

AMERICA 250

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America 250 | CT Commission
Governance Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 12, 2024
3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Attendees

Subcommittee Members

Arienne Orozco
Jason Mancini
Deborah Schander
Michael Werner
Megan Baker

CTH Staff

Cyndi Tolosa
Sheldyn Oliver
Rachel Gonzalez

The meeting began at **3:02 p.m.**

1. Minutes Approval

- a. A. Orozco opened discussion on minutes from the February and May meetings, and whether both should be approved, as there had not been enough voting members present at the previous meeting. There is a need to clarify who is a voting member, and in particular confirm the designee from CWCSEO. M. Werner recommended that in his absence, M. Baker should be considered the designee; this was agreed upon, with a note that Melvette Hill should be consulted as the official representative from CWCSEO on the Commission.
- b. [May 13, 2024 minutes](#): One update to the language for agenda item #1 in May 13, 2024 minutes: "Not enough voting members in attendance on 5/13/24 who attended 2/5/24 meeting - moved to next meeting."
 - i. Motion to approve: A. Orozco
 - ii. Second: M. Baker
 - iii. Motion was approved
 - iv. Abstained: D. Schander, M. Werner, and J. Mancini
- c. [February 5, 2024 minutes](#):
 - i. Motion to approve: A. Orozco
 - ii. Second: J. Mancini
 - iii. Motion was approved
 - iv. Abstain: D. Schander and M. Baker

2. Commission Demographic Data Collection

- a. Review [draft form](#)
 - i. Prior to the meeting, there was a question from M. McGee (IDEA Subcommittee) on the wording of race/ethnicity categories, noting that they could skew the data. A. Orozco followed up with Deputy Kozin to note M. McGee's concerns, and received the response that the Secretary

of the State's office had kept the categories the same from years prior but is considering updates based on concerns.

- ii. J. Mancini asked for clarification on categories, and whether they could be made more representative. After some discussion, subcommittee members came to a consensus to keep the language on the form aligned with that of the Secretary of the State's report. D. Schander noted that a field could be added at the bottom along the lines of "we're seeking feedback to share with the SOTS office regarding race/ethnicity," allowing respondents to self-identify. M. Baker further noted there are concerns with how data is collected that go beyond the state level, but if we are reporting to the state should use the categories delineated by them for ease of reporting.
- iii. M. Werner inquired as to the purpose of this at this stage, since the Secretary of the State's office is not currently collecting data for report. A. Orozco confirmed that is accurate, but that this will also be used for the commission to self-assess. Next year, the commission will need to officially collect for Secretary of the State reporting.

b. Review [draft email](#) to commissioners

- i. Deadline for response was set for September 15 to allow for review prior to the October Commission meeting. The email will be signed by both D. Merrill and J. Mancini, and will be sent by J. Mancini.

3. Affiliate Program Procedure

- i. C. Tolosa noted that there have been a few applications submitted thus far, but not all of them serious.

b. [Review web page](#)

- i. Discussion of layout and content of web page, with the following notes:
 1. "Apply" button will be moved toward the top of the page
 2. Add subheadings for easier readability
 3. Make the benefits more clear
 4. Ensure timeline for application for review is clear
 5. Note funding opportunities with CT Humanities, while making it clear that being an affiliate does not guarantee receipt of grant funding.
- ii. D. Schander recommended scheduling a special meeting before the next Commission meeting so the Subcommittee can report out on the first round of affiliates - a special meeting was agreed upon and scheduled for **10/7 at 3:00**.

c. [Review questionnaire](#) & establish norms for evaluating applications

- i. C. Tolosa noted that the questionnaire will be sent out to the current email list. Staff will also create draft language and ask CT League of Museums, CT Library Association, possibly municipal contacts, etc to push out the announcement to their own organizations/contacts.
- ii. The "themes alignment" question on the application will be removed prior to sending.
- iii. Discussion of criteria: What would cause the subcommittee to reject an affiliate application? A. Orozco raised the question that if an organization

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notes they are not non-partisan, it may not be an automatic disqualifier. The consensus of the subcommittee is that the answer is probably not an automatic no - that the questionnaire should give the organization an opportunity to explain their response and how they intend to align with the values and themes of the Commission.

- d. Establish timeline for application review & develop strategy for publicizing
 - i. Prior to the approval meeting, CTH staff will export PDFs of all applications and conduct an initial review to make brief notes for subcommittee members. Applications will be forwarded to subcommittee members for review. All members will vote "Yes" or "Further Discussion" for applications; those applications that are unanimously approved will not be discussed in subcommittee.
 - ii. Timeline - Deadline will be set for 1 week prior to the subcommittee meeting to allow for review. For the 10/7 meeting, the application deadline will be 9/29. CTH staff will review & forward to the subcommittee by end of day on Tuesday, 10/1.
 - iii. A review spreadsheet will be created - possibly a Google form so responses can be collated automatically.
4. Other Business as Needed
 - a. No other business

The meeting ended at **3:55 p.m.**

Next Meeting

Monday, October 7, 3:00 p.m. (Special Meeting)