Land Access and Opportunity Board: Shelter for All

April 30, 2026 12:00-12:40PM

Meeting Facilitator: Jean Hamilton

Notetaker: Arealles Ortiz

Attendance:

Mary Gerisch, NAACP

Guests & Public:

Grey Berreda

Staff: Jean Hamilton, Ornella Matta-Figueroa, Arealles Ortiz

Not Present:

Brian Cina, National Association of Social Workers

Jaada Longmore, VRJA

Mark Hughes, VRJA

Zack Hughes, Vermont Psychiatric Survivors

Tentative:

Susan Aranoff, Vermont DDC

Sonali Samarasinghe, US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)

Agenda:

- Check In: Name, Nominating Organization
- Prompt: Which sense (touch, taste, sight, hearing, smell) do you most value and why?
- What's going on with urgent needs right now in our unsheltered communities?
- Public Comment

Minutes:

Review Draft Minutes 4.16.26:

The subcommittee did not reach a quorum. 4.16.26 Minutes will be reviewed on 5/14/26.

What's going on with urgent needs right now in our unsheltered communities?

Comment: There have been mentions of 3 houses in Burlington, doors getting kicked in. There has been an interruption of supply which increases use and lethality. Mitododine is moving in to replace xylazine.

Not sure how to go about the mourning of the closing of safe recovery. There should be a grieving process for that.

Was in West Lebanon and White River Junction where there have been sweeps in unhoused communities and their belongings being thrown away in dumpsters.

Comment: In Bennington, there are people exiting the motels because winter weather exemption is over and have used their 90 days. There is some relief for unhoused folks exiting motels. They could ask for relief pending appeal.

VCCH has received a grant from LAOB to supply food and activities.

Vermont can't give out federal vouchers from HUD to people who are on the waiting list or want to apply. People who have HUD vouchers in the northern part of Vermont are getting their vouchers rescinded.

There are many kinds of vouchers other than HUD. Emergency housing vouchers last for 60 days. Family unification vouchers are permanent. Shelter plus care vouchers can be renewed. Rapid Rehousing also has temporary vouchers.

Question:
Talked to someone who has a trailer that would like to be restored. Are there programs for funding?

Response: There are mobile restoration programs throughout the state, but they don't have much funding. Another part of the problem is that a lot of trailers are in such bad shape that it would be cheaper to buy a new one.

Reflections on Shelter Policy:

H.772: An act relating to residential rental agreements, eviction procedures, and the creation of the positive rental payment credit reporting pilot program.

Question: How can LAOB work with HHAV?

Response: The LAOB grants awarded for emergency shelters are making a big difference. Things are changing every day at the statehouse, so no one really knows what's going on. Feeling personally opposed of the landlord tenant bill. On the other hand, the Vermont State Housing Authority are saying we should have this bill because of safety issues. Once we understand what's going to happen with state funding, we will better understand LAOBs role with HHAV.

Comment: There is a criminalizing happening that is being justified with this bill. Everyone has a right to due process.

Next Steps:

- Review Draft Minutes 4.16.26
- Update on Emergency Shelter Grants

Meeting Adjourned at 12:40 PM