

THE NEW ENGLAND COUNCIL

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes February 26, 2026

The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of The New England Council, Inc. (the “Council” or the “Corporation”) held a meeting on February 26, 2026, virtually via Microsoft Teams, for the purpose of discussing Council operations for 202 and for the transaction of any other business that may properly come before the meeting. The meeting began at 1:01 p.m., and ended at approximately 1:58 p.m.

The following committee members, all of whom are Directors of the Corporation, were present at the meeting which was conducted virtually:

James Brett, Pamela Everhart, Becca Gould, John Hailer, Patricia Jacobs, Dennis Leonard, Dennis Kearney, Joseph Nolan, Kenneth Quigley, and John Stadtler

The meeting was called in accordance with the Bylaws of the Council. Notice was mailed to the Directors via electronic mail in accordance with these Bylaws. James Brett presided and acted as Secretary.

The Secretary called the meeting to order.

I. General Business

A. Approval of Minutes

Upon motion duly made, seconded and decided by unanimous vote, the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on November 13, 2025, were approved as presented.

II. Financial Update

President Brett provided an updated financial summary and an investment summary, as attached to these minutes.

Upon motion duly made, seconded, and decided by unanimous vote, the Committee approved a resolution for the updated financials; 2026 Budget; and Neuberger Berman asset transfer of 23% from the Primary Account to fund the Fellowship Program Account effective January 2, 2026.

III. Membership Update

President Brett provided the following update on membership to date in 2026:

- We have secured **4** new members, representing **\$17,500** in new dues revenue.
- We have an additional **17** new members committed, representing **\$61,500** in new dues revenue.
- That brings our total to **\$79,000**

- And finally, **resignations** continue to be low, which says a lot about the value our members are getting from the Council.

IV. Events Update

President Brett provided the following update about NEC events:

Recent Events

- By the end of 2025, we hosted over 50 events throughout New England and in DC, and we're already off to a busy start in 2026.
- To date in 2025, the Council has hosted nearly 50 in person events throughout New England and in Washington, DC.
- We kicked off the year with a special program with political analyst Charlie Cook on January 12, during which Charlie shared his insights and predictions for the midterms.
- Also in January, we hosted our final Capitol Hill Report program with Sen. Shaheen, who is of course retiring at the end this term.
- In Washington, DC, we have already hosted two Capital Conversations breakfasts this year. The first, which was standing room only, featured Rep. Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member of the House Appropriations Committee. And we also hosted a program with Rep. Buddy Carter of Georgia, who is running for the Senate.

Upcoming Events

- We continue to have a busy schedule of upcoming events.
- Next week will be particularly busy with Capitol Hill Reports back-to-back on Monday and Tuesday with Reps. Chris Pappas and Lori Trahan. And then on Thursday, we'll hear from Rep. Maggie Goodlander in DC.
- On March 13, we have a rescheduled New England Innovates program looking at innovation in the early detection of disease. Rep. Jim McGovern will keynote, followed by a panel discussion with Council members who are leading the way in early detection innovation.
- Later in the month, we will host Capitol Hill Report programs in New England with Senator Angus King and Rep. Gabe Amo.
- And in April, we'll host a Capital Conversations breakfast with Rep. Stephen Lynch in DC.

2026 Washington Leaders Conference

- Planning is well underway for our 2026 Washington Leaders Conference.
- The conference dates are set for May 13 and 14, and registration opened just last week. We already have nearly 50 people registered, and expect final attendance to exceed 200 guests.
- We will be using all the same venues as last year for the main elements of the conference.
 - The President's Dinner will again be held at the Decatur House.

- The Board of Directors Meeting will be hosted at K&L Gates.
- The Welcome Luncheon will again be held at the Willard.
- Senator Markey's office has secured the top floor of the Hart Building for our Capitol Hill Reception.
- And we will also return to the Hilton Capitol Hill for the Congressional Breakfast.
- We have already secured several speakers:
 - At the Welcome Luncheon, our media panel will include Andrew Desiderio of Punchbowl News, and Jackie Kucinich of the Boston Globe.
 - And Rep. Richard Neal is already confirmed for the Congressional Breakfast, with several other invitations pending.

V. Policy & Program Update

President Brett then summarized the ongoing work of the NEC's policy committees:

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

- Our Energy & Environment Committee has been closely tracking efforts in Congress to advance permitting reform.
- Last fall, we hosted a meeting with staff to Rep. Jared Golden and House Natural Resources Chairman Bruce Westerman to learn more about their permitting reform bill, the SPEED Act, which was passed by the House late last year.
- On March 20, the Committee will meet with staff to Senate Environment & Public Works Committee Ranking Member Sheldon Whitehouse to learn more about how he and Sen. Capito will be approaching permitting reform in the Senate.
- We are also in the process of confirming a meeting in April for the committee and our board with the new CEO of ISO-New England.

FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

- As you'll recall, last fall we worked with PwC to release a report on the economic impact of the financial services industry in New England. In early December, we convened a Capitol Hill briefing on the report for Congressional staff and NEC members. PwC presented key findings, followed by a panel discussion with several members about some of the themes in the report.
- Building on past support for e-Delivery legislation, in December, we sent a letter of support for the current version of that legislation, which was included in a larger capital markets package that passed the House.
- And today, the committee is hosting a virtual meeting where members will have the opportunity to meet Rep. Stephen Lynch's new financial services policy staffer.

HEALTHCARE COMMITTEE

- In November, the Council sent a letter to the New England delegation expressing our support for the Ensuring Patient Access to Critical Breakthrough Products Act, which would speed up access to FDA approved medical devices for Medicare patients. The bill has broad support from our members, and was passed by the House Ways & Means Committee last fall.

- On March 13, the Healthcare Committee is hosting an event focused on early disease detection as an installment of the Council’s New England Innovates series. The program will examine the challenges and opportunities surrounding early disease detection in the healthcare sector. Congressman Jim McGovern is confirmed to deliver keynote remark, followed by a panel discussion with several Council members who will cover some of the new technologies available, as well as the impact of early detection on healthcare costs.
- And we’ve also just confirmed a committee meeting in March where members will hear from staff to Rep. Lori Trahan, who is a member of the House Energy & Commerce Committee, and more specifically, the Health Subcommittee, to learn more about the Congresswoman’s priorities and the outlook for committee activity this year.

HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- The Higher Education Committee hosted a meeting in December with UNH Law Professor Michael McCann, who is a nationally-recognized expert on issues related to name, image, and likeness or “NIL” for collegiate athletes, which is a major issue for many colleges and universities.
- The Committee also hosted a meeting earlier this month featuring former Biden Administration official Amanda Miller, who briefed members on recent regulatory actions by the Department of Ed, as well as what to expect from the agency in the near future.
- And finally, the Higher Ed Committee is working on planning a half-day conference in Worcester this spring, looking at how recent policy changes affecting the higher ed sector are having a broader economic impact in the region. We have extended an invitation to Sen. Markey to keynote the event, and plan to also include panel discussions focused on workforce challenges and community impact.

HOUSING WORKING GROUP

- In November, the Council sent a letter to HUD Secretary Scott Turner, members of the New England Congressional Delegation, and House Appropriations Chair Tom Cole expressing strong opposition to the Department’s proposed changes to the Continuum of Care (CoC) program. The letter outlined concerns about the proposed shift away from permanent supportive housing models and emphasized the significant impact such changes would have on vulnerable populations and communities across New England. Shortly after the letter, the proposed rule was rescinded by the Department.
- The Working Group is hosting its first meeting of 2026 today to discuss newly introduced housing legislation and the House’s renewed movement on its housing package. The group will also outline 2026 programming priorities, including sessions focused on Workforce Retention & Housing and the intersection of Transportation & Housing policy.

TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION WORKING GROUP

- In December, the Tech & Innovation Working Group partnered with the Energy & Environment Committee to host the EPA Region 1 Administrator, who will discussed administration priorities with a focus on AI and Robotics.

- In January, the working group hosted a webinar open to all Council members on the AI policy outlook for 2026. Over 100 members joined the session, which featured a presentation by several AI policy experts at member firm ML Strategies. The session covered both legislative activity, as well as executive orders and other regulatory activity by the Administration.
- And just last week, the committee hosted a briefing with several members of Sen. Markey's staff who discussed his work on both the Senate Commerce Committee and the Small Business Committee related to technology. Topics covered included AI, data privacy, telecommunications, and robotics.

TRADE WORKING GROUP

- In October, the working group hosted a meeting with Sen. Warren's trade counsel Haley Adams, who discussed efforts in the Senate related to President Trump's tariff policy, as well as a recent report on China trade relations.
- Also in October, the Council submitted a comment letter to the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative as part of that agency's mandated review of the US-Canada-Mexico Agreement (USMCA) on the 6th anniversary of the agreement's implementation. In the letter, the Council expressed its ongoing support for the USMCA and highlighted the importance of free trade between the US and these key trade partners
- And now that the Supreme Court has issued its ruling on President Trump's tariffs, we are working to finalize a briefing with several trade policy experts at member firm Akin Gump, including a former Trump Administration senior trade advisor, and former senior Democratic Senate trade staffer.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

- The Transportation & Infrastructure Committee recently hosted a meeting with several senior officials from the U.S. Department of Transportation who covered a wide array of issues including the reauthorization of the nation's surface transportation law; aviation safety; port infrastructure; and permitting reform.

NEC FELLOWS PROGRAM

- I also wanted to update you on our New England Council Fellows Program, now in its second year.
- As you'll recall, last year, this committee passed a resolution approving a proposal to provide long-term funding for the fellowship program, and we agreed to expand the program to fund a total of 12 fellows, two in each state.
- In November, we opened the application process for organizations to apply to host a fellow this summer.
- By the application deadline of January 30, we received a total of 72 applications from a wide array of organizations throughout the region.
- After our staff conducted a preliminary screening of the applications, a total of 48 applications were advanced to the Fellowship Advisory Committee for their review.

- The Committee met last week and selected the 12 organizations who will host our second cohort of fellows:
 - Connecticut:
 - Connecticut Foodshare
 - iQuilt Partnership
 - Maine
 - Avesta Housing
 - Dempsey Centers for Quality Cancer Care
 - Massachusetts
 - Freedom House
 - Haley House
 - New Hampshire
 - Disability Rights Center – New Hampshire
 - Meals on Wheels of Hillsborough County
 - Rhode Island
 - College Visions
 - Pawtucket Central Falls Development
 - Vermont
 - Southern Vermont Arts Center
 - US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
- Award letters have been sent to all twelve organizations, and we'll be making a broader announcement of the 2026 hosts once we receive the signed letters back.

VI. Communications Update

President Brett provided the following update regarding the Council's communications efforts:

Media Coverage

- We continue to receive great media coverage of our various events around the region, all of which you can view on our website.
- Our expanded video capabilities have enabled more coverage as we are able to share video with reporters who are not able to attend events.

Inside the Corner Office

- Our podcast, Inside the Corner Office, continues to be very popular and a great tool to highlight our members.
- As you know, we release a new episode on the first of each month. Recent guests include:
 - Samaritans CEO Kathy Marchi (Markey)
 - BU President Melissa Gilliam
 - Unum Executive Vice President Chris Pyne
- Upcoming guests include:
 - Alexis Steel, President of St. Mary's Center for Women & Children
 - Maura Sullivan, CEO of Arc of Massachusetts

- Regis College President Antoinette Hayes
- We've had so much interest in the program that we continue to have a waiting list of members who would like their CEO to be a guest—a good problem to have!
- The series is available not just to our members, but to anyone who is interested, on YouTube, Spotify, and iTunes. I hope you'll check it out, if you haven't already!

Social Media & Video

- As I mention at each meeting, our social media reach only continues to grow, and we continue to see increased engagement and new followers across all channels.
- During our Centennial Year, it was a great way to highlight a lot of the activities including introducing our NEC Fellows, promoting the Centennial Celebration, and highlighting some of the Council's history.
- As we prepare to announce the hosts of our 2026 fellows, we'll be highlighting those organizations, as well the fellows they hire, in the coming months.
- If you are not yet following us, I encourage you to do so as it's a great way to keep up with everything going on at the Council.

Adjournment

There being no further business, and upon motion duly made, seconded and decided by unanimous vote, the committee members agreed to adjourn the meeting at approximately 1:58 p.m.

CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY

The undersigned, James T. Brett, certifies that he is the duly appointed and qualified Secretary of The New England Council, Inc., a Massachusetts corporation and that the foregoing is a true and correct record of the minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee thereof, convened and held in accordance with state law and the Bylaws of the Corporation on the 13th day of November, 2025, and that any resolutions described herein were duly adopted and remain in full force and effect.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have affixed my name as Secretary of the Corporation to these minutes on the ____ day of _____, 2026.

James T. Brett
Corporate Secretary