Land Access and Opportunity Board: Policy Committee

May 4th, 2026, 11:00-12:00PM

Meeting Facilitator: Ornella Matta-Figueroa

Notetaker: Arealles Ortiz

Attendees	Not Present
Board • Andre Comandon, Office of Racial Equity • Susan Aranoff, Vermont Developmental Disability Council • Brian Cina, National Association of Social Workers • Mark Hughes, Vermont Racial Justice Alliance • Dan Coutu, VT Commission on Native American Affairs, **Staff:** Tay Margison, Arealles Ortiz, Jean Hamilton, Ornella Matta-Figueroa	● Jaada Longmore, Vermont Racial Justice Alliance ● Zack Hughes, Vermont Psychiatric Survivors *Tentative:* - Kirsten Murphy, Vermont Developmental Disability Council
Guests & Public: No members of the public were present.	

Agenda

Meeting Convened by Facilitator at: 11AM	
1. Introductions & Check-in	- Check ins: Prompt: Are you a coffee or tea person? - Review 4/27/26 DRAFT Minutes - Memo Update: S.193 - Public Comment
2. Discussion/ Updates	Review 4/27/26 DRAFT Minutes: Dan Coutu makes a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Susan Aranoff seconds that motion.

	Amendments: Page 2, “Looking at larger scale things is not economic analysis.” to “Looking at GDP does not provide the level of economic analysis and detail that is needed. GDP also does not speak to the rural impacts.” “The analysis would have to include how did we get there and the dynamic factors”. Mark Hughes abstains due to absence. Andre Comandon abstains due to absence. All were in favor of approving the minutes with the proposed edits. <u>Memo Update: S.193</u> Reviewed Draft Memo: Draft- LAOB MEMO S.193 - Google Docs Feedback & Discussion: Comment: This was very well written and thorough. The points described and reasoning for their inclusion are very clear. Comment: Huge thanks for taking this on. It’s awesome. This bill doesn’t name a way to restore people to competency. We might want to include in the memo: Observe, document, and acknowledge the disproportionate impacts on individuals with disabilities and define what it means to be restored. Anyone who can’t be restored with dementia, brain injury, intellectual, developmental disability should be included in a screening process especially individuals who cannot be treated with mediation. Comment: There will be testimony on Wednesday 5/6 in three committees about S.193. Comment: There are some concerns on what could happen eventually if we don’t set some real limits, related to rights of women. Comment: Without checks and balances, this bill could end up leading into similar kinds of consequences that have happened in Vermont such as the eugenics program. Comment: We’re in full support of the memo. There are many parallels with Office of Racial Equity’s testimony. There is a citing issue. Where would the forensic facility go if not in prison grounds? We have heard from the corrections

	committee that there could be the possibility of contracting with an upstate NY forensic facility. We would also have to acknowledge the difficulty of creating a new site if it's needed. Comment: Wondering if there could be a consensus that this bill won't produce anything good. We could say we do not support it moving forward. It is at an intersection of the juvenal justice and mental health systems where black folks are overrepresented. Comment: This bill may end up being a study. The House Health Care Committee was asked to provide clear language on how this facility would fit into the mental health system of care and not operate in isolation. Hopefully we will be asking for an analysis of how mental health services are currently being provided in correctional facilities. If there were competency programs, and people clear them, then what services do they get? Lastly, we noticed that the only program in Vermont for children 0-12 in mental health crisis is the Jarrett House that is going to shut down. 30% of children enrolled in the ARCH program will lose their benefits. Comment: We are making policy without understanding what the problem is we are trying to solve.
3. Process Check-in, Next Steps	● Reflections ● Next Steps: -H.772 Update -LAOB Policy Update: Act 181 -Committee Member Announcements/Updates ● Gratitudes
Meeting Adjourned at 12:00 PM	

Submitted By: Arealles Ortiz