

# Quarterly Meeting Minutes ~ September 28, 2017

Hannaford Career Center, Middlebury

Approved December 7, 2017

<b>Present:</b>	Kaiya Andrews, Julie Arel, Fred Breunig, Gina Carrera, Betsy Choquette, Mike Gruteke, Stacey Emerson, Carol Hassler, MD, Catherine Hybels, Steve Kieselstein, Dion LaShay, Ed Paquin, Lisa Rudiakov, John Spinney, Kay Stambler, Miriam Stoll, Adrian Vaut
<b>Absent:</b>	Terry Holden, Clare McFadden, Hannah Neff, Jesse Suter, Jennifer Stratton,
<b>Support Staff:</b>	n/a
<b>Guests:</b>	Rich Ossais, Karen Topper, Max Barrows, Nancy Breiden, Representative Diane Lanpher and her guest, Representative David Sharpe
<b>VTDDC Staff:</b>	Kirsten Murphy, Susan Aranoff, Chelsea Hayward

## 1. Welcome and Minutes:

The minutes were accidentally omitted from the mailing. **Motion:** Mike Gruteke made a motion to have the Executive Committee vote to accept the minutes on behalf of the full Council; there was a second. **Motion approved: 17-0-0.**

## 2. Executive Director's Report:

- **FFY2018 allocation and the P3I:** The House and the Senate have appropriated level funding for DD Councils. Both groups added a note to the budget stating that they did not support consolidation of Councils under a new program called the "Partnerships for Innovation, Inclusion, and Independence" (P3I).
- **Outreach campaign and ABLE:** Promoting ABLE has given VTDDC an opportunity to present to many groups including several designated and specialized service agencies and the Office of Public Guardians. This is helping to get wider exposure for VTDDC's name.
- **Cultural and Linguistic Competency:** Max Barrows will be joining the Vermont planning team for this technical assistance grant. Max's time will be supported by the [Center on Disability and Community Inclusion](#) and VTDDC, with each group providing \$5,000 to GMSA.
- **Check-in about Agenda and accessible video:** Members generally liked having a video to preview the meeting's agenda. They asked that Kirsten speak more slowly when taping.

### 3. Financial Report:

Kirsten distributed a budget handout and walked Council members through the Federal Fiscal Year 2018 [FFY'18] budget. (Details are attached).

Kirsten noted that \$60,000 must be obligated by September 30, 2017 to close out FFY'15 funds. "Obligated" means that VTDDC makes a commitment to spend the money for a specific purpose such as a grant. For this reason, the Council will decide whether to renew its \$60,000 grant to GMSA today.

There was a five-minute break before the Council voted to accept the FFY'18 budget as presented.

**Motion:** Miriam Stoll made a motion to approve the budget as presented. Mike Gruteke seconded. **Motion accepted: 17-0-0**

### 4. Reports from the Field:

- **SEEDS:** Karen Topper and Max Barrows of the [Green Mountain Self-Advocates](#), and Nancy Breiden of the [Disability Law Project](#), presented to the Council about their work promoting alternatives to full guardianship in the Northeast Kingdom. Each organization has had a \$15,000 SEEDS grant to support this project. They both participated on an advisory group for the project, along with representation from Vermont Family Network and the Department of Education's Transition Coordinator, John Spinney.

DLP received referrals directly from probate court so that they could talk with transition-age youth and their families about alternative arrangements. Although several referrals from Probate Court during the grant period did result in full guardianship, which was appropriate, court officials are better educated about alternatives, Nancy explained. One case in Family Court did result in an agreement for shared decision making. GMSA worked with schools and developed a toolkit for individuals and families. DLP expressed their strong commitment to continuing with this work statewide, even after the SEEDS grant ends.

- **Large Grant:** Max Barrows also presented on the work that GMSA has done through its larger grant from VTDDC. This nine-month grant supports self-advocacy and Goal 2 of the State Plan.

There are twenty-two (22) self-advocacy groups throughout Vermont that are under the "GMSA umbrella" (See Attachment 3). Each group has its own

personality, goals, and interests. All of them receive a technical assistance visit by Max at least twice a year. GMSA also provides outreach to high school students in Washington and Chittenden counties through their “Youth Summits.” Max often talks to participating youth about what it was like being a person with autism. Barrows said, **“One of the students asked me ‘If she would still have autism when she became an adult.’ As a person with autism, that’s who you are and that’s your life. Nothing changes who you are.”**

The peer-to-peer connection is extremely valuable, Max said. Being involved with self-advocacy changes peoples’ lives in a way that services cannot.

## 5. Program Committee Report PART 1:

- **Update on the Five-Year State Plan:** Kirsten reported that one lesson learned from VTDDC’s investments in the Northeast Kingdom and in Southern Vermont has been the fact that working on a single issue (like employment) is not enough to make an impact in Vermont’s underserved communities. Building capacity in these regions may require years of sustained, strategic investment. One way to increase our impact would be to build activities into existing grants. For example, next year’s Self-Advocacy Grant to GMSA could include a Youth Summit in an underserved area.
- **Green Mountain Self-Advocates’ grant renewal of \$60,000:**  
Council members had a brief discussion based on the presentation from the Green Mountain Self-Advocates. The drafted Scope of Work can be emailed to anyone who wanted it.

<p><b>Motion:</b> Kay Stambler made the motion to accept the grant renewal of \$60,000. Mike Gruteke seconded. <b>Motion accepted: 16-0-1.</b></p>
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## 6. Lunch with Legislators:

Two legislators attended: Representative Diane Lanpher (D, Addison 3) and Representative David Sharpe (D, Addison 4). After lunch, there was a spirited discussion about special education funding and other services and supports.

Council members reflected on the lunch discussion after legislators left. Kaiya Andrews, Steve Kieselstein, and Miriam Stoll will draft a letter, from the Council, to send to Representative Sharpe about segregation, best practices (which is the federal law), special education funding, language, and inclusion.

## 7. Program Committee Report PART 2:

- **Changes to the Five-Year State Plan, Goal One (1):**

Fred Breunig presented the idea of adding “education” to Goal 1 and adding a fifth objective to this goal. (See attached).

**Motion:** Ed Paquin made the motion to accept the suggested change as presented with the term “high quality” added before “special education” in objective five (5). Miriam Stoll seconded. **Motion approved: 17-0-0.**

These changes will be filed with the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) in VTDDC January 1, 2018 report, Kirsten said.

- **Requests for Proposals:**

Members worked in small groups to discuss how VTDDC might follow up on the work that Vermont Family Network began with their SEEDS grant last spring. During this small grant, VFN identified a great deal of need for family support and training in special education in southern Vermont. Kay Stambler explained how twenty (20) years ago family access to free legal services was critical in strengthening special education service in Chittenden County.

What would be the key elements for a Request for Proposals aimed at addressing the family needs in southern Vermont?

- **Feedback from group one (1):** They were very supportive of parent support and education as a webinar. They felt less strongly about professionals identifying needs, and suggested Vermont Law School to set-up a clinic for law students to pick-up cases related to students in special education (with help from the Vermont Bar Association), as an alternative.
- **Feedback from group two (2):** They felt positively about a series of training, with consultation, for parents and students. There was concern that people who attend trainings are usually those who are already “in the know” – how can VTDDC reach others?
- **Feedback from group three (3):** They agreed it was great to help parents understand their rights. Currently there is a very sensitive culture between parents and special educators, and the RFP should focus on collaboration and partnership to achieve a better outcome for students. Gina Carrera talked about “COACH”, a structure for parents to use to identify their child’s education needs and have them included in their Individualized Education Plan. She said, “COACH is the reason why meetings go the way I want them to go.”

## 8. Policy Committee Report:

The Policy Committee and Susan Aranoff presented about their most recent connections through networking, as well as monitoring the Vermont Legislature and Departments.

- **State System of Care Plan:**

VTDDC submitted comments several times to the [Agency of Human Services](#) on the drafted System of Care Plan, and to the [Green Mountain Care Board](#).

The draft system of care plan includes a cap of \$1,000 per family per year for Flexible Family Funding, which is an historic low for this program. If used for respite, for example, this represents a 50% cut in comparison to funds available in 2000. VTDDC's public comments included advocating for increasing Flexible Family Funding and greater access to other supports and service that reduce the need for crisis services.

Comments to the Green Mountain Care Board have focused on the need to protect the Medicaid Program as the State changes how it pays for acute medical care.

- **Outreach to Indivisible Blue, and Rights and Democracy:**

The committee heard from representatives of Rights and Democracy and Indivisible Blue and explored possibilities for collaboration. Rights and Democracy is a large, grassroots organization that could help with disseminating information about disability issues. Indivisible Blue was open to having Council members meet with their members to learn about what the Council does.

## 9. Representatives of State Government and Agencies:

Betsy Choquette of Vocational Rehabilitation gave a brief update to the Council. There was a \$4.5 million dollar cut to their program. There was a reduction in staff. Fortunately, VR has been able to keep services open statewide and staff morale has been positive.



## 10. Public Comment:

There were no comments from the public.



Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Budget as presented September 28, 2017

Annotated &amp; with Expense Categories aligned to AHS Business Office Requests

<b>INCOME</b>	FFY '17 budget	FFY 18 Recommendation	Balance FFY 18
Federal Allocation	\$487,511	\$487,511	
Unused funds, previous year	\$59,000	\$70,000	
Grant from VHCIP	\$6,627	\$0	
Puerto Rico redistribution	\$10,377	\$13,145	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$563,515</b>	<b>\$570,656</b>	<b>\$570,656</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
<b>Section 1, Salary &amp; Benefits</b>			
Salary, 3 FTE's	\$182,062	\$193,580	
Benefits at 43%	\$78,287	\$83,239	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$260,349</b>	<b>\$276,819</b>	<b>\$293,837</b>
<b>Section 2, Council Support</b>			
Meetings: meals & space	\$4,040	\$4,040	
Meetings: member per diem	\$5,600	\$5,600	
Travel: in-state	\$8,000	\$6,000	
Travel: Out-of-state	\$6,300	\$8,300	
Council Training	\$2,060	\$2,060	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$26,000</b>	<b>\$26,000</b>	<b>\$267,837</b>
<b>Section 3, General Operating<sup>5</sup></b>			
Occupancy	\$5,082	\$4,500	
Phone	\$1,918	\$1,800	
Printing & Postage <sup>4</sup>	\$2,000	\$4,000	
Office Supplies	\$2,500	\$2,587	
Equipment	\$0	\$2,400	
Dues, NACDD	\$4,050	\$4,134	
Subscriptions	\$2,600	\$2,479	
Staff Conference Reg.	\$1,500	\$1,500	
Staff Travel	\$4,550	\$6,000	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$24,200.00</b>	<b>\$29,400.00</b>	<b>\$238,437</b>

*These are the areas where the Council makes investments to accomplish its Five-Year Plan Goals and Objectives.*

<b>Section 4, Contracts</b>			 <b>\$194,437</b>
Program Evaluation for PPR	\$0	\$4,000	
Advertising & Sponsorships	\$17,000	\$20,000	
Disability Awareness Day	\$10,000	\$10,000	
Legislative Advocacy	\$0	\$2,000	
E-Learning Platform <sup>1</sup>	\$8,000	\$8,000	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>	<b>\$44,000</b>	
<b>Section 5, Programs &amp; Grants</b>			 <b>\$0</b>
Leadership Training <sup>3</sup>	\$20,000	\$25,000	
SEEDS	\$60,000	\$30,000	
Major Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$148,000	\$139,437	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$228,000</b>	<b>\$194,437</b>	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>			<b>\$570,656</b>
<b>Net</b>			<b>\$0</b>

Notes from discussion on Sept. 28, 2017

Where did spending vary from budget in FFY'17?

Budget Category	Impact
1. VTDDC did not pursue developing an E-learning platform; project needs additional Council member input.	+ \$8,000
2. VTDDC had \$148,000 available for major grants. They committed \$70,000 of this money -- \$45,000 to GMSA for 9 months and \$25,000 to VCDR for 6 months. It is not unusual in Year 1 of a Five-Year Plan to underspend as the Council develops its action plans to achieve the Five-Year Goals and Objectives	+ 78,000
3. VTDDC spent more on its Leadership Series than planned. The project was about \$10,000 over budget.	-\$10,000
4. There were cost over runs in printing and postage, totaling approximately \$2,000.	-\$,2000
5. Other general operating costs ran about \$4,000 over budget	-\$4,000
<b>NET IMPACT</b>	<b>+\$70,000</b>

Spending in other categories was close to budget.

Net impact of underspending results in \$70,000 that can be carried over to FFY'18.

## PROPOSED REVISIONS TO GOAL 1, VTDDC FIVE-YEAR STATE PLAN

### GOAL

VTDDC will reduce barriers to competitive employment, **inclusive education**, and effective health care services for people with developmental disabilities in two (2) underserved Vermont communities characterized by significant economic poverty.

**Objective 1.** In collaboration with partner organizations, work to bring health outcomes for people with developmental disabilities closer to those of people without developmental disabilities in an underserved Vermont community.

**Objective 2.** Promote the use of available funding and programs for competitive employment for Vermonters with developmental disabilities living in two (2) underserved communities characterized by significant economic poverty.

**Objective 3.** Support initiatives that position Vermont as a leader in developing and expanding entrepreneurial opportunities and innovative approaches to job training for people with developmental disabilities, especially those living in underserved communities.

**Objective 4.** Promote peer-to-peer training and support as a highly valued part of person-and- family-centered care planning for people with developmental disabilities.

**Objective 5.** Support families advocating for best practices in special education services for their child, including improving access to legal services, in an underserved region of Vermont.





## MAJOR GRANT Vermont Self-Advocacy Project Grant renewal, GMSA

In FFY'17, GMSA received a nine-month grant for \$45,000. The grant was awarded in response to a request for proposals (RFP) from *“qualified organizations [able] to expand Vermont’s capacity for youth and adults with developmental disabilities to learn about and engage in self-advocacy and to provide and benefit from peer-to-peer support.”* This grant was renewable up to two additional years at \$60,000 annually.

Based on GMSA’s performance, the Policy Committee recommends renewal of this grant for FFY’18.

### **Performance Strengths, by the numbers at 5 months**

- GMSA provided 20 technical assistance visits to local self-advocacy groups.
- The 19th Voices and Choices conference was held on May 15-16, 2017 and had over 700 participants. New Americans with developmental disabilities were the featured speakers.
- Over the first 5 months of the grant, 7 peer advocates were supported to actively participate on 16 decision-making boards.
- Self-advocates did 19 disability awareness presentations to promote inclusion and highlight the unique contributions of people with developmental disabilities in our Vermont communities.
- GMSA supported hundreds of self-advocates to prepare for and participate in 20 legislative advocacy events that included speaking at public rallies, testifying in legislative committees and public hearings and meet individually with their elected officials.
- During a meeting with Senator Bernie Sanders, Max Barrows was asked to record his comments as part of a video produced by Senator Sanders that was posted on his Facebook page and viewed by 1.5 million people.

## What will be new in a FFY18 Grant?

- Youth Summit in an underserved region of the State (NEK).
- Pilot project in Leadership development for a group of New Americans.

### **GMSA's Local Self-Advocacy Groups**

Advocates for Action (Bellows Falls)  
Bennington: Friends of Friends  
Bridging Advocates Together  
BSAC - Burlington Self-Advocacy Club  
Capitol Advocates Together (Montpelier)  
Champlain Voices (Colchester)  
Communication Alliance (Barre)  
Connections of Peer Support (Springfield)  
Dream Catchers  
Friends Helping Friends (Barre)  
Getting Acquainted Through Self-Advocacy (Morrisville)  
LGBTQ - Support Groups for Self-Advocates (Burlington)  
Next Step Self-Advocates of St. Albans (St. Albans)  
Our Drop In Center (Newport)  
Randolph Area Peer Support  
Rockin' Advocates of Central Vermont (Barre)  
Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered of Rutland  
Speak Up Addison County  
SAVY - Self-Advocates Voices and You (Morrisville)  
Strong Wings  
Vermont Choices (St. Johnsbury)  
Wild Hopes Advocacy Group (Brattleboro)  
Windsor Self-Advocates