

## Maine Recovery Council

July 11, 2025 (Zoom)

Chair Pat Kimball opened the meeting and welcomed listeners. The public comment period was short, there were no speakers. It was suggested that flyers go out to peer recovery centers and other outlets announcing the public comment segment of each Council meeting. The agenda was reviewed and the new Executive Director, Chasity Tuell, was welcomed. The minutes were approved (Vinsel/Everett, 10-0). Pat also reported that the three new Council members should be in place by the August meeting.

Paul Vinsel presented the Governance Committee report. The action item was to approve a change to the bylaws, specifically Section 4.6. The amended language: "Public notice shall be given of all meetings." The item was approved (Fitzgerald/Haskell, 10-0). The second item concerned the role of a clerk of the Council. Currently Grayson Havens is serving in that capacity. Maine statutes require every Board to have a clerk; Section 1.3 of the Bylaws specifies the Council Clerk shall be an attorney or an employee of the AG's office. Discussion focused on who might be an alternative. While the Executive Director seemed like a logical choice, concerns were voiced regarding the additional workload. Paul will draft language to amend this requirement. Turning to the public forum, Paul suggested December 10 and 11 and that part of a day be a zoom meeting format. The preference was for a one-day meeting with a dedicated portion reserved for public comment. Lastly, Paul raised the question of a needs assessment. Several members questioned the need to conduct another assessment as a lot of information already exists. Liz favored using a deep dive into the existing data to guide discussion on a new set of priorities for the next round of grants. Tess added that it was important to hear from those directly affected. Executive session was the last item on the Governance agenda. There is a contradiction between Section 4.10 and the FOIA statutes (Title 1, §405). Several Council members expressed their unease when discussing grant applications. Deb explained that a recent decision in her department noted that funding discussions were not public but the reasons for a decision were public.

Moving on to the next agenda items, Pat explained that the Finance Committee had not yet met formally. Deb said she had met with the AG and will continue to use the standing agenda developed by the previous Treasurer. The Programs/Grants Committee had not met formally but will be resuming their deliberations by the end of the month.

Chasity's first Executive Director's report noted more than half the Council was present at the Governor's Summit. She also said people were excited that a person with lived experience had a leadership role at the Council. The breakout session was scheduled for the last round of the day and as it was the third year, was the smallest yet. Her updates included the RFP for data management had been advertised, Elizabeth said no responses had been received. The Schools workgroup would be meeting next week. The CDC prevention position was in transition. Discussion regarding managing the grants and evaluation garnered a mix of opinions. It was agreed that separating the finance piece from Programs was almost impossible. Elizabeth reported that work was almost completed on the reporting template that would include exhibits and financials, a lot of inputting was necessary to get things set up.

Pat raised the topic of looking at the way people can request funding in non-grant cycle years and the procedures associated with that process under new business. Agencies and individuals ought to have a path to requesting funds. Pat also thanked Grayson for his assistance in working within the state system to get funding released to Tessa's House. She adjourned the meeting at 11:10 am.

