Land Access and Opportunity Board: Finance Committee
September 25, 2026 12:00PM-1:00PM

Meeting Facilitator: Jean Hamilton

Notetaker: Arealles Ortiz

Attendees	**Not Present:**
Board: ● Zack Hughes, Vermont Psychiatric Survivors ● Kirsten Murphy, Vermont DD Council ● Alyssa Beauchamp, Liberation Ecosystem Inc. **Staff:** Jean Hamilton Arealles Ortiz Ornella Matta-Figueroa	● Mark Hughes, Vermont Racial Justice Alliance ● Jaada Longmore, Vermont Racial Justice Alliance ***Tentative:*** ● Brian Cina, National Association of Social Workers, Vermont Chapter
Guests & Public: Christopher Baning, VHCB, Constanza Harris, DFM	

Meeting Convened by Facilitator at 12:00PM	
1. Introductions & Check-in	Agenda: - Check in: Name, Nominating Organization - Prompt: Something you're looking forward to this weekend? - Review 9/18/26 DRAFT Minutes - FY28 Discussion - Discussion with DFM Budget Analyst, Constanza Harris - Public Comment
2.Discussion/ Updates	Review 9/18/26 DRAFT Minutes: The committee will review 9/18/26 DRAFT minutes at 10/2 meeting. FY28 Discussion: -Overviewed a 3% & 0% COLA Increase -Overviewed Programmatic Costs for FY26

	Question: Are the three housing coaches included in program funding or general operating costs? Response: They are included in general operating costs. Comment: With base level funding, we will be short $142k and will have to find $2 million in programming costs. -Overviewed the Governors Administration top strategic investment priorities. -Overviewed the Budget Adjustment language. Comment: The budget adjustment right now is for FY27. LAOB has a ton of carryforward they will be using during FY27. Strategically, we will need to create a narrative to indicate the variants once carryforward is used up. Comment: Thinking about what kind of case would make an extraordinary event in FY27 that is representing a shortfall. Question: Are there any funds for this fiscal year that we anticipate will not be spent at the end of the year? Response: All of our program costs for this year are covered by carry-forward. <u>Questions we may ask Codi:</u> -Is there a recommendation about the gap; we will be short $142k and finding $2 million in programming costs? -Should we seek appropriations tied to policy initiatives? Comment: Could 2 secure housing coaches instead of 3 bring us to a more balanced budget? Would like to see what that math shows. It could shift our budget moving forward. Comment: The 3 positions were already factored in the FY26 budget for general operating. They just weren't hired. <u>Discussion with DFM Budget Analyst, Constanza Harris:</u> Question: Is there a way to present a budget that is not level funded that addresses the true increased costs we anticipate for our core general operations? Response: The recommendation would be to present a budget that is level funded and that agrees with the target we provided. Jason may be a better contact for policy related questions. Jason.Aronowitz@vermont.gov

	In terms of one-time funding instructions, there weren't any particular constraints. The requirements and documents that need to be submitted are similar to last year's. Program costs could be positioned within one-time funding. We don't have access to LAOB documents that explaining core expenditures. It would be helpful to have those details. Question: From your perspective, since LAOB appropriations are mainly general funds, do you see any challenges with general funds as a whole? Response: The administration is trying to be cautious, buffers from COVID are dissolving, and level funding is an approach the administration has taken in the past. Comment: This year LAOB will be spending all carryforward from previous years and in FY28 carryforward will be nonexistent. Comment: The board has to step into fundraising. We should be considering allocating funds to a fundraising specific staff member. Want to ensure we will be able to fill in the gap. Comment: Before we could even begin to hire a fundraiser, there should be a feasibility study to determine the capacity of a successful capital campaign. The primary source of housing will be public funds. The appetite for providing public funds for housing would be greater if we could establish a private public partnership. We need to think about the ethics of starting programs we can't sustain for more than a year. Comment: Thinking about stewarding major donors and bringing in collaborators who understand the vision of what LAOB is trying to accomplish. There is something to be said about diversifying our revenue stream.
3. Process Check-in, Next Steps	● Reflections ● Next Steps: -Do the exercise, base level funding projection. -Articulate the impact of any shortfalls. -How does level funding tie into impacts of the communities we serve? -Develop programs with clear performance metrics. -Develop diversification strategies such as fundraising, private donors and gifts between $1k-10k. ● Gratitudes

Meeting Adjourned at 1 PM