

Maine Recovery Council

December 11, 2025 (on-line only)

Vice-Chair Tess Parks opened the meeting and noted that no one had registered for the public comment period. With that, introductions came from around the screen. The agenda was reviewed, the minutes of the regular meeting (11/13/25) were approved (Brackett/McLoughlin, 10-0), and the special meeting (11/25/25) minutes were approved (Poulin/Brackett, 10-0).

In the Chair's report, Tess explained that the first meeting of 2026 would be the Annual Meeting. Committee assignments had been included in our materials and Pat should be made aware of any adjustments. Election of officers would take place, and a slate was also included in the materials. Members were reminded that FOIA training was now required, deadline was January 22.

The committee reports were next. The Finance Committee chair, Deb Poulin, reported reconciliation efforts are underway so that emergency funding can be released. She suggested that Programs and Grants be the entity to determine the application process and eligibility, Finance would facilitate the release of the funds. Tess volunteered to draft a policy and said she expected many revisions before it was approved. Todd said there ought to be a process for small requests to be turned around quickly. Chasity said Tess' draft would be distributed, members wanted to see the old policy and a revised version.

Joe reported that Programs and Grants had not met lately, Dec. 16 was their next meeting.

Liz reported for the School Funding sub-committee, they met for the first time last week. She said it was a helpful meeting, they heard from participants of the gaps, the challenges and what was going on in the schools. Melissa added that they were grateful to the people who stepped up. They had two more meetings scheduled to establish priorities and craft next steps. Liz said that although \$1.25 mil is available right now, there are many other gaps that need funding. Brendan added that schools in Maine are not limited to the funding available through the Recovery Council (3% of the total funds), they can apply anywhere else as well.

Tess provided the Governance Committee report. She reported the following nominations:

Chair: Pat Kimball

Vice-Chair: Tess Parks

Secretary: Betsy Fitzgerald

Treasurer: Deb Poulin, Darryl Stewart

While the by-laws do not say there cannot be co-Treasurers, the Treasurer is the designated chair of the Finance Committee. Deb suggested co-chairs, there were advantages to the duality. Each candidate had different talents and expertise and there would be consistency and continuity. Joe observed that the Treasurer could appoint a co-chair and didn't we discuss that possibility? Brendan said such an arrangement would not run contrary to the by-laws.

Tess raised the issue of the public forums. Brendan said the language in the MOU is very 'undefined' and said only that the Council had to hold a public forum to receive input. The by-laws could be amended to remove the public forum requirement. Liz suggested a more focused event; asking, for example, what

should be funded next, or an assessment of progress so far. A draft document could guide responses to these ideas. Todd spoke in support of Liz's suggestions. Tess added that it should be an opportunity for people to talk directly about their financial situation, particularly if an organization is close to closing. Maggie's perspective focused on the process and would additional topics at the public forum create an unfair space. Deb asked what constituted emergency funds and said we needed to work on these concepts before putting it out to the public. Jamar added that there ought to be a mechanism for organizations would look ahead three to six months out and manage their finances so that emergency funding was not critical. Were there technical assistance resources available? Brendan said that was one of the Council's mandates. The purpose was to minimize the risks to the Council's resources.

The Executive Director's report focused on a policy, developed in South Carolina, specifying activities and items that cannot be funded. These include activities that are not evidence-based, non-FDA approved meds and personnel costs. Chasity will forward the SC policy for Council members to review and discuss at the next meeting.

The Retreat has not been scheduled as of yet. Two facilitators have returned their proposals. Chasity will be meeting with each the first week of the new year and will have a proposal/recommendation for the next meeting. The question was raised: what were the goals for the retreat? That question garnered some discussion. Chasity asked if the retreat should be scheduled for the same day as the Council meeting (an extended day) or a separate day. Maggie suggested a full day in-person. Melissa proposed discussing what the Council was doing well, hopes for the future, staffing needs. Todd offered the Camp Kiev location. Costs/a budget had not been discussed. Deb said it would be important to know a ballpark amount at the very least. Facilitators come with a cost. The general consensus was to stay in the central Maine area.

Chasity also said PCG had been contacted. There are areas of concern and a meeting has yet to be scheduled. Elizabeth reported entities were reporting their first round funding, at least 1/3 of the contracts had reported.

Tess congratulated Paul on his retirement.

There being no new business the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm.





