



**EVENTS, EXHIBITS, AND TRAILS SUBCOMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

Boston City Hall Boston, MA, 02201

Held virtually via Zoom

**MARCH 13, 2024**

**Commissioners Present:** *Suzanne Taylor, Imari Jefferies, Fairies Gray, Celia Richa, Nat Sheidley, Eric Hanson-Plass, John Borders IV, Konah Brownell for Jay Ash*

**Commissioners Absent:** *Kara Elliott-Ortega, Dave O'Donnell, Juan Lopez, Kyera Singleton, Dr. Noelle Trent, Sam Tully-Chambers, Juan Eusebio, Juan Lopez*

**Staff Present:** *Genesis Pimentel, Commemoration Commission Manager; Murray Miller, Director of Historic Preservation*

A full recording of the meeting is available on [boston.gov/commemoration-commission](https://boston.gov/commemoration-commission)

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**SESSION BEGINS - 6:00 PM**

**I. WELCOME**

- a. Commemoration Commission Manager Genesis Pimentel welcomed attendees.

**II. ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- a. Meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

**III. EVENTS, EXHIBITS, AND TRAILS LENS**

- a. Genesis Pimentel introduced the spreadsheets that Timelines, Archives, and Curricula was working on. She introduced the idea of joint meetings with the Timelines, Archives, Curricula subcommittee. She also introduced a document of pre-existing celebrations by time periods that was put together by Embrace Boston. She shared the Events Form and Events Calendar with the group. Advertising for these materials was discussed.
- b. Discussed Jim Vrabel's *When and Where in Boston* and how this might work for archives.
- c. Genesis Pimentel shared constituent comments, so that the commissioners could see what residents would like to see for commemoration.
- d. Co-Chair Imari Jeffries asked whether we were commemorating 250 years of America or the Revolution based on the comments.
- e. Genesis Pimentel responded that some people are commemorating Revolution 250 and that can mean battle-specific events but others are looking at 250 years of America.



- f. Commissioner Faries Gray stated that the 250th can be looked at as a celebration of the colonists' independence from Britain because that's what it is. While that did not mean freedom for Black or Indigenous peoples, these events will be important to include.
- g. Co-Chair Imari Jeffries clarified that there are 250th celebrations that are not tied to Independence and asked if the 250th means we don't celebrate those who weren't around then.
- h. Commissioner Nat Sheidley stated that it would be more impactful to connect the commemoration to stories of the past.
- i. The Commemoration Commission ordinance was reviewed.
- j. Commissioner Eric Hanson-Plass discussed how Rev 200 was very celebratory and Rev 250 will include that but is also asking more questions of the nation and still defining revolution for ourselves.
- k. Genesis Pimentel showed examples of constituents who were interested in recent history, abolitionist history, and that many people who are interested in 250 anniversaries specifically are historians.
- l. Chair Jeffries discussed events happening in 2026, such as BAM Fest and groups like Front Porch Theater Company, that can be conceptualized as 250 events, even if not their original purpose.
- m. Commissioner John Borders IV asked how the Commission or subcommittee will be measuring success and how will the neighborhoods who were not directly involved in 250 be engaged.
  - i. Commissioner Celia Richa discussed questions that will need to be addressed per the ordinance: How are we creating wealth? What's the investment in local businesses? What are the metrics for neighborhoods engaged? Is it new visitors or residents from other neighborhoods visiting? What stuck out to Commissioner Richa was the charge to invest in local diverse businesses and how we use visitors to generate revenue for the City. It could be the number of groups engaged.
  - ii. Commissioner Borders reiterated Commissioner Faries Gray's point to ask if there is a possibility that Rev 250th events and 250th historical context events could coexist. Spending, heads in bed, and tourism is a given for his role but are there groups out there who are coming together, planning events, fundraising, and what can the Commission do to support them?
  - iii. Co-Chair Jeffries stated there is opportunity for counterstories. It would not make sense to ask groups that focus exclusively on certain historical eras, places, or events to expand, and other organizations should be brought into the fold and these events should happen side by side. The next steps once the Commission has events is to identify local businesses that are in proximity to the location of these events.



- n. There was clarification about the fact that the subcommittee is charged with recommending funds but not acquiring them. Commissioner Nat Sheidley discussed that while the subcommittee is recommending others' events, they should be involved with planning big events that usually fall to the City such as Fourth of July.
- o. Co-Chair Imari Jeffries discussed potentially focusing on June 15-July 15, 2026. It would encompass Juneteenth, Independence Day, and the Olympics.
- p. Genesis Pimentel recommended having a draft of recommendations by Juneteenth.

**IV. BOSTON 400 LOGO/BRANDING/MARKETING**

- a. Genesis Pimentel let the subcommittee know that social media has been started up, but Instagram has banned the official account.
- b. Co-Chair Suzanne Taylor discussed involving DoIT, the state releasing their logo, utilizing BLC, ONS, and historical societies.
- c. Commissioner Sheidley stated that getting the City Council to share information with their constituents.
- d. Co-Chair Suzanne Taylor stated there should be celebrations in every neighborhood with fireworks, similar to Coffee Hours or trolley.

**V. OPEN DISCUSSION ON RELEVANT TOPICS**

- a. Genesis Pimentel stated that the time period can be expanded because May 18th is Haitian Flag Day and Carnival marks the end of summer festivals in August.

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- a. There were no public comments.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT - 7:50 PM**

- a. Co-Chair Suzanne Taylor motioned to adjourn the meeting.
- b. Co-Chair Imari Jeffries seconded.