- Longer-term goal: hire a **consultant** to conduct a **feasibility study** (timeline planning to begin in spring).

9) Public Meeting Procedures & Recordkeeping (Reminders)

- Meetings are **public**; future agendas will include **public comment**.
- Meetings will be **recorded** for accuracy; **minutes** presented each meeting for approval.
- Staff will manage postings, notices, and records consistent with public-meeting best practices.

10) New Business (for next agenda)

- Discuss establishing an **advisory structure** for **Cape Verdean clubs/associations** statewide (e.g., Brockton, New Bedford, Taunton, Fall River, Boston, historic associations like Scituate) to contribute history, artifacts, and community engagement.

11) Next Meeting

- **Proposed: Tuesday, November 25 at 4:00 PM** (virtual) — to **finalize and vote** on up to **15** expansion members and authorize invitation letters. Staff to circulate calendar hold and meeting link.

Motion to adjourn **PASSED**. Meeting adjourned at **1:00PM**.

Things to answer:

- The commission **must elect exactly two co-chairs** (not just one chair).
 - Those co-chairs must be **selected from among the appointed members** (not designees or staff).
- These two co-chairs share leadership responsibilities equally — this structure is deliberate and written into statute to reflect balance.

Given how the law is written, Yes, we can create additional officer roles — like vice chair, secretary, treasurer, or subcommittee leads — through internal vote. The commission retains discretion to organize internally as necessary to fulfill its duties.

In the Chat:

Links to...

- [11/06 Agenda](#)
- [DRAFT 10/14 Minutes](#)
- [Recommendation List](#)

COMMISSIONER RECOMMENDATIONS:

Senator Liz Miranda: John Cruz, Djofa/Manuel DaLuz

Senator Dylan Fernandes: Barbara Burgos, Vinny DeMacedo

Senator Michael Brady:

Manny Lopes:

Patrick M. O'Connor:

Representative Kip Diggs: Sydney Marrow (Brockton Mayor Chief of Staff) Angelo Barbosa, Candida Rose

Representative Antonio Cabral: John Cruz, Jenny Costa, Soraya DosSantos, John Andrade, Evandro Carvalho, Jose Centeio

Representative Rita Mendes: Vinny DeMacedo

David T. Vieira:

Monica Veiga: Ana Fidalgo, Dr. Aminah Pilgrim, Elson Fortes, Colleen Fonseca

ROLL CALL:

- ☒ ~~Senator Liz Miranda~~
- ☒ ~~Senator Dylan Fernandes (matthew Connoley)~~
- ☐ Senator Michael Brady (Tobias Cowans)
- ☐ Senator Patrick M. O'Connor
- ☒ ~~Representative Kip Diggs~~
- ☒ ~~Representative Antonio Cabral~~
- ☒ ~~Representative Rita Mendes~~
- ☐ Representative David T. Vieira
- ☒ ~~Monica Veiga~~
- ☐ Manny Lopes

Cabral: Chairs should be legislative and vice chairs

Diggs:

Diggs makes a motion to accept the minutes and Antonio Cabral seconds - accepted

Dylan fernandes makes a motion to nominate kipp digs and miranda and cabral seconds

Look into establishing a designee for the meetings that can stand in

Monica Veiga recommends Ana Fidalgo

Deadline to Submit names (Nov 13th)

Tues Nov 25 at 4pm

Consider subcommittees so that meetings can be infrequent (monthly or quarterly)

February - do a sight visit to a potential space or a listening session

Monica Veiga

I like the cadence of connecting monthly and engaging with the community as part of that engagement

I am having sound issues and will use the chat.

Monica Veiga: Ana Fidalgo, Dr. Aminah Pilgrim, Elson Fortes, Colleen Fonseca

Antonio Cabral:

Jeanne Costa

- City: New Bedford, MA
- Occupation/Role: Historian, Community Organizer

John Andrade

- City: New Bedford, MA
- Occupation/Role: Community Activist, Veteran

Lucia 'Soraya' DosSantos

- City: New Bedford, MA

- Occupation/Role: Maternal Wellness Advocate, Birthkeeper, Founder of The Maternal Nurturing Collective