

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE NEW HAMPSHIRE – IRELAND TRADE COUNCIL

Hon Sharon Carson, Chair

State Senators

Hon. Regina Birdsell

State Representatives

Hon. Dennis Malloy

Hon. Sherman Packard

Secretary of State

Hon. Steve Shurtleff

Dept. of Business & Economic Affairs

Interim Commissioner James Key-Wallace

Hon. Jeanie Forrester

Business & Industry Association of NH

Michael Skelton

University System of NH

Michele Dillon

Public Members

Michael Barrett

Granite State District Export Council

Hon. Jeb Bradley

Public Member

Julie Demers

NH Tech Alliance

Andrea Hechavarria

NH Life Sciences Association

Darragh Madden

Irish Electric

Meeting Minutes

January 16, 2026

Department of Business and Economic Affairs

100 North Main Street, Suite 100

Caswell Conference Room

Meeting called to order at 2:05 p.m. by Senator Sharon Carson, Chair.

Present: Sen. Carson, Sen. Birdsell, Rep. Malloy, Hon. Steve Shurtleff, Adam Boltik, Jeanie Forrester, Michele Dillon, Julie Demers, Darragh Madden, Dave Scanlon

Approve Minutes

Sen. Birdsell made a motion to accept the November 21, 2025 minutes, seconded by Rep. Malloy, motion carried unanimously.

Update on Subcommittee for Irish Festival

Julie Demers presented an update to the Council on a potential Irish Festival in New Hampshire in 2026. Julie advised the subcommittee met and concluded after some discussion that Concord would be a good venue with a timeframe between August 15 to Columbus Day. The subcommittee wanted to present this to the Council first and find out what the expected budget would be and how it would be funded before reaching out to Pete Lally (Spectacle Live) to see what his availability is and fees would be. There was some discussion about ticket price, sponsorships, expected audience, parking, permits, etc.

There was consideration for not closing off the Main Street the first year and instead look at a smaller venue in arts alley with a band, Irish food, and engaging the Chamber and various businesses on the Main Street to offer special events like Irish food tastings Irish film festival, Bank of NH stage event, dancers, and soliciting sponsors like Guinness.

The subcommittee will find out what the cost would be for Mr. Lally to develop a plan based on these discussions/ideas.

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The subcommittee will put together a proposal for Council members.

Update on Reimbursement

Sen. Birdsell and Rep. Malloy's expense reports have been submitted for reimbursement.

Brief discussion on limits of reimbursement. Suggestion to look at UNH guidelines and State guidelines. Travel needs to be approved prior to travel, there should be a per diem limit and rates for meals, ground and air transportation, food, receipts required.

Sen. Mark Daly's invitations to legislators would be forwarded to Chair for approval.

AISLC 2026 Summit

AISLC 2026 Summit open to all council members per Sen. Mark Daly.

Other Business

Joint Chair Committee members (maybe 2 from Republic of Ireland and 2 from Northern Ireland) have been invited to Governors State of the State speech on February 5th. Suggested that if Shelagh attends to arrange to meet members of the trade council have a small reception here. Adam can help arrange meetings and tours. Tour of ARMI, UNH, etc. BEA can rent a van to get them to Manchester.

Brief discussion about finding other tours and connections to make with businesses that have a connection to Ireland including Pike Industries, Irish Electric, visit to Sen. Pearl's farm to consider use of barrels soaked with maple.

Sen. Birdsell will confirm date and then Council can work on invites. Sen. Carson will reach out to Sen. Pearl to gauge interest/availability to host tour.

Next Meeting

Next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 6th at 10 a.m. at BEA offices, Caswell Conference Room

Meeting adjourned at 3:07 p.m.