



America 250 | CT Commission
Community & Organizational Engagement Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 12, 2024
11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Virtual via Zoom

Attendees

Subcommittee Members

Amrys Williams (Chair)
Liz Shapiro
Andy Horowitz
Margaret Khan

Staff

Rachel Gonzalez
Cyndi Tolosa

The meeting began at 11:03

1. Welcome & Updates
 - a. IDEA Planning Guide is live on website & was shared in an e-blast.
 - b. Festivals update: A. Williams, R. Gonzalez, and others attended the Connecticut Maritime Heritage Festival in New London this past weekend. Upcoming festivals are PRIDE in Hartford this weekend (9/14) with 3 CT Humanities staff members & Cathy Labadia attending, then The Gathering in Waterbury later this month
 - c. New subcommittee member - Margaret Khan, taking the place of Doug Lord from the Connecticut Library Association. Subcommittee members and staff all introduced themselves.
2. 2025 Work Plan Development & Establishment of Working Groups
 - a. Meeting Schedule
 - i. Subcommittee is in agreement to change to quarterly meetings for 2025, with ad hoc meetings as needed. While the currently scheduled meeting time is convenient for those in attendance, a poll will be conducted prior to the next meeting in hopes of increasing attendance. R. Gonzalez will set up poll & distribute to subcommittee members, to plan for a November meeting and take December off.
 - b. Working Plan Update/Potential Establishment of Working Groups
 - i. C. Tolosa proposed smaller working groups focused on three different areas - Organizational Engagement, General Public Engagement, and Content Creation. Some conversation on whether this would be the best structure, as the number of subcommittee members who regularly participate is small, with a recommendation to set goals for output over the next year and assign work from there. Key items that will need to be addressed over the next year include: America Gives in coordination with the national commission, an oral history project with Fiona Vernal, and

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working to promote the themes of the commission with local committees, the public, and other entities.

- ii. Discussion on the best way to engage with communities: A. Williams noted that, from her experience at the Maritime Heritage Festival, attending festivals may not be the best way to engage with the public, but there was agreement amongst subcommittee members that engaging with local committees is important. C. Tolosa shared a brief overview of a Zoom meeting that was held with local committees in July and the upcoming schedule of meetings. L. Shapiro offered to join these meetings to assist with breakout groups and recommended potentially bringing in Designated Regional Service Organizations to assist as well. A. Horowitz recommended a form that local committees could complete to share their plans and stumbling blocks, and give an idea of what would be helpful both to review in future meetings and tailor the work of the subcommittee to meet local committee needs. Creation of a visual map of local committees may also be helpful.
- iii. Other items to consider to increase engagement: civics project around the election; M. Khan shared that the Connecticut Library Consortium has asked her about History Chip.

3. Other Business

- a. The budget ask from the State of Connecticut for next year is being crafted.

The meeting ended at **11:50**.

Next Meeting

November 2024. Exact date to be determined after polling all subcommittee members.