



## Montana-Ireland Trade Commission

The official meeting minutes may be accessed on the recording.

**Commissioners Present:** Senator Mike Cuffe (Chair) (Commissioner Christian's Proxy), Representative Gary Parry, Andy Fjeseth (Director Streit's Proxy), Jim McCormick and Paddy Fleming

**Commissioners Present Virtually:** Senator Ellie Boldman (Vice Chair) (Representative Seckinger's Proxy)

**Montana Department of Commerce Staff Present:** Mandy Rambo, Mackenzie Espeland, Tony Brockman, Katie Willcockson, Anita Proul and Syerra Stroud

**Guests Present:** Senator Russ Temple

### Call to Order, Role Call, Notice of Recorded Meeting

**00:00** Chair Cuffe called the meeting to order. Deputy Director Rambo called role for Commission members, Commerce staff introduced themselves.

### Purpose of the Commission, Goal Setting, Setting of next meeting dates

**00:42** Chair Cuffe went over Senate Bill 320, and discussed how and why the Commission started. Reimbursement, fundraising and the terms with Commerce was briefly discussed.

**07:50** Senator Boldman shared with the Commission that our ties with Ireland and the trade commissions have all started in the last few years.

**10:02** Jim McCormick and Commissioners discussed U.S. tariffs and potential impacts on Ireland.

**12:06** Chair Cuffe briefly discussed goals, the commissions purpose, funding and future meeting suggestions. Senator Boldman shared some of her thoughts on having subcommittees.

**Montana Department of Commerce** | [commerce.mt.gov](http://commerce.mt.gov) | [montanarelay.mt.gov](http://montanarelay.mt.gov) (711)

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## Financial Report

**20:55** Deputy Director Mandy Rambo presented the Montana-Ireland Trade Commission fund activity detail as of September 12, 2025.

**36:25** Commissioner McCormick made a motion to hold quarterly MITC meetings via zoom with small groups. All committee members approved Commissioner McCormick's motion.

## Report on Failte Montana Irish Festival

**38:50** Representative Parry spoke about the Failte Montana Irish Festival in Missoula that he attended.

## Presentation on time, resources and cost estimates for planning a trade mission

**42:50** Ms. Willcockson presented a PowerPoint of the best practices for trade missions. Mr. Fjeseth went over the Montana Department of Agriculture's trade mission approach. Commission members discussed the objectives of a trade mission.

**01:13:00** Ms. Willcockson spoke about the Delegation from last May of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the United States-Irish Partnership.

## Discussion on fundraising needed

**01:17:50** Representative Parry stated that the Commission needs to show the benefit to people that we are raising money from.

**01:19:50** Commissioners shared feedback for the Steelers game in Ireland along with existing events in place for college football exchanges.

**01:27:56** Chair Cuffe suggested to sell wheat and barley, and having a circuit of Montana performers on a business proposition basis. He will be talking to the Town Pump foundation along with other foundations and organizations.

**01:30:50** Senator Boldman suggested to have volunteer sub-committees structure.

## Next Meeting Date Reminder

**01:36:30** Ms. Rambo will be sending a Microsoft form survey out to the commission for the date of the next quarterly meeting in December, the meeting will be via zoom and in person at the Department of Commerce. Deputy Director Rambo also briefly discussed the State's travel policy and restrictions for the State account.

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## Discussion on fundraising needed

**01:39:50** Commissioners discussed corporate and individual donations along with fundraising dinners.

## Commission members to share their ideas for businesses and/or industries for creating or growing trade

**01:45:00** Mr. Fleming went over some manufacturing companies that may benefit from a commercial connection with Ireland. Commission members discussed some options of how and what to ship as well as processes.

**02:07:56** Chair Cuffe asked for public comment.

**02:08:32** Senator Temple and commissioners discussed the agriculture process for their products. Mr. Fjeseth will speak with agriculture businesses to see if there is any interest in Irish trade.

**02:12:24** Chair Cuffe asked for public comment online, there was no public attendance online.

## Next Meeting Date Reminder

**02:12:50** Next meeting will be on the first week of December, Ms. Rambo will be sending out a Microsoft survey to pick a specific date. The meeting will be virtual and in-person at the Montana Department of Commerce.

**02:19:12** Meeting adjourned by Chair Cuffe at 11:35am