



Montana-Ireland Trade Commission

The official meeting minutes may be accessed on the recording.

Commissioners Present Virtually: Senator Mike Cuffe (Chair), Representative Josh Seckinger, Mackenzie Espeland (Tony Brockman's Proxy), Dave Kuntz (Commissioner Clayton Christian's Proxy, Jim McCormick and Paddy Fleming

Montana Department of Commerce Staff Present: Mandy Rambo

Meeting Minutes: Syerra Stroud (not present at meeting)

Guests Present Virtually: Director Traolach O Riordain and Jennifer Clark

Call to Order, Role Call, Notice of Recorded Meeting

00:00 Chair Cuffe called the meeting to order. Mandy Rambo called role for Commission members.

Review of Meeting Minutes from 12.1.25 – vote to accept minutes

03:00 Mr. Fleming moves to approve the minutes from the 12.1.25 meeting, Mr. McCormick seconded the motion, minutes approved.

Financial Report

05:00 Deputy Director Mandy Rambo presented the Montana-Ireland Trade Commission fund activity detail as of February 28, 2026. There's a cash balance of \$500, complications around ability to receive funding from Town Pump was discussed.

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Chairman's Report, Chair Cuffe

08:21 Chair Cuffe stated that there is a possibility that the Irish Studies program at the University of Montana will be reduced from stopping the Minors degree in the program.

Report on call with Mark Daly, Jim McCormick

15:16 Mr. McCormick went over the highlights from the call with Senator Daly and Ambassador Walsh.

Reports from other Commissioners

32:38 Representative Seckinger stated that his outreach to fishing companies in Montana have been problematic because of the current tariff environment.

37:01 Mr. Kuntz went over the current process of academic review for the University of Montana Irish study courses.

Report on University of MT Irish Studies Program, Program Director Traolach Oriordain

55:28 Director Oriordain gave an overview of the University of Montana Irish studies program.

Report on MSU Engineering Department trip to Ireland, Jennifer Clark

01:20:43 Ms. Clark discussed the MSU engineering departments International Engineering Certificate program "NACOE Adventures" trip to Ireland.

San Francisco Consulate Visit Recap, Tony Brockman and Mandy Rambo

01:33:15 Ms. Rambo gave a review of the Photonics West Trade Show in San Francisco that her and Tony Brockman attended in January. Deputy Director Rambo also discussed the conversation that was had with the Irish Consulate General about furthering relationships with Montana.

Discussion on August Cultural Exchange, Vice-Chair Boldman

01:40:45 Chair Cuffe stated that the Commission will have to get the information later on from Vice-Chair Boldman by email or another call.

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Discussion on moving Commission to a non-profit model – Vote to make this decision, Vice-Chair Boldman

01:44:05 Chair Cuffe read the email with the nonprofit materials from Vice-Chair Boldman to the present Commission members. A discussion between commission members was had of when they can become a nonprofit association. Ms. Rambo stated that if the commission chooses to become nonprofit, they can discontinue Commerce led meetings, and continue having meetings as a private nonprofit. In the 2027 Session there would need to have to repeal the legislation removing the attachment between MITC and Commerce.

02:10:58 Chair Cuffe asks for public comment, there was no public comment.

02:14:35 Mr. McCormick motions to give the draft document in consideration to Commerce staff to include Montana Non-Profit Association Director Adam Jasperson for further legal review, and to return to this commission for a decision on this action item at a time convenient for this commission to meet. Ms. Rambo replied to Mr. McCormick to have the MT Non-Profit Association give advice to the potential entity once it's been separated, as a State agency Commerce cannot take or provide legal advice from an outside entity or to a private non-profit.

02:16:12 Mr. McCormick amends his motion to refer this issue and draft document to Commerce staff for further review to bring forward those recommendations and or changes to this commission for an action item at a date convenient for this commission. Representative Seckinger seconded the motion. Ms. Rambo took a roll call vote, motion passes by all commissioners who are present.

Next Meeting Date (to be set, if needed), Chair Cuffe

02:20:15 Ms. Rambo will send out a survey for the next meeting date for the week of April 20th-24th and times for commission members to vote on. Vice-Chair Boldman's email will be attached and the motion that passed will be included on the survey.

Meeting Closure, Chair Cuffe

02:27:21 Mr. Fleming motions to end the meeting, Representative Seckinger seconded the motion. Chair Cuffe took a vote, motion passes by all commissioners who are present.

02:31:12 Meeting adjourned by Chair Cuffe at 11:43am

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