

## Land Access and Opportunity Board Meeting

**Oct 30, 2023, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.**

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

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

Zoom Recording [Link](#)

### Agenda & Notes - Revised 11/13/23

1. **Natanya V. to convene the October 30th, 2023 virtual meeting of the LAOB at 5:30 pm**
  - a. Welcome, Facilitator Team Introductions, and overview of meeting
  - b. Touchstones
    - i. *Listen generously. Speak your truth from your heart & mind.*
    - ii. *Make the way we work together an example of what's possible.*
    - iii. *Trust that we all hold a piece of the puzzle & we need each other's pieces to understand the whole picture*
  - c. Board members and alternates to introduce themselves - Name, Identifiers, Organization you are representing

## 2. Review & Approve [Meeting Notes from October 16th, 2023](#) meeting

### 3. MOU UpdateMember Updates

a. Questions & Next Steps

- **Member Updates** - Slides 3-5
  - **Kirsten** - Intro
    - There is a LAOB Sub-committee working hard on this.
    - There has been a lot of back and forth working on this with VHCB as our fiscal
    - Met today and we feel we're close.
  - **Brian** - Slide 3
    - Housed under VHCB but intended to be more independent than other VHCB programs and also set-up a relationship that prepares LAOB to be separate someday
  - **Kirsten** - Slide 4
    - Document discusses Roles & Responsibilities and we've summarized main areas of focus
    - If the LAOB were to be independent it would take a long on-ramp and be expensive to develop and manage as a new entity.
    - Reminder - independent but responsible to follow VHCB policy and when applicable state policy
  - **Kirsten** - Slide 5
    - Most of the discussion/negotiations with VHCB where about four key areas
    - Human Resources Oversight - management of LAOB staff by the LAOB and future staffing structure vs. where LAOB is responsible to follow VHCB human resources conduct policy
    - Termination - discussed how termination could happen within a calendar given the state funding requirements. Both VHCB could not initiate in an unreasonable timeline and also
    - Public Comments - Importance that people from each entity speak on their own behalf and don't represent the other group. This is to allow LAOB independence and not require VHCB approval for all public comments
    - Fees - covers expenses to VHCB for providing administrative, financial, technical services.
      - **Brian** - Seen situations where a group forms and needs an umbrella for a period of time and as a part of that arrangement there is typically a baseline % to cover overhead. Important to cover expenses/time invested in managing the funds and activities. Important for LAOB to acknowledge that and offer fair compensation.
      - **Jess** - noting this is not a flat % but more of billed time with allocations
- **Member Questions & Comments**
  - **Samantha** - concerned about the fee structure, how
    - **Kirsten** - No, we didn't discuss this specifically, but will get periodic reports to allow us to know when we're getting close

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Jess</b> - given how funding is appropriated (lump sum upfront) it's more of a question about management of the services from VHCB - the board can choose to rely less on VHCB in some instances in the future and pay for services directly, but it's something for the LAOB to manage.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Samantha</b> - LAOB and VHCB have separate boards, does the MOU address the relationship of the boards. Is it clearly stated that the VHCB doesn't have decision-making and oversight of the LAOB (and staff).           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Robert</b> - That is the essence of the MOU and how it details out roles and responsibilities. Only on the administrative side is there oversight/review, etc. That is logical as VHCB is fiscally responsible and therefore LAOB has to follow VHCB policies and practices.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This is the current draft and the sub-committee has affirmed that we want to sign this version.</li> <li>● <b>Jess</b> - The strategic plan sits with the LAOB to create and doesn't need VHCB's board to approve.</li> <li>● <b>Samantha In chat</b> - My curiosity stems from knowing we have advisory powers over VHCB, so it feels important that our organizations have clearly defined boundaries before we use those powers</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Arnold</b> - Is there a definition of our reliance and dependence?           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Jess</b> - in our budget there will be a category for covering fees to VHCB. A practice LAOB might adopt to keep an eye on this would be to review what part of our budget is being spent on VHCB? Fiscal oversight. question for the board to ask themselves</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>● <u>Next Steps</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Robert</b> - important for this to get approved before the next meeting so not slow down the Hiring Process</li> <li>○ Board Members Review Final Draft - <a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iOaN1LMoZnS3wFlQNhYAzpIFXU1tAyxV/edit">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iOaN1LMoZnS3wFlQNhYAzpIFXU1tAyxV/edit</a></li> <li>○ Jess to request final draft for signing this week with due date in time for board members to review before 11/13</li> <li>○ Vote on 11/13/23</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>4. FY25 Budget Update &amp; Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Member Update - Ana Mejia</li> <li>b. Review Draft Budget</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Member Update</b> - Ana Mejia       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Met with Xusana and Gus facilitated by Jess on Monday 10/23</li> <li>○ Xusana sent and provided information related to translation and interpretation expenses.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>FY24 Budget Review - Slide 5 &amp; 6 (Jess)</b></li> <li>● <b>Review Draft Budget</b> - Slide 6       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <u>A.Staffing</u> - separate from VHCB overhead, more developed staffing with a raise, benefits and considering mileage reimbursement or other incidentals, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

c. Questions & Next Steps

- B. Translation & Interpretation - This is the Language Access Report's recommendation for state agencies and department
  - Recommend sub-committee to dig into those numbers (what documents to translate and what events to have interpretation and levels of use)
- C & D Grant programs - increased from pilot amounts <\$350K in FY24 but recognize it's a marginal increase as the pilot outputs/results will not be available
- E. Community Engagement events - assuming 4 outside of research (not focus groups just outward facing events), includes all expenses included in the events but interpretation as that's in like item B.
- F. Board Management - assumes regular bi-weekly meetings and 1 sub-committee with 5 people per week
  - Keeping \$250 higher rate
  - There is a process to advocate for an exception - Advisory Powers and Advocacy Sub-committee could explore
  - 1 Board event / retreat
  - Costs for Strategic Planning consultant or facilitation for board
- G. Technology - estimation for laptops, independent subscriptions. This is an estimate
- H. VHCB Overhead Fees - ESTIMATE and up to the board how
- NOTE
  - Questions for VHCB were sent via email.
  - To draft an appropriations ask that factors in rollover from FY23 or FY24, the LAOB needs an update on spend to date or most recent quarter so gauge levels
- **Questions & Input**
  - **Samantha** - Is the Payroll Tax and Benefits duplicative with overhead fees to VHCB?
    - **Jess** - No, while paid by VHCB as a part of their overall tax liability and benefits, it's a direct cost (no overhead) that will be passed on to LAOB and belongs in this category. Therefore it is not in H.
  - **Brian** - Has anyone been paid yet by VHCB for the LAOB?
    - Our spending this year will inform future spending. If everyone hasn't been paid for their labor yet, we should know what that amount should be so that
      - **Jess** - Yes, LAOB members are being paid per day of work on a monthly basis.
  - **Gus** - Carried forward \$62,000 from FY23 to FY24 / FY24 spend to date = \$30,000
    - **Jess** - The LAOB expects a financial report for review for FY23 and report for spend through Q1. Also written answers to the
  - Drafting Questions

- **Per diem** - *Does the board want to put in \$50 current per diem? Or Do you want to put it in at the higher rate of \$250 and force the legislature to consider an exception for LAOB?*
  - **Samantha** - How does it “force” the question? Because it didn’t last year
  - **Ana** - We would have to follow-up in order to follow through with the intent.
  - **Brian** - there has been debate in the legislature about consistency and they push back to the \$50. I feel bad asking for the \$250. It means this board would be paid 5x other boards and don’t like the inequality. If we don’t ask then we participate in the extractive economy. If we feel we deserve more, then we should make the case for increase for all boards. [revised 11/13/23]
    - **Jess** - The higher per diem would require follow-up from the board. There are other agencies and boards engaged in education around this issue. Kirsten and myself testified but then it was moved to committee and process for exception was not clear.
    - **Ana** - There are other exceptions; Health Equity Advisory Commission, Developmental Disabilities Council
  - **Samantha** - I support a higher rate
    - **Brithany** - Yes EJ Advisory Council is receiving a higher rate and there are other boards with an exception. I would push for a higher rate to respect people’s time.
  - **Brian** - \$250 seems too high as it’s \$125 per hour is much more than I am paid and state legislators (\$17,000/year). We deserve more, the government needs equitable increase across the world, but this is oversized. Can’t take the cuts from people doing the labor but also struggle to breakeven.
    - *Samantha in the chat* - according to the internet, \$50 in 1980 is the equivalent of \$193 today
  - **Ana** - I am hearing support for including a per diem for the board that is higher than \$50, but some discussion on what an equitable rate would be given other compensation across budgets.

Next Steps

- Questions shared via email and appreciate board feedback in writing.
- Budgeting will move forward with information known, but need board input in order to move forward to share externally. Need sub-committee members
  - **Brian** - Can help post MOU
  - **Samatha** - also accommodating for on-boarding committee
  - **Kirsten** - Available
  - **Jess** - I will include you all but recognize we need 1-2 meetings before 11/13 and the On-boarding and MOU processes will be ongoing then and may impact availability for Samantha and Brian.

<p><b>5. Hiring Update</b></p>	<p>UPDATE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Interviewed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 4 Program Development candidates</li> <li>○ 5 Advocacy &amp; Engagement candidates</li> </ul> </li> <li>● 2nd Round offers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2 Program Development candidates</li> <li>○ 2 Advocacy &amp; Engagement Candidates</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <u>Timeline</u>: Interviews 11/2-11/6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Expect updates by 11/7 or 11/8 and will share so offers can be voted on at the 11/13 meeting go out immediately following</li> <li>○ executive session will be called for in 11/13 meeting to discuss hiring decision</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><u>Comments &amp; Discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Dan</b> - Speaking with candidates and looking at folks selected for 2nd round interviews. They are amazing people. We couldn't have expected better from the quality of candidates from our recruitment - depth and diversity.</li> <li>● <b>Susan</b> - Shoutout to Jess, Natanya and Francis. Your support to the committee throughout the process made it possible to focus on the candidates and have important conversations. Thank you for running an amazing process. Gus - convey our thanks to Francis!</li> <li>● <b>Ana</b> - Did we get a good turnout of people from the target populations we aim to serve? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Natanya</b> - We had strong representation but not necessarily of all demographics</li> <li>○ <b>Dan</b> - wouldn't use the word huge but when you look at the background of people who applied had majority from target populations.</li> <li>○ <b>Jess</b> - overall, had 16-17 for each position in a 2 week period</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Samantha</b> - was there discussion of having candidates attend a LAOB Meeting? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Gus</b> - Does this board want candidates to attend a board meeting? Invitation to Board meetings and/or a special meeting where board members can meet the candidates in the final round. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Natanya</b> - 11/1 we are designing 2nd round interviews and process for making a final hiring decision. We had not planned on inviting candidates to a board meeting</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Public Comment &amp; Board Responses</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Buster</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Attendance and Engagement - The attendance of your board, especially if appointed, needs a policy around how seats will be handled. I saw in the chat</li> <li>○ Event - VT Farm to Plate Gathering 11/16-11/17 and would hope at least one</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <u>Invitation</u> - Include Housing and Homelessness Alliance of VT to your meetings and your engagements</li> <li>○ <b>Samantha</b> - Agree VT Farm to Plate is a good place to engage. VT Releaf will be there. Samantha will be on a panel around ‘How to farm without land wealth?’ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Note - Farm to Plate and/or Releaf are happy to help if cost is prohibitive</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Ana</b> - Appreciate these invitations and also want to share how difficult it can be to engage in established, white dominated spaces as a woman of color. I want to be there, but I also want to be transparent about the barriers and why it’s also legitimate to not participate. We should consider how to make those spaces more inclusive.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Community Engagement Events</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Community Engagement Planning Meeting TOMORROW 10/31 12PM for board involvement in planning and facilitation of the meeting</b></li> <li>● <b>Outreach Events</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Eventbrite links in the chat as we did not have time for board members to send invites in the meeting.</li> <li>○ SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2:00-5:00pm @ North Branch Nature Center, Montpelier, VT <b>Register <a href="https://www.eventbrite.com/e/land-access-opportunity-board-designing-land-access-grant-programs-tickets-737084919837?aff=oddtcreator">here!</a></b></li> <li>○ THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 6:00-8:00pm - virtual (Zoom) <b>Register <a href="https://www.eventbrite.com/e/land-access-opportunity-board-designing-land-access-grant-programs-tickets-737103685967?aff=oddtcreator">here!</a></b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>8. Advisory Powers Learning Journey Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Member Updates</li> <li>b. Questions &amp; Next Steps</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>- Skipped due to time -</i></p>
<p><b>9. Board Announcements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Come prepared to share any organizational or</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>- Skipped due to time -</i></p>

relevant updates with the board	
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<b>10. Meeting Adjourned 7:05pm</b>	
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