



## **Maine Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (MePCSW)**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**August 15, 2024**

**9:30-11:00 A.M.**

**MePCSW Commission Members in Attendance:** Kate Elmes, Eisha Khan, Ellen McKenzie, Fatuma Hussein, Samantha Lott Hale, Rebecca Austin, Keita Whitten Foster, Darylen Cote, Sue Mackey Andrews, Dania Bowie, Maulian Bryant

**MePCSW Commission Members Absent:** Anne Gass, Jill Randall, Jill Barkley Roy, Jennifer Wilkey

#### **Staff and Guests:**

- Elinor Higgins, MePCSW Executive Director
- Shenna Bellows, Secretary of State
- Joann Bautista, Deputy Secretary of State – Policy Advisor

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**Facilitator:** Kate Elmes (former Chair) and Elinor Higgins

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#### **Welcome and Introductions**

1. Welcomed new Commission members, Ellen McKenzie and Eisha Khan
2. Icebreaker/discussion question about cultural roots and identity – will continue during next meeting

#### **Old Business and Public Comment**

1. Approve June in-person meeting minutes
  - a. Motion to approve: Darylen
  - b. Second: Sue
  - c. Vote: Unanimous approval
2. Any members of the public may introduce themselves and speak for 3 minutes
  - a. No members of the public in attendance

#### **Guest Speaker**

1. Shenna Bellows, Secretary of State (joined by Joann Bautista, Deputy Secretary of State – Policy Advisor)
  - a. Provided overview of state budget timeline and status of MePCSW funding.
  - b. Established goals for the next biennial budget cycles: 1.) get a stand-alone budget line and 2.) secure funding for defined budget initiatives

- c. Discussed strategies for securing per diem compensation for Commission members, interest from members in potential legislative sponsors
- d. Requested that MePCSW prioritize budget initiatives

**Executive Director's Update**

Elinor provided brief updates on operational work and participation in state data governance workgroup

**Operations Update and New Business**

1. Reviewed and discussed MePCSW budget initiatives, including funding requests for: baseline operational/administrative expenses, Commission member per diem, contracts, and interns
  - a. Darylen moved to amend the budget request to include funding for travel (mileage and lodging) to each Maine county. Sue seconded.
  - b. Budget approval authorizing Elinor to make necessary amendments
    - i. Motion to approve: Kate
    - ii. Second: Dania
    - iii. Vote: unanimous approval
  - c. Authorization for Elinor to prioritize budget items based on discussion.
    - i. Motion to approve: Darylen
    - ii. Second: Sue
    - iii. Vote: unanimous approval

**Next Meeting Date and Wrap-Up**

1. Next MePCSW Meeting: October 17<sup>th</sup>, 9:30-11am
2. Next Report Committee Meeting: August 29<sup>th</sup>, 12-1:30pm