



Minutes

Vermont 250th Anniversary Commission

June 1, 2026, 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Microsoft Teams Meeting

Members Present: Laura V. Trieschmann, Chair
Jim Brangan, Vice Chair
Alexandra Garrett *arrived 10:56am
Tom Hughes
Martin Mahoney
Heather Pelham
Steve Perkins
Izzy Provoncha
Breanna Sheehan
Jonah Spivak

Members Absent: Catherine Delneo
Susan Evans McClure
Christopher Kaufman Ilstrup
Paul Deslandes

Staff: Lindsay Pacheco

Public: Andrew Whipple, Isle La Motte Historical Society

I. Welcome

Laura V. Trieschmann opened the meeting at 10:33am.

II. Changes to the Agenda

Jonah Spivak requested to add legislative funding update. Laura Trieschmann will discuss recent media strategy meeting. Breanna Sheehan will share Abenaki Curriculum. Stephen Perkins will give update on 50 for 250 exhibit and book.

III. Public Comment

No public comment.

IV. Review and Approve Minutes

a. February 13, 2026

Jonah Spivak made a motion to approve the minutes; Steve Perkins seconded the motion. All in favor, Breanna Sheehan abstained due to absence; motion approved. Tom Hughes provided edits for his section to be corrected in the February minutes.

V. Grant Updates

a. Vermont Humanities and Vermont Arts Council

36 grants awarded from last round of funding. Next deadline for funding is in September. ACCD included all awarded grants in a May press release.

b. Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership

Jim Brangan provided funding update. \$650,000 of grants have been awarded. Another 15 grants totaling \$222,000 will be awarded this month. 45 grants totaling around \$850,000 will be awarded once funding program is complete. Recommended Commissioners visit the CVNHP-funded Battle of Plattsburgh Exhibit and new display at Fort Ticonderoga. Admission to the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum is free. 2026 CVNHP Summit will take place on 9/22-9/23. 9/22: field trip day to include visit to Burlington City Arts Facility, Ethan Allen Homestead, and on-lake tour of Burlington Bay. 9/23: panel discussion featuring artifacts in the interpretation of the Revolutionary War, round table discussion by former CVNHP interns.

c. Potential Funding (state FY27)

\$50,000 has been allocated in state budget for the 250th Commission. Will likely pass through another \$25,00 to VT Humanities for grants. Potential for 1-2 signature events with remaining funding.

VI. Partnerships and Events

a. ILM 250th Commission Events presented by Andrew Whipple

Andrew Whipple, President of the Isle La Motte Historical Society, shared the plans that Isle La Motte has organized for 250th events throughout the summer, as well as 250th themed informational kiosks. Laura Trieschmann added that ground penetrating radar will occur at the burying yard in Isle La Motte, which is also receiving a Roadside Historic Site Marker this summer.

b. Roadside Historic Site Markers

Tom Hughes organized the dedication of the Ann Story marker over the weekend, which brought about 100 people to the event. 17 markers are in production or planning to be installed in 2026 that are related to the 250th Anniversary. The marker fund received a one-time funding boost of \$20,000 to cover some of the additional markers being installed.

- c. Commemorative Flags and Banners
VDHP provided funding to the Vermont Covered Bridge Society to install the Betsy Ross flag on all municipally and state owned covered bridges in Vermont. VDHP purchased flags for the state-owned covered bridges. 100 feather flags were purchased and are being distributed to towns that have adopted a 250th resolution.
- d. "Parley and Protocol, War and Peace" at Lake Champlain Maritime Museum
As previously mentioned by Jim Brangan, the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum (LCMM) has a new 250th-related exhibit that is opening in June.
- e. 50 for 250 Exhibit and Book
Steve Perkins shared that the Vermont History Museum has created a new exhibit showcasing 50 artifacts from the Vermont Historical Society collection that tells 250 years of Vermont history. Accompanying book is out to print, and exhibit will open to public on July 3rd.
- f. Abenaki Curriculum and Upcoming Event
Breanna Sheehan shared that VCNAA has helped fund and create the American Abenaki Curriculum, which was developed by all four state recognized tribes in Vermont and came out in December 2025. Telling their history in their own words, on their own terms. Intended for 3rd to 6th grades, but there are resources to accommodate up to 12th grade. Includes materials, resources, and worksheets. Breanna also shared that the "Parley and Protocol, War and Peace" exhibit opening will coincide with Abenaki Heritage Weekend from June 13-14 at LCMM, and feature a gallery talk.
- g. Bennington Museum Updates
Martin Mahoney stated that the Battle of Bennington gallery is open, which will be installed upstairs next year. The new exhibition for summer is Vermont Life.

VII. Committee Updates

- a. Admin/Financial
No recent meetings, but once the \$50,000 has been approved in the state budget and received, the committee will meet again to discuss spending. Jonah Spivak would like to discuss potential signature events at the next meeting.
- b. Marketing
No updates; feather flags have been received and are being distributed.
- c. Research/Culture
Members absent, will ask for update at next meeting.

d. School/Teacher Outreach

Izzy Provoncha provide an update. Art at the Statehouse in March 2026 was very successful. Student's art from this exhibit is currently on display at the Chimney Point State Historic Site. Next theme will be "Power of Place." Committee worked with Vermont Public to produce videos with students on 250th themes, which will be released on June 15th on the Vermont Public website. Josh Bell is working on passports for fourth graders, which give them free access to all state historic sites. Discussing virtual lecture series for students for 2026-27 school year, possible launch in Fall 2026.

Mount Independence had a Living History Day, which brought over 200 kids. Jonah Spivak added that 200+ fourth grade students came to Old Bennington for 250th themed educational experience. Smaller event for 50 fourth graders occurred in Shaftsbury. Izzy added that the Hartford Historical Society also organized a Living History Day.

VIII. Additional Updates

a. Media Strategy

Laura Trieschmann and Heather Pelham met with the ACCD Communications Director to discuss 250th anniversary media strategy. Public interest and outreach have increased as we get closer to the anniversary. We want to be able to showcase the work that the 250th Commission has accomplished, and to funnel the appropriate locations for events and more information. The focus is on the Vermont 250th, not on America 250 or Freedom 250. Vermont's celebrations will continue through 2027, since that is the most relevant year for the state.

Jonah Spivak inquired about the status of Vermont's participation in the Great American Fair. Laura Trieschmann will check in about how they are representing states that are not participating.

b. State Historic Sites are now open! Annual celebration of Calvin Coolidge's birthday and accompanying July 4th parade will occur at the Coolidge Historic Site in Plymouth. Hubbardton Battle weekend is July 11-12. Old Constitution House construction has begun; the site remains closed. Bennington Battle Monument is open; however, the elevator is not operational yet.

c. Breanna Sheehan added that the Fort at Number Four is doing monthly programming around the 250th. [This weekend](#), the Elnu Tribe will do living history about the French and Indian War.

IX. Adjourn

- a. 2026 Meeting Schedule
 - i. July 17, 2026
 - ii. September 18, 2026 (potential in person)
 - iii. November 20, 2026
- b. Meeting adjourned at 11:23am.