

## Land Access and Opportunity Board Meeting

**Aug 21, 2023 , 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.**

Meeting Facilitator: Natanya Vanderlaan WholeHeart Inc., Jessica Laporte CROs

Guests: Robert Appel, Attorney

Attendee	Present	Not Present
<b>Board</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Britaney Watson, NAACP</li> <li>● Shingai Kagunda, Vermont Every Town Project</li> <li>● Dan Coutu, VT Commission on Native American Affairs (VCNAA)</li> <li>● Xusana Davis, Office of Racial Equity</li> <li>● Susan Aranoff, Vermont DDC</li> <li>● Pacifique Nsengiyumva, US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)</li> <li>● Arnold Thomas, Vermont Racial Justice Alliance (VRJA)</li> <li>● Brian Cina, National Association of Social Workers (NASW)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Samantha Langevin, VT RELEAF Collective</li> <li>● Raheemah Madany, Pride Center of Vermont</li> <li>● <i>Vermont Psychiatric Survivors (no active board member)</i></li> </ul>
<b>Board Alternates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Jennifer Morton-Dow, VT Releaf Collective</li> <li>● Kirsten Murphy, Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ana Mejia, NAACP</li> <li>● Mark Hughes, VRJA</li> <li>● Rich Holschuh, VCNAA</li> <li>● Kenya Lazuli, Every Town Project</li> <li>● Ashley Devereaux, NASW</li> </ul>
<b>Guests &amp; Public</b>	<p><u>Guests</u>: Trey Martin, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board</p> <p><u>Public</u>: None</p>	

<p><b>1. Jessica Laporte to convene the August 21st, 2023 hybrid meeting of the LAOB at 5:30 pm - 15 minutes</b></p> <p>a. Welcome, Facilitator Team Introductions, and overview of meeting</p> <p>b. Board members and alternates to introduce themselves - Name, Identifiers, Organization you are representing - <u>Prompt</u>: What is an identity that you have that you don't get to name often? (Ex: saxophonist, auntie, dog foster parent, etc.)</p>	
<p><b>2. Review &amp; Approve <a href="#">Meeting Notes from August 7th, 2023 meeting</a></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Notes from 8/7/23 approved</li> </ul>

<p><b>3. MOU Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Timeline check-in</li> <li>● <u>Decision point</u>: Does the board agree to extend Robert's contract through the finalization of the MOU with VHCB?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Robert's contract originally ended in May 2023 and we extended through August 2023. Temperature check on extending Robert's contract beyond August 2023 to make sure we get through the whole MOU process?</li> <li>● Voting - in favor: 7 (consensus)</li> <li>● Note from Trey: scheduling with VHCB is challenging right now. We don't want to stall the recruitment process.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Hiring Process Update</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update - Jess</li> <li><u>Activity</u> - share doc and give people 5 minutes to fill in to brainstorm formal and informal pathways for recruitment.</li> <li><u>Discussion</u>: Related to previous tools suggested for the recruiting and considering a diverse applicant pool. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anonymizing applications</li> <li>Thresholds to move through each step</li> </ol> </li> <li><u>Decision Points</u> - Skipped</li> </ol>	<p><b>Hiring process Updates:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hiring Committee has gone through finalizing the job descriptions for Board review.</li> <li>● Sub-committee is working on designing the hiring process and evaluation criteria.</li> <li>● Hiring Committee welcomes copy-editors and for folks to truly look at the wording. Feel free to send feedback on the actual wording of these descriptions.</li> <li>● We need to build out <i>how</i> we're going to recruit. Hiring committee wants to create hiring criteria along the way.</li> </ul> <p><b>Activity</b> - spend 5 minutes filling in the spreadsheet of informal and formal recruitment channels. Using <a href="#">this doc</a>. What are the recruitment channels we can bring together? Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Xusana</b>: are we looking for Vermont-based or national candidates?</li> <li>○ <b>Jess</b>: We're tabling this question for another meeting because it could be a big conversation. For now, note in the doc if a network is national.</li> <li>○ <b>Arnold</b>: I can share contact info for the organizations I suggested in the chat after the meeting.</li> <li>○ <b>Pacifique</b>: VT Dept of Labor is a channel we can tap into.</li> <li>○ <b>Jess</b>: the LAOB staff will be staff of VHCB. Is VHCB registered with VT Dept of Labor to post jobs?</li> <li>○ <b>Trey</b>: Not sure but VHCB posts very widely, I just don't know what they are.</li> </ul> <p><b>Hiring Process Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Jess</b>: are there questions or updates to the Board that would be helpful to answer about the job descriptions? I also want to look at some of the questions that kept tripping up the Hiring Committee and where Board input is desired.</li> <li>● <b>Jess</b>: One director will focus on advocacy and engagement, the other will focus on designing LAOB programs. We're looking to crowdsource different channels to get these descriptions in front of folks who are great candidates.</li> </ul>

- **Xusana:** there might be people who find this through non-English and ASL sources. I'll give an example of a video we did. Example of ASL video interpreting of an event flyer: <https://youtu.be/5p4QmlIFGmg>
- **Jess:** Great question - do we want to make this available in other languages?
  - **Pacificque:** what we do has to reflect everyone, and I think we need to be able to translate all the materials that we're producing, which is to say - do we have a pool of funding for translation? I think it's high time we start thinking about that so we can communicate with all the people we're trying to serve.
  - **Jess:** this has come up recently. We haven't facilitated these meetings in other languages yet. Looking at some other folks in the room - what translation options are available for state boards? How to make meetings and materials language accessible and affordable? We've talked about materials we put out there to be reflective of those we're serving.
- **Jess:** Let's pivot to think about the recruitment process. Quantitatively and qualitatively: how do we know when we have enough candidates? How do we know if we've interviewed enough candidates? How do we know if we've offered enough interviews to people with different identities?
  - **Jennifer:** I was on a recent hiring committee for the Truth & Reconciliation Commission. We had a set number of days the postings would be up, then we went through a thorough review of all the resumes, until we had the top 5 to interview, then top 3. Taking it down through different filters, starting from a wide pool.
  - **Jess:** Did you use a de-identified process?
  - **Jennifer:** We had that sort of laid out for us given the focus of the Commission.
  - **Xusana (in chat):** first-pass and second-pass review will help you double-check whether your anonymized applicants that you select for interviews are inclusive. So you can un-redact after people have given an initial look. In addition to names, I also redact educational institutions and addresses.
  - **Jess:** I'm hearing a clear hiring window is one process. What if we don't get the applications we're looking for?
  - **Brian:** It makes me think of something related. Hiring a superintendent during a controversial time and it was a complicated process. Thinking about bias trainings and how they were useful. "Success factor interviewing." I don't think we should do that but it's an example of a hiring process made to be more equitable.
  - **Dan:** I've been a hiring manager for many years. When I've run into scenarios when we weren't getting the right candidates in the window we had intended, we've had to

extend or re-open the position posting. These are reasonable things to do. I don't think we have to figure this out right now but confront it if we get to it.

- **Shingai (in chat):** Is the goal that the two positions are filled by Vermonters?
  - **Xusana:** I'm not inclined to participate in the out-of-state xenophobia. It doesn't make sense to me and I don't think we should cut ourselves off from a potentially large opportunity and pool of strong candidates. I wouldn't be in my position if they hadn't advertised out of state.
  - **Arnold:** I agree with Xusana. If we want to look at a more diverse pool of candidates, greater diversity is going to come from people who were born and raised outside the state but share an understanding and concern about LAOB's priorities.
  - **Shingai (in chat):** I agree with Xusana! I think we would also have a higher chance of getting a person of colour in the pool like Arnold alluded to. (We may then also want to think about a transition stipend for moving someone up here if it came to that.)
  - **Britaney:** I agree with not limiting the position to Vermont residents
  - **Dan:** I was someone who was born and raised in Vermont, left for a few decades, and returned, which is a unique perspective and I learned a lot being away from Vermont. There are economic and educational reasons for advertising outside of Vermont.
- **Jess:** A distinction I'm not quite hearing is whether we think these roles could be completed remotely or if they are residentially in-state. I was under the impression that staff would need to live in the state to complete this role, and I want to open that up for discussion. We need to bring specificity to role descriptions about 1) relocation expenses and 2) expectations for residency or not. Reimbursement expenses will look very different based on where someone is located, given state house advocacy and relationships with other work here.
  - **Britaney:** I would take Vermonter as someone with a Vermont address. Could this be folks who are willing to travel but not live in VT?
  - **Brian:** Or Canada? Our superintendent was from Ontario, it was more complicated and expensive but he had knowledge skills and talents that were useful.
  - **Dan:** Seems like it could be tricky because there are finer points of obtaining land and housing in VT that would differ from other places, given cultural norms for lack of a better term. Each state has formed its own cultural conventions around land and home access.
  - **Xusana (in chat):** We may then also want to think about a transition stipend for moving someone up here if it came to that.. The state has 2 incentive programs for people who move to VT for jobs; it reimbursed moving expenses - may have ended.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Brian:</b> Housing for the staff - maybe explore the solutions with us in the way that they relocate here. Recognize housing may be a barrier. It might be a way to show other groups how we creatively solve this problem. Just had a beautiful vision of a village where people move for jobs in VT. Not that we choose it for them but offer options. Maybe temporary housing like a college campus that the state owns and turn it into a vibrant community of the future. There's a name for an interesting community in S.226 related to public-private partnerships on something like this, or we can think about this as one way to partner with other agencies and organizations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Timeline Check-in and Facilitation Contract (Jess):</b> Ultimately we've been talking about needing to seek a diverse applicant pool. How language accessible is our process? Which channels are we using? How to support applicants in a diverse pool and have a thoughtful process? And already as a Board, we have thought about different accommodations that might be needed. I love that it comes back to the big connection between the mission of this Board. As we wrap up, I want to make a regular plug: Committees are open to all Board members. 9:30-10:30 Hiring Committee on Tuesdays, 11-12:00 Advisory Powers &amp; Advocacy Committee on Tuesdays.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Question we wanted to flag is: how can we as facilitators create more opportunities for engagement?</b> We can hopefully talk more about this next week.</li> <li>● 1) Wanting the Board to consider and remember that the extension for the facilitation process was going through October. We're not going to have staff in place by then despite aiming to get the job postings up in the next few weeks and go step by step. The earliest we might be able to make an offer is mid to late October. Folks offered the position might need a month to be able to start. That brings us to the end of November/December, so I want to be practical in what we can manage and follow through on.</li> <li>● 2) Hiring Committee/ interview teams will need more folks</li> <li>● 3) The facilitation team wants to understand how we can be best available and supportive to you, as well as how we can help the LAOB get through the hiring process.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Public Comment &amp; Board Responses</b></p>	<p>N/A - no public present</p>
<p><b>6. Board Announcements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Dan:</b> Sunday starting at 10:00am, my tribe is hosting events that are open to the public</li> <li>● <b>Brian:</b> wanting to honor the EJ Summit. The space felt relatively safe for folks who have been harmed by oppression. Reminded me that the state has taken big steps toward equity. If we keep organizing and empowering people, I do think that we can mitigate harm and save lives</li> </ul>

	<p>and make them better. We have an opportunity to mobilize and do something different with the money this Board has and what the LAOB is doing. Wanting more events that empower and engage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ First African landing day on Saturday, Intervale 11:00am. <a href="https://www.eventbrite.com/e/vermont-first-african-landing-day-tickets-693771066937?aff=oddtcreator">https://www.eventbrite.com/e/vermont-first-african-landing-day-tickets-693771066937?aff=oddtcreator</a></li><li>○ Recovery Day event in Burlington - Brian is playing music.</li><li>○ Pride: statewide Pride is Sunday, September 10. Parade at noon in Burlington to Battery Park, after parties.</li><li>● <b>Jennifer:</b> Releaf events for Collective members - equinox event, community dinners, grief and cake</li><li>● <b>Jess:</b> plugging EJ Summitt and Network: <a href="https://environmentaljusticevt.org/">https://environmentaljusticevt.org/</a></li><li>● <b>Upcoming Board Meetings</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ August 28th - hybrid with in-person in at the United Church in Christ in Randolph with food from Taino Kitchen – need confirmation from folks about being in person or virtual</li><li>○ Invitation to community members for 8/28?</li><li>○ September 18th - potentially in-person</li><li>○ October 2nd - may need to move sooner for Hiring Process approval</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>7. Meeting Adjourned at 7:00pm</b>	