

AMERICA 250

CONNECTICUT

America 250 | CT Commission Governance Subcommittee Meeting Minutes Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Attendees:

Arienne Orozco, Governance Subcommittee Chair
(designee of the Secretary of the State, the Hon. Stephanie Thomas)
Steven Hernández
Michael Werner (designee of Steven Hernández)
Jason Mancini
Denise Merrill, AM250 | CT Chair
Sheldyn Oliver
Cyndi Tolosa
Megan Baker (guest)

The meeting started at 2:06 p.m.

Minutes Approval

Motion: To approve the minutes taken from the August 24, 2023 Governance Subcommittee meeting.

First: Steven H.; **Second:** Denise M.

Yes: 3* **No:** 0; **Abstain:** 0

Motion passed.

***Number of members present during vote.**

Annual Report

The annual report outline that was submitted to the agenda for today's meeting was discussed by committee members.

The committee will plan to work together, via email, to create a DRAFT of this report. The DRAFT will then be sent to Kathy D'Amato (Am250 | CT Commission designee of the Governor of the State) for her review before the Governance Committee presents the report to the Commission at the January 17, 2024 Am250 | CT Commission meeting and ultimately submits the report to the Office of the Governor.

Feedback included additional items to include in the report:

1. Declaring Freedom Conference – Spring, 2024
2. National/Regional progress in relation to the work of Am250 | CT

Subcommittee Role in 2024

In 2023, the Governance Subcommittee was tasked with establishing bylaws for the Commission as well as submitting the Commission's annual report. With the bylaws approved and the report underway, the Governance Subcommittee has been asked to help build a philanthropic ecosystem for 2024. This could include building out the process for bringing a diverse pool of people into the work of the Commission via subcommittee work, advisory work, etc.

It was suggested that the Am250 | CT Commission could align its work (communications and storytelling) with the state's rebranded slogan, "Make it Here" and to think about the commemoration of Connecticut through the stories and experiences of its residents – connecting with Connecticut's communities and fundraising around the ability to talk about Connecticut's towns through this lens. Resources related to this can be found at the end of the document.

The Governance Subcommittee was also asked to assist with external messaging for the Commission. This external messaging would be of use to subcommittees when they connect and engage with the public – specifically engagement with Connecticut's communities of color, voters, and young residents. As important as it is to commemorate the past, it will be just as important to cast our collective gaze to envisioning a healthier future for Connecticut.

To get Am250 | CT into the imagination of the public, it was suggested that a call for individual stories and experiences could be submitted to the Commission. A submission call done by the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity served as a model for this suggestion.

Messaging will be discussed and workshopped at the next Governance Subcommittee meeting.

Other Business

CTH has made significant progress relating to networking and prospective funding for Am250 | CT. The CTH 250th Leadership Committee has begun to lay the groundwork for philanthropic initiatives. Any progress made will be shared in the New Year.

CTH, the Office of the Secretary of the State, the Connecticut State Department of Education, and the Connecticut Democracy Center were awarded \$35K from the Scripps Family Fund for Education and the Arts (SFFEA) to support the Red, White, and Blue Schools Initiative. This is a great opportunity to continue to amplify the message of the work of the Commission.

Arienne O. and Cyndi T. to work together to update the list of annual fairs and festivals for 2024.

Next Meeting

An availability poll will be sent to the committee to find a date during the week of January 8, 2024.

Zoom Chat Resources

- Connecticut Made: Homegrown Products by Local Craftsman, Artisans, and – Wadsworth Atheneum (wadsworthshop.org)
- Distinguished speakers to host Venture Smith Day at gravesite in CT (middletownpress.com)
- <https://simsburyfreelibrary.org/exhibits/dr-martin-luther-king-jr-in-simsbury/>

The meeting ended at 3 p.m.