

Land Access and Opportunity Board Sub-committee: Advisory Powers & Advocacy Relationship-building (WORKING SESSION)

August 15th, 2023, 11:00 – 12:00 pm / Meeting Facilitator: Jessica Laporte CROs

Attendee	Present	Not Present - includes Board Alternates
Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan Coutu, VT Commission on Native American Affairs (VCNAA) • Brian Cina, NASW • Kirsten Murphy, Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rev. Mark Hughes, VRJA • Xusana Davis, Office of Racial Equity • Susan Aranoff, Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council

Agenda & Notes

1. Meeting Convened by Facilitator, Jess Laporte @ 11:00am	
2. Welcome and Check-in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian - dealing with backlash from racial justice organizing and knows who to reach out to for support as an elected official • Dan - transitioning between hiring process and this sub-committee meeting • Jess - at the VCRD conference this morning and on a panel, looking forward to meeting many of the other participants <p>Overview of Agenda (Jess)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Left off thinking about what the invitation is with the outreach process - wanting to gather baseline information and invite to present • <u>Goals for meeting</u>: Spend time today cleaning up survey and potentially looking together at the introduction letter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Document</u>: Information Gathering ‘survey’ as part of the Outreach Plan and possibly looking at the Introduction Letter
3. Outreach Survey	<p>Group Work on the Survey document</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan - identifying that we don’t need questions posed in the introduction letter. We can pull all questions into the survey for actual data collection. • Brian - there was a question that had different groups identified, and I want to list specific groups. • Jess - the questions are in a different order and the different groups are condensed into “protected classes.” Let’s give 5 minutes to read through the survey and add in comments and/or other questions. • Jess - How do you feel about the depth or breadth of the information being asked of these organizations? • Dan - I think this covers quite a bit. • Jess - Are these questions best answered in writing or best as part of organizations’ presentations? • Brian - They might send us a 50 page document explaining some of their answers, some might send a 1-pager, some things lend to quick survey questions, and other things hard to convey in writing.

- **Dan** - whatever they don't fill in, we can ask them to answer in their presentation
- **Brian** - I want to be mindful not to create unnecessary burdens on people. Sometimes a strategy that people use is sending a list of 40 questions asking me to defend my position and take hours of my time. I'm sensitive about asking overburdened workers to feel like they have to create something extensive and new that's just for this Board. Is there a structure that can be put in place so that the public can have this information? We might want to have a disclaimer at the top saying that we could talk about it rather than requiring everything in writing. We don't want to unintentionally create a one-time use document that is time-intensive.
- **Jess** - we can add language that introduces the survey, including options for how to respond. We can pull questions out to ask them to include in their presentation and let them know there's flexibility in this activity. I want to make sure we're covering what we want to learn (and chip away at this big task of information-gathering) before figuring out our communication strategy about this survey.
- **Jess** - programmatic - this is where rubber hits the road and where LAOB is focusing advisory powers. Does this section hit key elements of what we need to learn?
- **Dan** - my sense of the question about obtaining information is recognizing that when we're interviewing other organizations, we don't know what they're doing to get public input on their activities, which could arrive through a wide variety of channels and mechanisms.
- **Jess** - we're going to keep chipping away at gathering questions for specific organizations, in addition to this broad survey with questions that we'd like all of the organizations related to LAOB's advisory powers to answer.
- **Brian** - someone could say the internet, emails, phone calls, meetings, etc. in response to how they obtain information. Are we literally asking them what mechanisms they are using, or are we asking because we're trying to assess whether or not they're gathering public input in a comprehensive way? Metrics kind of does it. How do they evaluate their progress? Do they integrate public feedback about their services and programs?
- **Kirsten** - If you have a feedback mechanism, what is the structure? Describe it if you do.
- **Jess** - I do think there's a difference and this clarification is a good lens to put on for all of these questions. We don't need to gather information just for the sake of gathering it. For this question, we're wondering if they have an established feedback structure.
- **Dan** - Maybe we need to go up to a higher level to look at the questions from the perspective of "how do these help us in doing what we're tasked to do?" I'm realizing that some of these questions we don't need, though it would be interesting to have the answers.
- **Kirsten** - validating that there's a distinction between what would be nice to know versus what we need to know to do our tasked work.

- **Dan** - maybe what we want to be asking is a collection of questions that are more focused on land, home ownership, enforcement processes related to land, banking practices related to purchase and acquisition of property, things like that.
- **Kirsten** - further down in the survey there are more specifics. I can see why the LAOB would need to know how public input is gathered. The LAOB wants to have high interaction with the public. The public not having access to information is potentially a barrier to access, as is organizations not doing outreach to marginalized communities, which is part of the problem and the LAOB is trying to influence these aspects.
- **Dan** - it would be valuable for us to collect data on the people in marginalized groups.
- **Kirsten** - ask the organizations about the demographics of the groups they're serving, for instance - what do you need to be doing to make this a more diverse pool of recipients of your services?
- **Dan** - this will help us identify organizations that have biases or gaps in public feedback mechanisms so that we can then create strategies to try to impact change.
- **Jess** - I added a question in the metrics section. Can you track demographics of people served through your programs if you haven't been? For land and housing, do we want to add access instead of purchase because we know there aren't many purchasing programs. Can we keep honing these questions?
- **Dan** - to support the discovery process, I think we want open-ended questions.
- **Kirsten**: I would be consistent with language to avoid confusion. Rather than use both the term "marginalized groups" and "protected classes," I would pick one term and use it consistently throughout the survey.
- **Dan** - I think protected classes is the term to use.
- **Brian** - let's be consistent with what the legislation says. I'm curious if there are "unprotected" classes out there?
- **Dan** - "marginalized" might leave too much room for interpretation.
- **Brian** - are there marginalized groups that are not protected classes?
- **Jess** - I think the most obvious is low-income people, which is explicitly not a protected class. We can use this placeholder at the top for terminology to be described and we can add the definitions later. Are we still using #7?
- **Dan** - the other questions cover the breadth of what #7 was intended to. I think we can get rid of it.
- **Kirsten** - I'm looking for clarification on #12.
- **Dan** - organizations have a charter of the boundaries of their work and shall not operate outside that scope - which would be a constraint on their ability to work with organizations outside of that scope.
- **Jess** - shared examples of state and federal constraints. If you are trying to be more community-oriented, you could list that you can't work with organizations outside of your scope.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jess - it's 12:01 already - we made some good progress in wordsmithing and combing through the questions and why we're asking them.
4. Outreach Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRAFT Introduction letter - <i>did not get to review together today</i>
5. Gathering next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduled 8/22 Working Session for the 1-pager and other communications materials • 8/29 Meeting - <i>Continue to refine the survey</i>
6. Meeting Adjourned at 12:10pm	