

**Town of Boscawen
Duston Island Task Force
116 North Main Street, 4th Floor Meeting Room
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
Monday, August 31, 2026 at 6:00pm**

Present: Lorrie Carey, Denise Pouliot, Elaine Clow, Gary Waters, Josiah Morrow (*Remote*), and Katie Phelps

Excused: Mason Donovan

Guests & Advisory Members: Paul Pouliot

Virtual Attendance: Josiah Morrow was attending remotely as it was not reasonably practical that he attend in person. All votes will be by roll call vote.

Lorrie Carey called the meeting to order at 6:03pm. Roll call completed.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

The Task Force members reviewed draft meeting minutes from August 10, 2026.

Motion made by Elaine Clow to approve the meeting minutes from August 10, 2026 as presented. Seconded by Denise Pouliot. Roll call vote – Lorrie – yes, Denise – yes, Elaine – yes, Gary – yes. Josiah – yes. Motion passed.

Interpretive Panel Design and Formatting Overview

Chair Carey presented a sample panel from a Vermont project to illustrate how the finished interpretive panels would look, including the layout of headers, main narratives, photos, captions, and sidebars. She explained that each panel will have a header, a main narrative, a large photo, photo captions, and three sidebars across the bottom. The graphic designer will configure colors and layout. Chair Carey also noted that the Boscawen town flag colors will be used for consistency and to reflect the town's values of green space and the river. Selectman Crawford is able to provide the color codes used for the flag. She will coordinate all panel formatting and submission with the graphic designer, as long as contributors provide the necessary information.

Hannah Duston Panel – Photos and Content

Discussion centered on sourcing appropriate images for the Hannah Duston panel and the role of the Duston-Dustin Garrison House Association. The suggestion was made to use the monument photo of Hannah Duston, or historical drawings/photos from the Boscawen Historical Society (BHS), including images of the statue when it had a nose and fencing around it. Josiah Morrow confirmed the Duston-Dustin Garrison House Association does not have images appropriate for this project and that the panel language focuses on events on the island, making a Garrison House photo unsuitable. Josiah suggested the BHS website as the best QR code destination, as the association's focus is primarily genealogy and their website lacks robust Hannah Duston historical content. Elaine Clow confirmed that BHS has a complete album of Hannah Duston images and that Steve Green has been developing a BHS website suitable for QR code linking.

Native Presence Panel – Content, Images and Approval

The group reviewed the Native Presence panel revisions and discussed image selection. It was noted that Passaconaway should be featured prominently given his mention in the narrative. Several images were reviewed, including a widely used portrait, a monument at Weirs Beach, and images from Canadian archives. Denise suggested including a map of N'dakinna (Meaning “Our Homelands”) and a sidebar defining the Wabanaki and Abenaki names, tying in the Penacook tribes and the broader regional history. Copyright considerations discussed. Gary Waters questioned whether the committee had historians among its members. Chair Carey clarified that all content will be reviewed by Nadine Miller - Deputy Director of the Division of Historic Resources, Ben Wilson – Director and State Historic Preservation Officer, and Matt Flanders – Director of Bureau of Historic Sites. She also noted that historian Barbara Cutter had been involved in earlier meetings and may provide informal review, and that historians Meghan Howey (UNH) and Christine M. DeLucia (Author of Memory Lands – King Philip’s War and the Place of Violence in the Northeast) remain collaborative advisors. Josiah confirmed that the family association has a family historian.

Motion made by Elaine Clow to approve the Native Presence Panel. Seconded by Chair Carey. Roll call vote – Lorrie – yes, Denise – yes, Elaine – yes, Gary – no. Josiah – yes. Motion passed.

QR Code Management and Longevity

Denise Pouliot cautioned the group about ensuring that QR codes remain functional over time, prompted by an experience shared during the meeting. Denise noted that a QR code used for an augmented reality project had expired after four years because the original provider shut down their account, requiring significant rework. She recommended that the town generate and control its own QR codes to ensure longevity and avoid dependency on third-party providers. Chair Carey said that the graphic designer can generate QR codes but needs to be told the destination URL.

Historical Marker Language and Legislative Update

A brief update was provided on the legislative process for historical marker approval. Chair Carey reported that legislation requiring New Hampshire House approval before historical markers could be placed was vetoed. The process reverts to the previous standard, which routes markers through the Division of Historic Resources. She noted that this committee's submission will be among the first to go through the post-veto process.

Panel Placement and Site Considerations

The group discussed the physical placement of the interpretive panels near the island and Commercial Street. Chair Carey described a location just before the bridge leading to the island on the right-hand side of Commercial Street, within the rail right-of-way, as a strong candidate. The spot overlooks the island and connects the railroad, Commercial Street, and Hannah Duston narratives. She noted uncertainty about land ownership in that area and the need to research or obtain permission to place panels within the rail right-of-way. Denise suggested using a granite slab as a base to minimize maintenance. Chair Carey highlighted a 1906 granite piece salvaged from the mill buildings smokestack that could serve as a bench or platform beneath the panels, connecting the physical history of Commercial Street to the interpretive display. She noted the

graphic designer requested a good photo of the mill district to use building silhouettes as panel backgrounds. Katie Phelps confirmed panel dimensions: 28 inches by 36 inches by ½”, with double surface mount pedestals.

Grant Deadline and Invoice Payment

Katie Phelps stated that the invoice for the panels must be paid prior to September 30, 2026 which is the EPA grant deadline.

Signage at Other Commercial Street Entry Points

Elaine questioned whether additional signage would be placed at the Concord-side entry to Commercial Street. Chair Carey indicated this would likely be a decision for the TIF (Tax Increment Finance) Committee, which is currently meeting to discuss the entire Commercial Street area. She noted that existing rail trail signage is not very visible and that the rail trail organization is working on improvements, though state approval and costs are involved.

Future Development of the Island and Commercial Street Area

A broader visionary discussion took place about long-term development opportunities for the island and surrounding area. Chair Carey envisioned floating walkways (similar to Squam Lake) to allow public access to the water regardless of flooding. She suggested a food truck opportunity near the rail trail to support economic development and local employment. Discussion ensued. Long-term development of the island is aspirational and will depend on town initiative, grants, and inspiration from Concord's development on their side of the river.

Housing Development and Town Growth Discussion

An informal discussion arose about a potential housing development near the sandpit and broader growth projections for Boscawen. Gary noted that a potential multi-unit housing development at the sandpit near Commercial Street had been discussed at the Public Safety Advisory Committee meeting. Chair Carey acknowledged the need for affordable housing for elderly residents downsizing and young people entering the housing market, noting that average house prices in Boscawen are six times the average family income.

Action Items

- Format all approved panel content and submit to graphic designer.
- Submit panel content to the Division of Historic Resources for review.
- Research ownership and permission requirements for panel placement.
- Ensure invoice payment prior to September 30, 2026.
- Request informal historical reviews of panel content.
- Email preferred citation information for content.
- Mill District photo for panel background.

Next Meeting: Monday, September 28, 2026 at 5:00pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by Katie Phelps