Land Access and Opportunity Board: Policy Committee

September 21, 2026, 11:00-12:00PM

Meeting Facilitator: Ornella Matta-Figueroa

Notetaker: Arealles Ortiz

Attendees	Not Present
Board ● Dan Coutu, VT Commission on Native American Affairs, VT Council on Native American Affairs ● Susan Aranoff, Vermont Developmental Disability Council ● Mark Hughes, Vermont Racial Justice Alliance ● Andre Comandon, Office of Racial Equity **Staff:** Ornella Matta-Figueroa Arealles Ortiz	● Brian Cina, National Association of Social Workers ● 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: 11:00 AM	
1. Introductions & Check-in	-Check Ins -Prompt: What is one word on how you're arriving today? -Review 9.14.26 DRAFT Minutes -Discuss the plan: Legislative Session FY28 -Public Comment
2. Discussion/ Updates	Review 9.14.26 DRAFT Minutes: Minutes were not ready to be reviewed. The committee will review 9.14.26 minutes at 9.28.26 meeting.

	Discuss the plan: Legislative Session FY28: Overviewed what we learned: The challenge was: Defining our Roles Clarifying Advisory Powers Clarifying board & staff responsibilities Deciding what belongs in our policy lane Determining how community voice informs policy decision We were building multiple things like: Policy Positions Governance Structures Advisory Powers Community Engagement Systems Organizational Identity Things we have agreement on: Shared Values: Community voice is central Lived experience is expertise Building with an Equity Lens Accountability Relationship before solutions Seeding power to communities (community engagement to ownership) Shared Principles: Listen before advocating Community – informed decision making Structural barriers matter Community Voice should influence systems Policy should be connected to lived experience What is in LAOBs lane: Homeownership Land Access Affordable Housing Disability Housing First Generation Homebuyers Housing Finance

	Shared Equity Housing Land Use & Development Policy <u>Maybe in our Lane:</u> Tax Policy Economic Development Workforce Development Shelter Policy Food Systems Food Sovereignty Climate Resilience <u>Not in our Lane:</u> General Electoral Politics General Education Policy Childcare Healthcare unrelated to housing Broadband Issues Transportation issues without a housing connection Criminal justice issues unrelated to housing access <u>Proposed Legislative Focus Areas:</u> - <u>Development and Land use</u>: led by Ornella & Tay with Jean's Support Focus would be on understanding our development and zoning barriers and working to invest into answering: What barriers are slowing housing development? What barriers affect historically marginalized communities? What changes might improve access to housing, landownership and wealth building? - <u>Housing and Navigation Support Services Infrastructure:</u> led by Ornella, Kiah, Jean, and secure housing coaches' support Invest into answering: How do we improve housing navigation? What are the limitations of the existing system? How do we network and support the existing system to provide better support services for our communities? - <u>Organizational infrastructure related to policy:</u> led by All Staff Advisory Powers Toolkit- Receiving Feedback

	Board Policy Binder- In progress MOU Development for partnerships- In prototype Communication Systems- In progress Legislative Tracking System- Updating from prior years Annual Reporting- We must plan and set up a structure for our annual reporting. - <u>Finance and Budget Funding Strategy:</u> led by Jean and Ornella DFM Process Budget Adjustment Act Appropriations Strategy Legislative Meetings Testimony Planning (House and Senate Appropriations) - <u>LAOB Bill:</u> led by All Staff What are we introducing and prioritizing for this year's LAOB Bill? <u>Shared outcomes that are still missing:</u> What are the changes we want to see? What does success look like for our policy work? How do we know that we are making progress? What is LAOBs role in supporting our appointed organizations platforms and coalitions platforms? How does LAOB bring our unique perspective? Do the resilience hubs want a focus area on their own? <u>Discussion Questions:</u> 1. Does this sound like an accurate synthesis? 2. What feels missing? 3. Are these the right FY 28 focus areas? Response: Liked the process of starting with community input. We will need to think about how we will gather the input and transform that. Also, we should think about the outcomes of Development & Land Use and partnerships. USCRI is working on a bill tracking system.

	Response: Like what you put together. It's sensible and focused on the right way. Community first is important. Question: What are resilience hubs? Response: Places in towns and communities where people can turn to for support during a community disaster. Resilience Hubs align with other state investments like technical assistance, support in municipalities, and needs for shelter. Comment: We need to be careful not to repeatedly ask community the same questions. Comment: What feels missing is building community input and what will that look like? What will be treated as data and how will we use it? Comment: Appreciation for the analysis. What stands out is our approach. Want to identify what we need to do differently to get a different outcome? Working on our Finance Strategy should be a higher priority discussion. Comment: Love how you put this all together. Concerned were losing people in the legislature who support the LAOB. We should prioritize continual asks for LAOB Budget, changes in statute, adds or drops, and securing our future. Comment: There is a lot of mapping that we'll have to do to align with the Strategic Plan.
3. Process Check-in, Next Steps	● Reflections ● Next Steps: Legislative Session FY28: Exploring Outcomes
Meeting Adjourned at: 12:00PM	