Land Access and Opportunity Board Meeting

November 11, 2024, 5:30 – 6:45 p.m.

Meeting Facilitator: Ornella Matta-Figueroa & Jean Hamilton, LAOB Staff

Attendee	Present	Not Present
Board	● Samantha Langevin, VT RELEAF Collective ● Dan Coutu, VT Commission on Native American Affairs ● Susan Aranoff, Vermont DDC ● Pacifique Nsengiyumva, US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)	● ● ● Xusana Davis, Office of Racial Equity ● ● Emily Carris, Vermont Every Town Project ● ● Mark Hughes, VRJA ● Brian Cina, National Association of Social Workers ● Mary Gerisch, NAACP ● *No active board member*, Pride Center of Vermont ● Walt Wade, Vermont Psychiatric Survivors
Board Alternates	● Kirsten Murphy, Vermont DDC	● Jennifer Morton-Dow, VT Releaf Collective ● ● Rich Holschuh, VCNAA ● Ashley Devereaux, NASW
Guests & Public	Public: Guests:	

Agenda

1. **Convene the November 11, 2024 virtual meeting of the LAOB at 5:30pm** (5 mins)
   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. LAOB Board Member & Staff Introductions: Name, Identifiers, Board seat and location (county)

2. Review & Approve Meeting Notes from October 28, 2024 meeting (5 mins) https://vhcb.org/sites/default/files/meeting-agendas/2024/LAOB/10.28.24%20LAOB%20Minutes.pdf POSTPONED TO NEXT MEETING - No quorum.	
3. Public Comment & Board Responses - 15 mins	
4. Board Announcements - 10 mins	- Dan: NEK Collaborative hosting a conference on Thursday about housing in the Kingdom. Dan is attending to provide a connection to the LAOB. - Ornella: Statewide Housing Conference happening this Thursday. LAOB is hosting a Shelter for All workshop. Considering how to involve the voices of unhoused community members, and how to do so in a non-extractive way. The activity we will feature on Thursday is a circle conversation. o First a step in the middle exercise to learn who is in the room and identify who is closest to the direct experience of navigating shelter options when unhoused. o Then we will have a conversation about what is deep listening and an orientation to identifying feelings with a feelings wheel, to empower the conversation. Then move into a fishbowl, to hear the council of the 20 people who are most directly involved with seeking shelter. - Samantha: would appreciate a report out on how the workshop goes at the Housing conference. Doing things differently is to get different results. Will be interested to hear how the group responds to and what comes out of this event. - Ornella: Hearing from Shelter for All committee, members of the public, reporting that best practice will be to build relationship slowly otherwise there is a lack of trust. - Brian: responding to what we were hearing at the Shelter for All committee meeting about how to build community relationships. On Election Night, we organized more community members to come to the mutual aid food distro. Some community members grouped up off to the side to be respectful and stay out of the way, but it came off as neighbors coming down to get food and then not engage. This is something we can work on as a culture issue. How to engage respectfully. How to not be elitist. How to be respectful, cultural humility, and dignified. Speaking of elitism, there is worry that the conference will feel really elitist and will not respect the voices of

	unhoused neighbors who come to the conference. Recommend that LAOB staff and board help walk our neighbors into the conference with eyes wide open about what kind of culture can be expected.
	
	- Kirsten: Friday we have a meeting scheduled with a developer and families with adult sons with developmental disabilities to identify potential housing options in a new development. This is thanks to LAOB serving a connecting role.
	
	- Ornella: we are also starting to work with another group of family members. Developmental Disability Housing Initiative.
	
	- Brian: This may feel like a small action, but including anyone in housing developments is a big deal. What we are doing with the Housing Conference is a big deal too. We are modeling at the conference how we are building relationships and building a plan in real time.
	
	- Jean: highlight another initiative that came out of the DD families conversation is that Kirsten and Sue were able in that meeting to connect with Jenny Hyslop, Director of Housing at VHCB about a regulatory issue that has been coming up as a barrier for housing for people with developmental disabilities. Current options include
	  - Therapeutic Group home: very high level of licensure
	  - Shared Living: cap of 2 people with developmental disabilities per building. Creates a gap between 2 people and group home.
	  - Lacking a category of housing for say four people living together in shared living, which can be beneficial because it creates community, etc.
	
	- Kirsten: this issue had shown up as creating a very high level of cost for creating housing for people with developmental disabilities.
	
	- Samantha: Approached Jean and Ornella about hosting a potential event on Dec 12 in Burlington for Board members to meet up in person.
	
	- Dan: its been a year and a half since we met in person!
	
	- Brian: Received an email from a conservative think tank, celebrating the win of Trump and the republican party, “this was a mandate to move swiftly towards project 2025 and start with

	'impoundment'." Could look like states not receiving federal money even if it has been congressionally awarded. We may see unprecedented challenges. I am concerned about the behavior locally and the fact that it looks like the Governor has been impounding resources designated for shelter. If we do see a pattern leading to the erasure of the social safety net, how will we respond?
BREAK - 5 mins from 6:30-6:35pm	
5. Policy/Legislative Updates	Explore impacts of federal election results Explore impacts of state election results - Ornella: as different unpredictable and unprecedented changes happen at the federal level, lets keep looking at how we can respond. - Susan: thinking a lot about the key losses in Vermont. Representative Diane Lanpher, chair of house appropriations was a strong ally and advocate for the developmental disabilities community. Its really frustrating because it feels like a direct response to the leadership of VT House and Senate -> same party, but wouldn't work together. Will there be more of a lets solve the problems together attitude this session? - Brian: I am hopeful that the results will be humbling. On a different board, we went through a hiring process and got some training, which said, the greatest predictor of future behavior is their past behavior. I think we should be saying, we all have our part to play. Don't play the blame game. We see that peoples' faith in the institutions is so shaken. We see that talking points and elitism have become a huge turn off to people. Failure of the democratic party to serve the people with equity and affordability. Hoping we can do something like Snelling did. Lets laser focus on housing for two years and solve a problem together. - Dan: what i heard from folks in the native communities is that people are really depressed, especially about taxes. The proposed taxes on gas, sent people through the roof. Not being able to afford heating fuel oil is unbearable. When people saw the legislature propose that it feels like there is not accountability for where all the funding goes, what kinds of results come out of it. - Jean: How can the LAOB help foster a lets solve the problems together attitude in this years statehouse.

	- Kirsten: we should be open to new relationships. To meeting people on issues rather than on partisan politics. LAOB's position can and should be, we are here to help your housing problems. - Dan: I appreciate the framing of is this the most effective way of approaching a problem. - Samantha: To Kirsten's point, I wonder if it is worth it to host bipartisan info sessions for new legislators, etc, to continue to show how we augment what exists and to build broader support - Ornella: I have ideas about how to do this. - Pacifique: Vermont Energy cost is already way high and adding more cost to the working class is not sustainable. - Brian: there are people in every caucus who have supported us and people who have worked against us behind closed doors. It is important that people understand that this group is not a puppet of George Soros, we are here to listen to all of the voices who get marginalized from important conversations. Listen to the voices of people who never get listened to. We are a new body of government that has been created to improve the efficiency and function of government. I am proponent of thinking about how many problems can we solve when we build new housing. Waste reduction, energy production, social gathering spaces, food production. How do we address the social determinants of health in housing ->take into account many solutions in one central investment like housing. Consider that we are spending a lot of money on building a fancy new prison, but incarceration is the most expensive form of housing people, and we can prevent people from entering prisons by addressing the social determinants of health with good housing We have seen a lot of policy decisions that have not been inclusive and then feel tone deaf. How do we hear people more, validate their struggle. - Pacifique: Housing supports the workforce, the workforce supports the economy and taxes. Our population is aging and lack of housing directly impacts the ability of our economy to thrive. feeling that as a state we are missing the connection between housing and opportunities to gain state taxes.
2. CONSENT ITEMS	●
3. ACTION ITEMS	● Agenda item to reflect on the Housing Conference workshop on Shelter for All.
4. Meeting Adjourned 7:30pm	

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86991181856
Meeting ID: 869 9118 1856