



Montana-Ireland Trade Commission

The official meeting minutes may be accessed on the recording.

Commissioners Present Virtually: Senator Mike Cuffe (Chair), Senator Ellie Boldman (Vice-Chair), Representative Gary Parry, Tony Brockman (Director's Designee), Director Jillien Streit, Jim McCormick and Paddy Fleming

Montana Department of Commerce Staff Virtually: Mandy Rambo, Mackenzie Espeland, Sarah Jordt, Katie Willcockson and Syerra Stroud (minutes)

Guests Present Virtually:

- Senator Mark Daly; Senate of the Republic of Ireland

Call to Order, Role Call, Notice of Recorded Meeting

00:00 Mandy Rambo started the meeting

Montana Department of Commerce Staff Introductions

01:13 Katie Willcockson; Senior Officer of International Relations. Sarah Jordt; Operations and Budget Analyst. Tony Brockman; Officer of International Relations. Mackenzie Espeland Business MT Division Administrator. Mandy Rambo; Deputy Director. Syerra Stroud; Administrative Assistant.

Ms. Rambo called the roll for Commission members.

Commission Member Introductions

02:57 Representative Gary Parry; last appointed commission member by the speaker of the House. Senator Ellie Boldman; appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives. Director Jillien Streit; Director of the Montana Department of Agriculture. Jim McCormick; appointed by the Governor and represents the Irish American community. Senator Mike Cuffe; appointed by the president of the Senate. Paddy Fleming; appointed by the Governor, is part of a Montana business association, trade and economic development organization headquartered in Montana.

Senator Mark Daly Comments to Commission

13:12 Commissioners spoke on the existing tariffs with Ireland and the purpose of the Montana-Ireland trade commission. Additional discussion was had on Irish cultural and educational organizations within the United States as well as Ireland.

Housekeeping Items

24:24 Deputy Director Mandy Rambo gave guidance to commissioners on commission; email communication procedures for boards.

Montana Department of Commerce Presentations

29:22 Ms. Willcockson presented a PowerPoint of the Montana-Ireland Trade Commission regarding the purpose of the commission, the commission background, current export and import goods, the May 2025 inbound Irish delegation.

41:04 Ms. Jordt presented the Montana-Ireland Trade Commission fund activity detail as of August 15, 2025. A fund activity report will be presented with the beginning balance, current expenditures, any revenue collected, the available cash balance and the available appropriation to spend the cash at each meeting.

Discussion on and Election of Commission Officers

45:51 Deputy Director Rambo started the discussion on election of the Commission Officers.

46:42 Senator Boldman nominated Senator Cuffe as Chair, Paddy Fleming seconded the motion. Representative Parry moved to close nominations. All members approved nominating Senator Cuffe as Chair.

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50:52 Representative Parry nominated Senator Boldman as Vice Chair, Paddy Fleming seconded the motion. All members approved nominating Senator Boldman as Vice Chair.

53:08 Senator Boldman shared an idea to create sub-committees or work groups within our task force.

Discussion on and Vote on Commission goals for the 27 Biennium

57:46 Commissioners discussed the possibility of a trade summit in Ireland.

01:02:27 Commissioner Fleming suggested doing a trade commission trip to Ireland for Montana companies.

01:24:24 Senator Boldman made a motion as vice chair to draft the report for the legislature. All committee members approved Senator Boldman's motion.

01:33:12 Senator Boldman discussed the Irish Trade Commission website and potential marketing materials.

Discussion on fundraising needed to meet Commission goals

01:45:16 Committee members discussion of fundraising and budget. Commerce staff discussion on existing partnerships and trade missions.

02:07:21 Senator Boldman offered to assist Commerce with secretarial duties by creating a detailed report with the monthly goals, events and activities of the commission.

02:12:38 Senator Cuffe and Commerce staff discussed funding of existing trade missions. Mandy Rambo and Director Streit went over the State procurement laws that their Departments follow.

02:23:56 Senator Cuffe asked for public comment, there was no public in attendance.

Discussion on and Vote on future Commission meetings

02:24:58 Committee members discussed fundraising opportunities, dates of next meeting and a recap of the meeting.

02:59:19 Meeting adjourned by Senator Cuffe at 11:15am