



PENQUIS EMPLOYEE ADVISORY COUNCIL (EAC)

MINUTES

Meeting held on Monday, September 14, 2026

The EAC meeting was held in person at Harlow Street beginning at 9:00 am and ending at 11:00 am.

Attended: Audra Cowperthwaite, Danielle Goodale, Presiding Member Katie Bucklin, Kara Hay, Bambi Littlefield, Angel Seavey, Kristina Norbury, Robin Lucas, Secretary Nancy Batchelder, Vickey Rice, Allison Kinnear, Hollie Collins, Lee Goodwin, and Amanda Louk

Absent: Dallas Prescott, Dawn Moody, Rebecca Holt, and Lisa Bailey

Katie began the meeting by asking each member to introduce themselves. Kara provided a brief orientation to the new EAC members.

Open Mic

Lee Goodwin started Open Mic with several items for the committee to discuss such as fluctuating temperatures at Harlow Street, donating leave time to other employees, and ideas for expanding awareness of the unhoused population. Katie Bucklin mentioned potential confidentiality issues with recycling bins in the offices. All topics were addressed appropriately.

Report on Board, Staff and Department Activities

Kara provided the EAC with numerous updates:

- Penquis was mentioned in at least 36 stories in the media this past month.
- Penquis' "We've Got Your Back" program served 1450 children this year!
- Kara relayed information about funding for the UMaine 3D printed housing project.
- The Bright Beginnings Child Development Center opened! Senator Collins visited and spent over an hour touring the site and talking with Penquis staff. Kara discussed how candidates for office from both political parties were, or will be, invited to tour the site. There will be a public open house soon.
- Kara discussed the Substance Affected Youth (SAY) program expansion, and the current United Way campaign.
- Planning is underway for Penquis's 60th Anniversary in 2027. Kara explained that a "Gala" event wasn't appropriate in the current economic climate, but that fun ideas are being discussed for a fitting recognition.
- Theresa's Place had been open for one year! Kara mentioned wonderful stories coming from residents.

- Kara is currently attempting to meet with all gubernatorial candidates to further Penquis' mission.
- Kara mentioned current work with Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) and Neighbor Works America.
- Kara relayed information on Transportation 2.0 and the multiple positive approaches and ideas being discussed. This led to an opportunity to assist McAuley House when Audra mentioned that part of the McAuley house budget is being spent on Uber for rides to Head Start.
- Penquis staff are currently monitoring legislative priorities at both the State and Federal levels.

Department Highlights

- Members shared brief program updates as applicable.
- Danielle discussed the September safety message topic of safe lifting practices and remarked on a recent communication to supervisors about employee safety in the community. She also shared updates on Earned Time Cashout changes, Job Description reviews, 2027 Benefits Renewal and HSA contributions, and flu shot opportunities. The next Wellness Challenge, "Fall into Wellness," begins October 4th.

Next Meeting: November 30, 2026

EAC Secretary Nancy J. Batchelder, MBA

If you have a topic that you would like addressed at a future EAC meeting, please reach out to one of the following members:

- **Kristina Norbury, HES**
- **Audra Cowperthwaite, Family Enrichment Services**
- **Vickey Rice, FES**
- **Rebecca Holt, CWSS**
- **Lisa Bailey, HES**
- **Nancy Batchelder, Corporate Services**
- **Katie Bucklin, Corporate Services**
- **Robin Lucas, Transportation**
- **Allison Kinnear, Child Development**
- **Hollie Collins, Corporate Services**
- **Lee Goodwin, MSF**
- **Amanda Louk, Transportation**