



Maine Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (MePCSW) Governance Committee

Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2025

10:00 – 11:00 A.M.

MePCSW Committee Members in Attendance: Anne Gass, Samantha Lott Hale, Keita Whitten Foster, Jill Barkley Roy

MePCSW Committee Members Absent: Kate Elmes

Staff and Guests: Elinor Higgins (MePCSW ED)

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Facilitator: Anne Gass, MePCSW Chair

Welcome

Old Business and Public Comment

1. Update on drafting a MePCSW member handbook/policy manual – discuss next steps
 - a. Circulate to the full group – have people comment in share point
 - b. Timeline for this – create an excerpted version for new members so we can use the more solidified components. Aim to finish the full manual within the first half of 2025.
 - c. Plan for this to be a living document that we review and update periodically
2. No members of the public present

New Business and MePCSW Governance

1. Updates:
 - a. Governor's budget - \$5,000 for MeCSW
 - i. Discussion about historical underfunding of efforts to advance women's wellbeing, the need for sufficient resources to do our work, opportunities to broaden impact through partnerships, opportunities to illustrate our value to policymakers
2. Bill submitted by Rep. Lynn Copeland on cloture day (language below)
 - a. **Resolve, to Study Pay Disparities in Gendered Workforces**
Resolved; that the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, established under Title 5, Chapter 371-A, and referred to in this resolve as "the Commission," shall study the extent of occupational or workforce segregation in Maine by gender; and assess any disparities in safety or compensation related to that workforce segregation. The Commission shall

submit a report on such findings to the 132nd Maine Legislature by January 15, 2026.

3. Invitation to speak and exhibit at Inclusion Maine Conference – committee supportive of exploring this opportunity
4. Discussion about strategic planning in 2025
 - a. Discuss approach and timeline
 - b. Facilitator for discussions in February and April (working with Dept. of SOS staff to identify a facilitator)
 - c. Discussed survey questions for members and consensus about adding questions that ask specifically about opportunities and threats facing Maine women, as well as issues impacting MePCSW
 - d. Suggestion to share information about existing work streams and identified priorities to give members context
5. Maine ERA for All campaign – brief update, teeing up for discussion of Commission support at February meeting
6. Committee member sharing and other new business?
 - a. Anne's project gathering stories from Maine women who have lived experience with sex discrimination