

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Special Commission on the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution

State House, Boston 02133

Representative Carole Fiola

Senator Edward J. Kennedy

House Chair

Senate Chair

Meeting Minutes

1st Commission Meeting

Tuesday, March 15th 2022

3:01pm: Opening Roll Call and Welcoming Remarks

Representative Fiola, House Co-Chair of the Commission gave brief welcoming remarks, to the Commissioners and the public watching the livestream, and informed Commissioners of the public nature of these meetings.

Representative Fiola called the opening roll. 37 Commissioners had been designated and appointed to the Commission by the time of the first meeting.

Present (33): Carole Fiola, Edward J. Kennedy, Jeffrey Roy, David Vieira, Mike Barrett, Michael Comeau, Brona Simon, Kyera Singleton, Gavin Kleespies, Michael Lawson, Suzanne Barry, Ray Anthony Shepard, Kristin Karl Carnahan, Geoffrey E. Love, Scott E. Casper, Casey Cullen, John Peters, Jr, Ryan J. Woods, Erin Kelly Miranda, Brian Boyles, David Slatery, Paul Sacco, Thomas Moreau, Kerima Lewis, Dave O'Donnell, Leon Wilson, Abby Chandler, Barbara Krauthamer, Ken Hiscoe, James Hollister, Keiko Orrall, Michael Quinlin, Paula Renkas

Not Present (4): Ryan Fattman, Catherine Allgor, Michael Creasey, Suzanne Taylor

Awaiting three appointments to the Commission: One by the Select Board of the town of Arlington, and two by the Governor, representing the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head Aquinnah and Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe respectively.

After the roll call, Senator Kennedy gave brief welcoming remarks, as Senate Co-Chair of the Commission. The Co-Chairs will be rotating meetings as the presiding Chair.

Introduction of Commission Members

Commissioners who were present gave a brief introduction stating their title and background for the other Commission members.

Representative Carole Fiola of Fall River	Senator Edward J. Kennedy of Lowell
Representative Jeffrey Roy of Franklin	Representative David Vieira of Falmouth
Senator Michael Barrett of Lexington	Michael Comeau, Executive Director of the Massachusetts State Archives
Brona Simon, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the State Archeologist	Kyera Singleton, Executive Director of the Royall House and Slave Quarters in Medford
Gavin Kleespies, Director for Public Programs in the Massachusetts Historical Society	Michael Lawson, an economist and former Concord Select Board Member
Suzanne Barry, Select Board Member from Lexington	Ray Anthony Shepard, an author and middle school teacher.
Kristin Karl Carnahan, Chief of Interpretative Services for the Department of Conservation and Recreation	Lieutenant Colonel Geoffrey E. Love, Deputy Director of Historical Services for the Massachusetts National Guard
Scott E. Casper, President of the American Antiquarian Society	Casey Cullen, a teacher and Director of Outreach and Advocacy for the Massachusetts Council on Social Studies
John Peters, Executive Director of the Commission on Indian Affairs for Massachusetts	Ryan J. Woods, Executive Vice President & COO of the New England Historic Genealogical Society
Erin Kelly Miranda, Executive Director of Preservation Massachusetts	Brian Boyles, Executive Director of Mass Humanities
David Slatery, Deputy Director of Mass Cultural Council	Paul Sacco, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Lodging Association
Thomas Moreau, Assistant Secretary for Policy and Planning at the Executive Office for Education	Kerima Lewis, Member of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Professor
Dave O'Donnell, Vice President of Strategic Communications for the Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau	Leon Wilson, President and CEO of the Museum of African American History
Abby Chandler, Associate Professor of History at UMass Lowell	Barbara Krauthamer, Dean of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts at UMass Amherst
Ken Hiscoe, Director of Corporate Affairs & Govt Relations for Pfizer, representing the greater Boston business community	James Hollister, the Education Coordinator and Park Ranger at Minuteman National Park
Keiko Orrall, Executive Director of the Office for Travel and Tourism	Michael Quinlin, Executive Director for the Commonwealth Marketing Office and part of the Office of Travel and Tourism
Paula Renkas, State Regent for the MA Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution	

Overview of Legislation establishing the Commission

Representative Fiola reviewed the Commission's purpose and mission. She stated that the Co-Chairs will continue to guide the work of the Commission as established by the legislation and codified in Section 132 of Chapter 24 of the Acts of 2021.

The charge as a Commission is to investigate and study the promotion and celebration of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution by:

- Developing a comprehensive plan for promoting and celebrating the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the American Revolution;
- Identifying all opportunities for individuals, municipalities or other actors across the commonwealth to participate in celebrations of the anniversary and recognize the particular history of their geographical areas;
- Investigating and promoting under-represented voices in the American Revolution including, but not limited to, women, native peoples and persons of color; and
- Submitting a report ... that shall include, but not be limited to, an overview of the commonwealth's particular role in the American Revolution and notable battles, events and figures of the era. This report may be published for distribution to the public..

Representative Fiola further stated that the Commission is not responsible for organizing individual events but is doing this work in conjunction with virtually every historical commission and organization in the Commonwealth. The job of the Commission is to help these communities make connections with one another, help market both small and large community events, and ensure organizations have a place to turn to throughout the state.

Brief Overview from Revolution 250

Jonathan Lane and Gavin Kleespies, from the group Revolution 250 gave an overview of the background and structure of their organization.

Gavin Kleespies spoke on the founding of Revolution 250, a group currently under the umbrella of the Massachusetts Historical Society and has been coordinating efforts around the anniversary since 2013 and hired their first staff member (Jonathan) in 2017.

Jonathan Lane then began to speak about Revolution 250's goals which are to:

- Support or develop imaginative, collaborative, and inclusive programming to link Revolutionary era ideas with civic education and engagement.
- Support or develop educational partnerships that utilize the history of the American Revolution for the purposes of developing a more engaged citizenry for the 21st century.
- Build public-private partnerships for preservation and conservation of historic sites and surrounding areas and enhance the infrastructure that interprets them.

Additionally, within the goals outlined above, there is a particular focus on underrepresented peoples and topics. Jonathan then highlighted the signature partners and smaller organizations that support and make up Revolution 250. They are building this effort to be for communities across the Commonwealth, not just restricted to those with major events.

Jonathan gave a list of multi-year signature projects that Revolution 250 will be working on, from curricula development to the creation of new historical trails, to podcasts and more. This led into a quick overview of the timeline of upcoming signature events that will be taking place. All of the programs and projects mentioned, work towards the three mandates of Revolution 250 including preservation, education, and commemoration.

Schedule of Future Meetings for 2022

Representative Fiola stated that the current plan is to have three more meetings this year of the full Commission, one in June, one in September, and one in December. A poll on future dates will be sent to Commission members a date in these months that will work for the most Commission members will be chosen.

Subcommittees

Representative Fiola said the Co-Chairs propose the formation of subcommittees to best get the work of the Commission started. Some early ideas on Subcommittees focuses could include, education, fiscal, outreach/communication/messaging, diversity/representation and more. All of these ideas for subcommittees will also be sent via poll to the Commission members.

Senator Barrett asked questions related to financial resources from the federal government available to the Commission. Senator Barrett also asked about the staffing situation for the Commission, what role Revolution 250 would be playing in relation to the Commission, and what overlap exists between the two groups.

Representative Fiola stated that they wanted to first constitute the Commission, and that the formation of a finance subcommittee can address the topic of funding in the future as the Legislature moves into budget season and learn of federal participation. There is no current budget for the Commission, nor are there monies available yet for Commission staff. Revolution 250 is a separate, non-profit organization with only a few members on the 250th Commission, and the Commission members will need to decide in the future exactly the role and relationship between the 250th Commission and Revolution 250.

Jonathan Lane stated that America 250 (the national organization) has received some federal dollars and is awaiting a possible \$30 million line item from the Congress that they can give to state commissions like ours once an agreement is signed. However, many states such Vermont and Rhode Island have been hesitant to sign the America 250 agreement due to severe fundraising restrictions set in the agreement. Pennsylvania is the only state known to Jonathan that has already received federal funds. It appears they may have only received \$10,000 but we will confirm. Jonathan stated that the 250th commemorations are not just to celebrate what happened 250 years ago but to reflect on what has happened in the last 250 years. Gavin Kleespies added in that the missions of the 250th Commission and Revolution 250 are not identical, but that Revolution 250 helped to establish this Commission.

4:25pm: Call to Adjourn and Closing Roll Call

Representative Fiola and Senator Kennedy gave closing remarks before calling to adjourn the meeting. Senator Kennedy additionally advocated for a subcommittee structure and encouraged Commissioners to reach out and answer the poll regarding dates and subcommittees.

A closing roll call was taken, and the meeting was adjourned.