Land Access and Opportunity Board Meeting
May 4th, 2026, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Occurs Every 4th Monday

Meeting Facilitator: Ornella Matta Figueroa & Jean Hamilton

Notetaker: Arealles Ortiz

Attendee	Present	Not Present
Board	● Andre Comandon, Office of Racial Equity ● Abel Luna, Migrant Justice ● Mary Gerisch, NAACP ● Susan Aranoff, Vermont DDC ● Mark Hughes, VRJA ● Dan Coutu, VT Commission on Native American Affairs ● Brian Cina, National Association of Social Workers ● Alyssa Beauchamp, Liberation Ecosystem Inc.	● Emily Carris-Duncan, Vermont Every Town Project ● Sonali Samarasinghe, US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) ● *No active board member*, Pride Center of Vermont ● Zack Hughes, Vermont Psychiatric Survivors
Board Alternates	● Caitlin Scott, Vermont Psychiatric Survivors	● Samantha Langevin, Liberation Ecosystem Inc. ● Jaada Longmore, VRJA ● Kirsten Murphy, Vermont DDC ● Xusana Davis, Office of Racial Equity
Guests & Public	Buster Caswell	
Staff:	Kiah Morris, Tay Margison, Jean Hamilton, Arealles Ortiz, Ornella Matta-Figueroa	

1. **Convene the May 4th, 2026 virtual meeting of the LAOB at 5:30pm**
   a. Welcome, Overview
   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, Seat and Location (county)
      Prompt: What color best describes you?

2. Review & Approve DRAFT Minutes from 4/6/26

Mary Gerisch makes a motion to approve minutes as presented.
Alyssa Beauchamp seconds that motion.
Mark Hughes Abstains.
Caitlin Scott Abstains.
Andre Comandon Abstains.
All were in favor.

3. Agenda Items:	-LAOB Signing Authority -Board Approvals -Special Board Meeting Updates -Public Comment
4. LAOB Signing Authority	- <u>Office Update: VT Humanities-LAOB lease:</u> Mary Gerisch makes a motion to give signing authority to Jean and Ornella to sign the lease for office space with VT Humanities Council. Alyssa Beauchamp seconds that motion. All were in favor. - <u>Vermont Department of Health: State Health Improvement Plan Grant:</u> Mark Hughes moves to give signing authority to Jean and Ornella to sign the State Health Improvement Plan Grant. Mary Gerisch seconds that motion. All were in favor.
5. Board Approvals	- <u>Emergency Shelter Grantee Budget Adjustment Approval:</u>

We have 8 active grants under grant agreements. Grantees will receive funding through reimbursement. One grantee, Beloved Winter Shelter, is requesting a shift in their budget that would result in $5,500 reduction. They are proposing to remove supplies and administrative overhead costs because they no longer need those items in this grant as well as shift personnel costs to align with actual costs.

Question: Are there alternative allowable costs that this grantee can shift this funding to use?

Response: The grantees determined this is the best path forward and wanted to close out their grant. They also had more of their cost's reimbursed from emergency cold weather shelter grants. Because of the reimbursement structure, we were feeling concerned if grantees would be able to close out their grants, so we were supportive of this direction.

Mark Hughes makes a motion to approve Beloved Winter Shelter's budget adjustment.
Mary Gerisch seconds that motion.
All were in favor.

- Community Resilience Hub Grant Presentation & Approval:

Our total proposal that we are recommending for Community Resilience Grants is $400k. This grant project has been in development since the Co-directors joined the LAOB. We observed the urgency to move it forward. These funds are coming from what we received back in the Budget Adjustment Act (BAA). There is pressure to spend funds down this fiscal year.

We received 37 letters of intent that were translated into 26 applications. Webinars and 1 on 1s were available to help people who were applying to think through what community resilience means as well as strategies around partnerships and collaborations.

When we got to the application period, there was a growth in highlighting what LAOB does best in helping organizations, entities, and communities find better ways to do their work strategically.

Overviewed the review timeline process.

Question: Were there LAOB staff present for the deliberations?
Response: Yes, the co-directors and one staff member was present.

BREAK: 6:30-6:35pm	
	Mark Hughes makes a motion to move into executive session to respect the confidentiality of contract negotiations, protect the integrity of the selection process, and ensure we are not placing ourselves at any undue liability. Dan Coutu seconds that motion. All were in favor. Mary Gerisch makes a motion to move out of executive session to continue grant discussion. Mark Hughes seconds that motion. All were in favor. Susan Aranoff makes a motion to approve the awards as recommended by the grant review committee. Mary Gerisch seconds that motion. Mark Hughes abstains. Abel Luna abstains. All were in favor. - <u>Community Resilience Organization (CROs) capacity grant to support the Community Resilience Hub Toolkit:</u> Mary Gerisch makes a motion to approve CROs capacity grant as proposed. Dan Coutu seconds that motion. All were in favor.
6. Public Comment & Board Responses	I hope moving forward LAOB would help in continuing the discussions, hosting organizations, and co-facilitating any future events necessary to keep moving things along. There is such great need for farmworker housing. Appreciate Jeans leadership.
8. Special Board Meeting Updates:	- Homes For All Grant/Loan Fund: Thursday May 14th 12 - 1PM, May 15th 10-11AM - LAOB Program Updates: Friday May 29th 2:15 - 4:15PM - FY26 Budget 3/27 9:30-10:30AM: - Comprehensive Community Engagement Proposal Meeting 5/6 4:30-6:30PM: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Iusr7yjfwwsKzR6pBeXOZQYLWaUpumEA/view

ACTION ITEMS:	- LAOB FY26 Budget: Amendments & Approval
Meeting Adjourned: 7:30PM	

Submitted By: Arealles Ortiz