CITY OF EAST PROVIDENCE
Semiquincentennial (250th Anniversary) Commission
Draft Minutes

Date: Thursday, December 19, 2025
Time: 2:00 PM
Place: East Providence City Hall, 145 Taunton Avenue, Room 306

Voting members present: Meredith Bonds-Harmon (Chair), Sandra Turgeon (Vice-Chair), Patrick Hanner (Secretary), Deborah Ormerod, Nancy Moore, James Moran, Elmer Pina and Sheryl Hack.

Non-voting ex-officio members present: Eric Underhill, Tom Warzeka, Laura McNamara, André Herrera and Brain Turgeon.

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 2:07 pm. Meredith Bonds-Harmon introduced herself and requested all commission members to give a brief introduction.

2. Mayor DaSilva Introduction

Mayor DaSalva welcomed all the commission members and suggested that the book "Our Heritage, A history of East Providence" could be updated/revised by the commission.

3. Meredith Bonds-Harmon

Meredith Bonds-Harmon read the charge of the commission from the executive order "Establishing the City of East Providence Semiquincentennial (250th Anniversary) Commission".

4. Introduction of Commission Members:

Meredith Bonds-Harmon: Ms. Bonds-Harmon is currently the City's Library Director and is familiar with the Rhode Island Open Meetings Act, City policies, navigating City logistics, event planning and is passionate about advocating for inclusiveness and facilitating discussions among historians.

Elmer Pina: Mr. Pina has worked for the City for 21 years and is currently the City's Affirmative Action/EEO Officer. Mr. Pina has always enjoyed working among diverse groups and encouraging inclusiveness.

Andre Herrera: Mr. Herrera is the City's Director of Policy & Constituent Services and will coordinate between the City's 250th Committee and the Secretary of State office.

Sheryl Hack: Ms. Hack is the Executive Director of Preserve Rhode Island and specializes in architectural history.

Eric Underhill: Mr. Underhill is a member of the Historical Society and City's Historic District Commission, and specializes in industrial heritage such as the Rumford Baking Powder Company and Standard Oil.

Laura McNamara: Ms. McNamara is the Director of Events and Community Engagement for the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council and former Executive Director of the East Providence Chamber of Commerce, and is currently serving on the Barrington 250th Committee. Laura is familiar with social media and a liaison to the Barrington 250th Committee for possible collaboration.

Andrea Vargas: Ms. Vargas is the City's Veteran Services and Community Health Coordinator and is experienced in graphic design and logos, and is currently working on a design for banners and a logo for the 250th Committee.

James Moran: Mr. Moran is the City's Chief Planner and is the temporary liaison between the 250th Committee and the Sowam Committee.

Patrick Hanner: Mr. Hanner is the City's Principal Planner and has been working closely with the Historical Society and Historic District Commission on a number of preservation projects that include nominations to the National Register of Historic Places and preservation studies.

Deborah Oremrod: Ms. Ormerod is the Vice-President of the Historical Society and the Chairperson of the City's Historic District Commission. Deborah is familiar with outreach efforts, interpretive signage and social media.

Nancy Moore: Ms. Moore has been involved with preservation projects for the last 48 years as a member of the Historical Society and Historic District Commission. Ms. Moore suggested a strong partnership between the 250th Committee and the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council.

Sandra Turgeon: Ms. Turgeon is a member of the Historical Society with areas of specialization that include Newman Cemetery, Little Neck Cemetery and Ring on the Green. Sandra is currently completing biographies of the 170 revolutionary war veterans.

Brain Turgeon: Mr. Turgeon is a former member of the Historic District Commission and a member of the Historical Society experienced in the historic renovation/construction projects.

5. New Business

a. Election of Officers

On a motion by Elmer Pina, seconded by Nancy Moore, the committee voted unanimously (8-0) to elect Meredith Bonds-Harmon as Chairperson, Sandra Turgeon as Vice-Chairperson, Patrick Hanner as Secretary.

b. Meeting Frequency and dates/times

Following discussion among the committee members, it was decided that the 250th Committee will meet the third Thursday of every month at 3:00 pm in room 306. The next meeting will be held on January 22nd at 3:00 pm in room 306. Agendas will be sent to committee members prior to meetings and all meeting agendas will be posted on the Secretary of State's webpage and City Hall lobby.

c. Workplan

At the January 22nd meeting items to be discussed include an events calendar, content guidelines, funding opportunities and a logo.

d. Homework

Meredith Bonds-Harmon suggested to the committee members to visit the webpage rhodeisland250.org and to become familiar with the RI250 Community Field Guide, and to be prepared to brainstorm events and content at the January 22nd meeting.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 pm.