

Sub-committee: Hiring
Land Access and Opportunity Board
October 3rd, 2023, 5:00 – 6:00p.m.
Meeting Facilitator: Jessica Laporte

Attendee	Present	Not Present
Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dan Coutu, VT Commission on Native American Affairs (VCNAA) ● Susan Aranoff, Vermont DDC ● Jennifer Morton-Dow, Vermont Releaf Collective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pacifique Nsengiyumva, US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) ● Samantha Langevin, Vermont RELEAF Collective
Guests & Public	<u>Public:</u> None / <u>Guests:</u> Francis Sharpstene, VHCB; Trey Martin, VHCB; Gus Seelig, VHCB	

Agenda & Notes

Meeting Convened by Facilitator, Natanya Vanderlaan @ 5:00 PM	
1. Introductions & Agenda Check-in a. Name, Nominating Organization & Check-in	
2. Job Description Review with VHCB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10.3.23 LAOB Advocacy and Engagement Director - VHCB COMMENTS - https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VQIMOnnJ0Es06wV7_2p9lnQcakiIV3ms/edit?usp=drive_web&oid=108919402298290307236&rtpof=true <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Susan - Don't see a substantive difference between the original and revised wording ○ Gus - Policy makers consider 'advocates' to be people <i>outside</i> of state government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ VHCB does not see themselves as lobbyist ■ LAOB sees the board members and staff involved will ■ Policy makers don't always view advocates in the same way we do - we want to avoid the perception of the LAOB using public funds for lobbying ■ Difference - developing policy for the state of Vermont given you are a governmental institution ○ Susan - To clarify, I am not sure if 'promoting the mission' is any difference in the activities undertaken. I don't see a substantive difference in what the role would be.

- If there is something specific that the LAOB staff will not be able to do then that should be on the table.
- I am familiar with restrictions since DDC is a federal agency - they are expected to advocate but cannot do partisan politics.
- **Trey** - Yes we do want this to be reflected in the MOU
 - Reference to Hatch Act is apt and then there is also non-profit IRS law around lobbying because employees of this org are required to abide by Hatch Act and IRS law for non-profit
 - Need to avoid perception of advocacy, included as grassroots organizing are seen as lobbying
 - Any employee are welcome to advocate outside of their roles/employment under their 1st Amendment Right
- **Jennifer** - a frustration with this is that we're trying to do radical work. I don't see where in the job description we're saying we're going to be doing political things.
 - If you want to advocate for the mission of the LAOB and that is what we want to be doing, then why would we *just* change the wording.
- **Susan** - I don't think we're losing anything in the change of wording - I am new to the hiring committee and learning that for those who have crafted this,

INVITATION TO DISCUSS SPECIFIC EXAMPLES from previous LAOB activities and where they would fall on a scale of green (accepted), yellow (allowable) or red (discouraged) activities.

- **Trey** - Everything that we did in the legislative session were all 'green light' (5 greenest to 1 wary)
 - Green - Being responsive to the legislative mandate for a report - that addressed funding needs- as we did on the Sunrise Report. Particularly when invited by legislators from other agencies, governor's office, etc.
 - A board member (or staff) can reach out to announce the delivery of report and inquire if LAOB should present it.
 - Green - Engage and educate legislators to relative issues
 - LAOB supported a community group to learn about LAOB and present to legislators
 - Engage in community advocacy events
 - Yellow - When you've been invited in and while you're in the building, we've been working on this thing and invite them to learn more.
 - Red
 - Cannot say "vote yes on this" or "tell the committee chair to vote yes on this"
 - coalition/advocacy/grassroots "calls to action"

- Lobbying - telling someone something to do related when a bill is in motion (includes appropriation)
- **Gus** - Examples
 - Work with Vermont Housing and Conservation Coalition that does the advocacy, similar to how Seeding Power worked with Action Circles - they often take a more vocal or
 - Board Members can continue to engage with Seeding Power
- **Trey** - What Gus is sharing speaks more to strategy of how to manage restrictions and engage effectively
 - No Board Member or LAOB Nominating Entity should feel
 - We want to make sure that Staff of LAOB does not step over the line from educational to lobbying activities
 - We've used
 - The difference is that as a Staff of a State Entity has access and availability
- **PAUSE TO INVITE BOARD MEMEBR FEEDBACK**
 - **Jennifer** - Want to finish comment from before
 - “advocating” for the mission feels powerful compared to “promoting” feels less powerful, substantive, etc.
 - Especially since we're not in this document describing lobbying activities, why is this a concern
 - **Dan** - Understanding
 - ‘Driving forward’ may be a stronger wording without stepping over a line in a space
 - **Gus** - VHCB would be fine with driving forward.
 - I would be more comfortable if we left advocacy out of the title but we left it there and want to
 - **Jess** - I am hearing compromise on wording. We should be clear about if we're compromising on wording or actual activities
 - **Trey** - Agree, this is mostly wording to improve optics and not lose the mission.
- **Temperature Check** - *Do Board Members agree this is wording or a more substantive shift?*
 - Board members indicated that this is a wording shift and not impacting activities.
- **Jess EXAMPLE:** LAOB members and staff invite nominating organizations, people they serve or staff to participate in legislative activities.
 - Collect their stories to share LAOB's work or as a part of research then follow-up with them to engage with the legislature through testimony
 - Can LAOB members or staff encourage them to testify to the legislature or invite them to testify as a part of LAOB presenting/testimony, etc?

- **Trey** - Yes, ‘Open Calls’ in committees or on budget, et for public comment are clear opportunities. And can invite to present/testify when LAOB has been asked to engage. However, if LAOB said, here are the 3 people we need to shift and here’s what will move them
- **Gus** - LAOB has many interested and dedicated partners who would also want to promote your work
 - Another allowable **EXAMPLE:** If LAOB Is invited into a committee, you can ask the representative/senator, what would be most effective information to share to express the importance of this work to members of your committee? [Eg. was Sen Ram Hinsdale]
- **Susan** - will some of this be in the MOU?
 - **Trey** - Yes, and if it isn’t it should be.

LAOB Program Development Director - VHCB Comments -

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/16AIVG9jjj88-XGIHwAq37czwupYUGe-G/edit>

- Minor edits made
- Some edits from Advocacy & Engagement summary weren’t reflected here - Trey will edit

TEMPERATURE CHECK to close the meeting with VHCB (already overtime) - Any last questions, comments, next steps or do you not feel prepared to stop.

- **Jess** - Given the examples and content that is important in this discussion it seems like we’re bridging into the “on-boarding” and partnership with future staff, not details the hiring committee needs to know to make a hiring decision. I want to encourage this information is integrated into future board meetings as we prepare for that transition.
- **Susan** - has a hard stop otherwise would hang in because want to resolve these things
 - Appreciate the support and
 - One of the things that is going on here is that we can only move as fast as trust develops - that’s the reality we have to work with
 - Ready to say, lets ‘drive the work forward’ language and move on
- **Dan** - wording changes in both documents sit well with him
- **Jennifer** - Thank you for your patience, After being on the CNAA and City Councilor and being
 - Thank you Dan for seeing my frustration and coming up with an alternative

NEXT STEPS

- **Trey** - we’re interested in sharing information and engaging with the board to clarify the nuances and partner with you all for your success.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jess - Clear opportunity is to engage with board meetings and to send communications with information or invitations to the full board. If board members miss it then facilitators are able to raise it in upcoming agendas. <p><u>ACTION ITEMS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trey to make direct edits and share to this committee before posting. New JDs should include ‘dated version’
<p>4. Next Steps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Job Description edits from VHCB ● Facilitators will highlight and share new PDFs with the board ● Hiring Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review 9.29.23 Application Evaluation / first round interview Evaluation mash up - https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-oLNgXPd7gV1ZivoxZih5ULneiQVrxGq_bTqpZw5Yks/edit shared from Natanya and if possible provide comments/questions ahead of 10/10 meeting ● 2 meeting times next week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 10/10 Hiring Committee Meeting ○ 10/13 Hiring Committee Meeting - review applications and make 1st round interview decisions
<p>Meeting Adjourned at 6:13 pm</p>	