

Maine Recovery Council (Zoom only)

March 12, 2026

Chair Pat Kimball opened the meeting. Following introductions around the screen she reviewed the agenda. She also informed the Council that a proposal for a work session at the governor's opiate summit was submitted by jointly by the Penobscot Opiate Committee, the MOSS Center and MeRep. The workshop would focus on how counties have determined a process to allocate opiate funds and open discussion on how more collaboration.

The public comment portion of the agenda was first. Five speakers had signed up for the three-minute slots. Alan Burgess spoke on behalf of the Recovery Wellness Initiative and thanked the Council for the support. Ashley Mitchell represented the Save-a-Life Resource Center. Debra York described the challenges faced by the Angel's Wing in Lewiston. Amy Robinson described her journey from addiction to serving as a recovery coach. Danielle Forino, from First Mile Recovery Center, explained the challenges of serving a large portion of northern Maine. Collectively, the speakers advocated for the continued support of recovery centers statewide.

Turning back to the agenda, the minutes were approved (Everett/Pulcifer, 10-0-1). The chair's report was brief, noting a proposal had been submitted from the MOSS Center/MeRAP and would be an agenda item next month.

Committee Reports

Finance: Deb Poulin presented a comprehensive view of the financial status of the Council. She presented a draft operating schedule that included consideration of off-cycle requests and set thresholds for emergency funding requests. The draft budget showed a beginning balance of \$29,926,047 and obligated funds of \$9,385,957. The Council was reminded that the settlement funds are front-loaded and will slope downwards in the remaining years. Liz asked what amounts had been allocated to each pillar and Deb provided those amounts. Joe observed this was the closest the Council had been to understanding cash flow.

Governance: Paul Vinsel began the report with a summary of the discussion regarding orientation for new Council members and added that current members would benefit from a review as well so that everyone was on the same page. A procedure for determining committee chairs and vice-chairs was discussed. Based on suggestions Pat had made that mirrored the by-laws, the procedure was approved (Brackett/Fitzgerald, 13-0). Next was consideration of a policy for the review of personnel contracts. After a robust discussion a motion to approve a review policy was approved (Brackett/Stover, 12-0-1). Chasity noted that her contract expires June 30. A letter to nominating bodies, reminding them of the slots that would soon be open with the advent of term-limited members, was also noted.

Programs/Grants: Joe Everett summarized the discussion regarding the status and needs of recovery centers. A survey of four questions was distributed, the information received was not all positive. Data clarification is needed in that some centers reported encounters and others by number of participants served. Cutbacks on hours have been reported already. Possible alternatives: fund the full amounts needed to continue operations, use a funding structure similar to the SSPs (equal), extend funding for the two centers the Council currently funds or support the Recovery Wellness Center only. Pat reported her conversation with AG Aaron Frey and his willingness to partner in support of recovery

centers. Rep. Stover observed that getting the centers to a safe sustainable place was of the essence, it would be more expensive to re-open a program if it closed in the interim. Pat offered that the Council could fund Year 1 and suggested the AG's office could fund Year 2. The motion was made emphatically expressing that and was approved to that effect (Fitzgerald/Vinsel, 13-0). Joe also announced that Melissa Hackett had been selected as co-chair of the Programs/Grants Committee, the selection was approved (Vinsel/Blackwell-Moore, 11-0).

School Funding Workgroup: Liz Blackwell-Moore said the discussion focused on next steps. The participants focused on how the Council could help in the RFP process and in prioritizing the process of awarding funding. The information gathered would be assembled into a forthcoming report. Melissa added that it was a good think tank that would result in a set of discreet set of recommendations.

Turning to the Executive Director's report, Chasity reported the contract with Lifeline had ended and the \$20,800 had been returned. She also mentioned that several grantees have expressed that they would like to come and report on the impact funding has had on their work. Carol's contract has yet to be encumbered, interviewing will begin as soon after that is finished.

There was nothing mentioned under the new business heading.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 pm.