Land Access and Opportunity Board: Policy Committee

January 5, 2026, 11:30am-1:00pm

Meeting Facilitator: Ornella Matta-Figueroa, Jean Hamilton

Notetaker: Arealles Ortiz

Attendees	Committee Members
Board ● Dan Coutu, VT Commission on Native American Affairs, VT Council on Native American Affairs ● Mark Hughes, VRJA ● Susan Aranoff, Vermont DDC ● Caitlin Scott, Vermont Psychiatric Survivors ● Brian Cina, National Association of Social Workers ● Xusana Davis, Office of Racial Equity **Staff** Ornella Matta-Figueroa, Jean Hamilton, Arealles Ortiz	● Kirsten Murphy, Vermont Developmental Disability Council
Guests & Public	

Agenda

Meeting Convened by Facilitator at 11:30AM	
1. Introductions & Check-in	Name, Nominating Organization Check-in: A word to describe how you are Review 12.16.25 Minutes: Amendments: Grammar error: Mayor Maro to Miro Weinburger Edit: Policy committee meetings canceled due to Staff Holiday Dan Coutu makes a motion to approve 12.16 minutes as presented Susan Aranoff seconds that motion All in Favor Caitlin Scott Abstains from approving minutes as presented

	Review 12.18.25 Minutes: Mark Hughes makes a motion to approve 12.18 minutes as presented Brian seconds that motion Dan Coutu, Susan Aranoff, Caitlin Scott Abstain from approving minutes as presented Agenda Building: - Policy slate discussion for January Board Meeting -Draft Bill Edits https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kQZFquxhPSpsZuyuvu9oR4onIiRf4Y3K/view
2. Discussion/ Updates	Policy Slate discussion for January Board meeting: Question: What is important for the board to hear and participate in? Responses: -A review of big picture policy material that we will carry forward into the year. -Update for the whole board on what happened to our budget. -Top 3 policy initiatives. -If a legislator asked the us/LAOB what are our most important initiatives this this session, what would they be? -5 most important things you should know about Brians Bill. Question: Is there an established way to discuss legislation as it's moving? How do we know what legislative pieces to track? We would like to create a process such as weekly LAOB updates, external focused communication, so the board knows where to show up, when, and what is needed. Question: Is there an active process of finding things, someone reading through policy at Office of Racial Equity? Response: We encourage people to send us material that is relevant. We have a Bill Tracker. We have an equity liaisons network, to check in on equity related legislation. We check the weekly legislative calendar and do scheduling based on what the hearing calendar is going to show.

	AOA leadership calls and cabinet meetings. Given that, are we able to sync up with your intel? Can we build a process that our subcommittee members can feed into? LOAB should be leaning on what it already has. VHCB is already tracking policy, you can use them, see what they gather, and filter it through an equity lens. We can make time for legislative updates as a standing item at the LAOB Board Meetings Agenda. Question: Has the ORE been flagging priorities that you are concerned about? Or interested in seeing moving? Housing, education, and health care are impacted by people whose influences are seen as greater than ours. Public safety we always want to track. At January Board Meeting: We could establish a process for this session. Something that communicates expectations. If you have something you will bring it. Have standing time on board agendas to share legislative initiatives. Establish a google form. Plan how we integrate information. Who are the spokespeople for the LAOB? Deciding top priorities. Knowing you are going to be asked to share something is more encouragement and gives people an opportunity to respond and let emerging issues come to the surface. Staff: Prepare a document to outline this process for the Board Meeting and get the board's feedback. As well as looking at Brians Draft Bill and reviewing proposed changes to the 2nd Draft <u>Next Agenda Item: Brians Draft Bill:</u> Legislative lawyers say leadership doesn't know if the Bill can be introduced. That this Bill is too similar to another Bill. Leg Council is pushing back on certain topics. Question: Was this communication in an email? Response: Yes The public needs to know things are not operating as usual. Our bill can be introduced via petition of the Board and sent to the house clerk.

	I would like for us to review the Draft Bill and make edits/feedback/comments, answer questions about yellow highlights: Page 11, Line 16: July 15, 2026 Can the Director of ORE call the meeting of the Working Group to occur on or before July 15, 2026? Xusana agrees yes. Page 11, Line 20: December 20, 2026 What was title requested? An act relating to building sustainable resources for the dev. and maintenance of affordable housing infrastructure Proposed Titles: Longterm housing security for Vermonters An act relating to housing access and opportunity Agreement on: An Act Related to the Land Access and Opportunity Question about Legislative Lawyers that we work with. Do we have a choice? I would like to talk to that person who worked on the original LAOB Bill. I would go back to the year it was passed. Look at the testimony schedule, usually the 1st person is the drafting attorney. David Hall. Page 11 line 5, land security working group report. Section C, powers and duties: Wondering if there could be language surrounding 'land conservation' or 'conservation'? Question: Can we talk about the working group list? Proposed list: HHAV, Farm to Plate Network (VSJF), VAAFM, VHCB, VHFA, VRJA, VTPOC, Migrant Justice, Developmental Disabilities Housing Initiative, Vermont Legal Aid, Community Action Agency, VT Association of Conservation Districts, Civil Rights and Environmental Justice Unit at ACCD.
3. Process Check-in, Next Steps	● Reflections ● Next Steps Next Policy Committee Meeting: 1/12 11:30AM-1PM: Schedule policy committee meetings. Discuss the Civil Rights bill & Equal Protection Constitutional Amendment. Board Meeting Agenda Items: 1/12

	Staff: Prepare a document to outline this process for the Board Meeting and get the board's feedback. As well as looking at Brians Draft Bill and reviewing proposed changes to the 2nd Draft January Board Meeting: We could establish a process for this session. Something that communicates expectations. If you have something you will bring it. Have standing time on board agendas to share legislative initiatives. Establish a google form. Plan how we integrate information. Who are the spokespeople for the LAOB? Deciding top priorities. We should look into rulemaking as a Board. ● Gratitudes
Meeting Adjourned at 1:45PM	

Submitted by: Arealles Ortiz