

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 19, 2023 MEETING OF THE MEMBERS  
OF THE FINANCE AUTHORITY OF MAINE**

Chair Trafton called the January 19, 2023 meeting of the Finance Authority of Maine to order at 9:00 a.m.. This meeting was conducted virtually through Zoom. Provisions were made for the public to attend.

Legal Assistant, Summer Knowlton, noted for the record that the members had received an Agenda and Notice of Meeting and that notices of the meeting had been published in certain newspapers throughout the state (*see Affidavits of Publication attached as Appendix 2*).

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Knowlton called the roll of the members and noted that there were sufficient members present for the purpose of beginning the meeting.

Those members present were as follows:

Richard Trafton, Chair  
Dustin Brooks, Vice Chair  
Rebecca Asen, Treasurer  
Henry Beck  
Renee Ouellette  
Blue Keim  
Fritz Onion  
Steve Shannon  
Heather Johnson  
Amanda Beal joined at 9:05  
Jean Hoffman  
William Tracy  
Blue Keim  
Heather Johnson  
Jennifer Hogan

Those members absent:

Omar Andrews

Guests:

None

Staff present:

Carlos Mello, Acting CEO  
Christopher Roney, General Counsel

Shelly Desiderio, Director of Finance  
Martha Johnston, Director of Education  
Jennifer Cummings, Director of Business Programs  
Laura Rigby, Contractor  
Bert Audette, Chief Information Officer  
Scott Weber, Senior Credit & Risk Officer  
Summer Knowlton, Legal/HR Assistant

**A: CALL TO ORDER**

**A1: Ascertainment of Quorum** 9:00 a.m.

**A2: Approval of the November 10 and December 8, 2022 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

**A3: Approval of the November 10, 2022 Business Committee Meeting Minutes**

**A4: Approval of the December 7, 2022 Education Committee Meeting Minutes**

**A4: Approval of the November 17, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by Mr. Daigler and seconded by Mr. Brooks to approve/accept (1); the minutes of the November 10 and December 8 Executive Committee Meetings; (2) the minutes of the November 10, 2022 Business Committee Meeting (2) the minutes of the November 17, 2022 Board Meeting. The motion was approved by a vote of 11 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

**B: CHAIR'S REPORT** 9:08 a.m.

Mr. Trafton reported the Executive Committee's focus on the structure and style of FAME board meetings and how it can be improved. Mr. Trafton reported that FAME Staff and Ad Hoc HAF/ASF Steering Committee members are working to finalize an agreement with HAF/ASF on the shared marketing and data sharing of NextGen 529. Mr. Trafton noted the FAME Board conflicts of interest policy in the packet. Members and staff discussed logistics and planning of the FAME Board retreat.

**D: STAFF REPORTS** 9:22 a.m.

Mr. Mello presented the Acting CEO Report, beginning with the Business Division of FAME, which had generated over \$60 million in new lender debt for the first half of FY2023, significantly ahead of the previous year. Mr. Mello also reported that the Thrive program's final results have been compiled and the major finding was that the program was significantly

oversubscribed and the need for relief is high across all business sizes and sectors. FAME Staff is working, with the advice of the board, on criteria for the next round of funding based on these results. Mr. Mello reported that FAME received 5 proposals for the NextGen 529 program administrator and FAME staff would be reviewing and scoring each proposal in the coming weeks. Additionally, several interviews had been conducted for the Director of Strategic Growth position and an offer will be made in the upcoming week. Mr. Mello presented the Strategic Priorities, where the only areas of concern were under the NextGen Program Services Agreement transition, where the service provider, Sunday, has merged with Vestwell and is now operating without yet updating the program services agreement with FAME to reflect that merger. Additionally, the Economic Development Finance Portal was an area of concern because of the delays in its creation and the immense cost of a custom-built system of its kind, leading FAME to look at alternative, pre-built solutions that are customizable.

Mr. Weber reviewed the first quarter results of both the Economic Recovery Loan Program and the Commercial Loan Insurance Program, where default, delinquency, and risk ratings were all flat. Ms. Kunesh reviewed the WatchDesk, where there were no significant changes to any of the accounts.

Ms. Johnston presented the first quarter Education Division report, where FAFSA completion is increasing from the past two years especially in students seeking associate degrees. Ms. Johnston reported FAME's significant efforts in Financial Education to prepare Maine borrowers for Federal Student Loan Repayment to resume. NextGen account openings and contributions were down, which was in line with the overall market trend.

Ms. Cummings and Ms. Rigby presented the results of the Thrive Program, where the program was seven times oversubscribed and need was high across all business sizes and sectors. Requests in the largest amounts and for the largest businesses came in much higher than expected, however, the largest business sector awarded was for hospitality, as expected. The allocated amount for B-Corps, ESOP's, and Co-Ops was undersubscribed, and the additional funds will be recycled into the next round of applications. FAME is working to better reach businesses of these kind in the next round to ensure all the funding available is awarded.

**ADJOURN- 10:55 AM**

