

**Arizona America250 Commission**

In person and virtually via Zoom

**Meeting Minutes of March 3, 2025**

**1. Call to order and roll call**

Acting Chair Tighe called the meeting to order at 9:05am.

**Commission Members Present:**

Verlon Jose

Paul Tighe

Ashley Harder

Anna Needham

Sarah Webber

Marcus Carney

**Commission Members Absent:**

Senate Member (TBD)

House Member (TBD)

Secretary Adrian Fontes

Jay McCall

Neil Giuliano

**2. Discussion and possible action on meeting minutes for February 7, 2025.**

**MOTION** Adoption of the 2/7/25 minutes with no changes. Marcus Carney motioned, Sarah Webber seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

**3. Commissioner update and possible action on subcommittee work.**

**a. Arts, Museums & Cultural Institutions.**

The most recent subcommittee meeting, last week, wasn't quorate, so it was more of an informational session. Anna Needham spoke about their support for the upcoming Two Lights for Tomorrow celebration, including working to get a poet to read/reimagine Longfellow's poem.

**b. Civic Engagement, Education & Community Service.**

Paul Tighe said that they had a very productive meeting last Monday. Good information was shared, and he highlighted the organizational tool managed by subcommittee member and Vice Chair Dawn Wallace, and offered to share with other working groups. There is some overlap between this subcommittee and others.

**c. History, Heritage & Historic Preservation.**

Ashley Harder reports that they are working for a historical interpretation for the Semiquincentennial. She expects that interpretation will involve documents for the Traveling Museum. A scope of work and timeline have been created. This is in partnership with the Arizona Historical Society. Several other groups have come together to partner to support the Heritage Fund, which comes through the General Fund for state parks and Arizona Fish and Game, as well as other groups. They are looking to form an alliance supportive of the Heritage Fund. Ashley highlighted the work for preserving the May Hicks House in Flagstaff. Outside of the subcommittee, Ashley met with the Arizona Library and the Arizona Memory Project to start planning for the Traveling Museum. They talked about how they could work together for the Semiquincentennial.

**d. Military & Veterans Affairs.**

The Executive Director presented to the Legislature's Veterans Caucus on America250 AZ activities. This committee has a great partnership with the Arizona Trail Association, and there is a partnership with them to plan a Veterans Relay. Arizona PBS is interested in covering the relay.

**e. Municipal Outreach & Tribal Affairs.**

The ED said we are currently working one-on-one with cities and the Tribal nations through individual subcommittees but hope to formalize a specific committee soon.

**f. Travel & Tourism.**

The next meeting is on 19 March.

**4. Report from Executive Director.**

**a. Fundraising and sponsorship update.**

The ED thanked Neil and Secretary Fontes for their efforts on sponsorships. There are close to a dozen meetings scheduled in the coming weeks. There have been enough soft commitments to ensure the Two Lights for Tomorrow program can go on as scheduled. In the interest of time and with respect to planning, Vitalyst will be supporting in this effort by providing an advance until upcoming donations are finalized and deposited. The ED shared that there is a small-dollar fundraising platform, and she will share information about that with the commission.

**b. Two Lights for Tomorrow planning update.**

SOS staff shared that the planning is moving along. The planning team will be meeting with Communications this week to craft the press release and finalize additional outreach efforts. Vendors are being negotiated with, and there is an exhibitor application which staff shared with the commission. They report that many applications have come in already. Quite a few exhibitors are lined up to demonstrate craftsmanship endemic to Arizona in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as well as the eastern colonies. The run of show is being finalized, and the program will include recognition of Riley, our logo contest winner. There will be a few different bands performing throughout the evening. Food trucks are being secured. We expect Waste Management to in-kind the portolets and trash receptacles. The ED and staff have been exceptionally busy planning this kickoff event. Commissioners are welcome to suggest VIP attendees.

Verlon Jose asked if there is a running list of the events being planned and wants to know where the information about programming can be found. The ED said a website is in the works, and she will email an overview to the commissioners with up-to-date information about all events planned. Once Two Lights is over, planning will begin in earnest for the Traveling Museum. The website will include not only A250's events but events being held by partner organizations.

Ashley Harder wants to increase visibility for the commission and subcommittees. Partnerships are continuing to be formed. She is really looking forward to the website being up and running and getting the commission's brand out there. She has experience with creating websites and digital foundation tools. She has talked to a previous employer about finding start-up grants for the commission to help subsidize website development. The ED is planning for the website to be published in conjunction with Two Lights and solicited information about fundraising for that and possibly finding a company that would be willing to offer in-kind help. She asked the General Counsel and the new Deputy General Counsel to share information. The DGC discussed best practices around procurement and soliciting bids. Paul Tighe asked about the different threshold limits, and the DGC offered clarification.

Jim McPherson spoke to Verlon Jose's question about publicity and asked if there is a Public Information Officer assigned to the commission who can liaise with the various state agencies. SOS Comms staff said that they will act as that liaison and that planning is already underway.

##### **5. Call to the public.**

No public comment received.

##### **6. Adjournment.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:41am.