

Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council

Draft Quarterly Meeting Minutes ~ September 27, 2018  
Vocational Rehabilitation, St. Johnsbury

<b>Present:</b> Betsy Choquette, Melanie Feddersen, Mike Gruteke, Terry Holden, Steve Kieselstein, Dion LaShay, Hannah Neff, Ed Paquin, Lisa Rudiakov, Kay Stambler, Miriam Stoll, Jennifer Stratton, Adrian Vaut, Havah Walther, Crista Yagjian
<b>Absent:</b> Kaiya Andrews, Julie Arel, Gina Carrera, David Frye, Carol Hassler, Hillary Hill, Jesse Suter, John Spinney,
<b>Support Staff:</b>
<b>Guests:</b> Legislative Candidate Jane Pompeo
<b>VTDDC Staff:</b> Kirsten Murphy, Susan Aranoff, Chelsea Hayward

1. Welcome:

- Changes to/adoption of the Agenda- Members talked about the recorded minutes and how helpful it was to have audio alongside the printed version.

**Motion:** Miriam made the motion to make an amendment to the Agenda. There will be time for member announcements following the Chair’s Report. Kay seconded.  
**Motion adopted: 14-0-0.**

- Adopt Minutes –

**Motion:** Miriam made the motion to accept the minutes. Mike seconded. **Motion adopted: 14-0-0.**

- Member Introduction Activity - Council members paired up for a brief “meet and greet” to answer questions that Council Chair, Miriam, had prepared and distributed. Member shared “fun facts no one knows” about one another to the full group.

2. Meeting Roles and Policy:

- How We Roll – Kirsten introduced the meeting roles that are assigned to Council members. Members volunteered to take on the following responsibilities:
  - Jargon Busters were Courtney and Kay
  - Keepers-of-the-List were Adrian and Steve
  - Keepers of the Rudder were Mike.
  - Time Keeper was Lisa.

- Equalizer was Havah.
- Processors were Crista and Melanie
- Adopt revised Conduct of Meetings Policy – this agenda item was tabled until the next meeting.

### 3. Chair’s Report:

- Monthly Message and Interviews – Miriam mentioned the first issue of her electronic newsletter. The newsletter keeps members connected and up-to-date between meetings. Havah, Mike, and Dion requested a printed copy by mail.
- Feedback from June’s Meeting – Miriam summarized the previous Meetings group activity. The bulleted list highlighted what Council members would like to improve at Quarterly Meetings.
- Late Spring Retreat – Miriam suggested the Spring Retreat as a way to “dig deep” into issues that do not make the Quarterly Meeting Agenda but are still important to cover.

**Motion:** Miriam made the motion to have staff plan an overnight retreat for Spring 2019. Mike seconded. **Motion adopted: 14-0-0.**

In discussing the motion, members brought up concerns about travel. Kirsten assured Council Members that accommodations will be made so that everyone may attend. Mike suggested inviting Partner Agencies and organizations to the retreat, like Green Mountain Self-Advocates.

NEXT STEPS: Staff will collect some estimates and ideas for dates and venues for the retreat by the December Quarterly meeting. Over the winter, a Council subcommittee will help develop the agenda for this event.

### 3.5 Member Announcements:

- Ed announced that Disability Rights Vermont produced and distributed a Voters’ Guide for People with Disabilities.
- Lisa will be joining a group-walk to help a local pregnancy center. She brought a pledge sheet for Council Members to show their support.
- Crista mentioned an Inclusive Practices Workshop by the Agency of Education; there will be two full days dedicated to explaining what Vermont is doing to reach students with disabilities. October 29<sup>th</sup> in Castleton.

#### 4. Report from Washington:

- Presentation by the DC Travel Team – Mike and Terry talked about the conference they attended with Council Staff. The National Association for Developmental Disabilities Council [NACDD] annual conference hosts Councils from every state and territory. NACDD is the private non-profit that provides tech support, funding advocacy, and all other duties that the VTDDC, and all other such Council's, need to operate.

#### 5. Staff Report:

- Office Move – Kirsten reported that Miriam and Terry have met with the Agency of Human Services Operations Manager to explain VTDDC's priorities for space and why the Council is interested in the Capitol Plaza. The Operations Manager agreed to discuss this option with the Department of Buildings and General Services (BGS).
- Leadership Class of 2019 – The Leadership Series has accepted 23 people into the Class of 2019, the largest class to date. When they graduate, they will join a network of approximately 120 trained advocates. The first weekend will be in early October.
- Healthcare Forum – In collaboration with Vermont Care Partners and the Vermont Association of Mental Health and Addiction Recovery, VTDDC is sponsoring an all-day discussion with advocates. This event is titled, *The Future of Medicaid: The impact of health reform on Vermonters with disabilities*. The goal of this event is to educate advocates about important changes to the Medicaid Program and to build consensus for positive changes or protections that could be requested in the reform process. Participation is limited to a small invitation list, but organizers hope that this event will lead to additional opportunities for people to share their concerns and hopes for health reform.
- Amicus (Friend of the Court) Brief – Susan reminded the group about the details of the recent State Supreme Court Case that VTDDC addressed in a Friend of the Court Brief. The case centers around whether someone with an IQ of 75, which falls within the standard error of measurement for the required score of 70, should receive developmental services. Oral argument in the case was heard by the court on September 11, 2018. A decision is unlikely before Christmas. Council members asked questions about the case, the justices on the court, and timeline. As far as Kirsten knows, this is the first time any Council has submit an *Amicus* brief.

Council members may contact Melanie Feddersen for any questions about people who are eligible for disability services in Vermont.

## 6. Financial Report:

- Review of FFY 2018 at 9 months – Kirsten shared a PowerPoint presentation that outlined the Federal Fiscal Year 2018 budget. She talked about spending in Programs and Grants, Other Funds Supporting the Five-Year State Plan, Salary and Benefits, Council Expenses, General Operation, and Contracts. Kirsten showed the Council that there are at least \$70,000 in FFY'18 that can be rolled into the FFY'19 budget.
- Request for FFY 2019 budget adjustments – Council members reviewed the Budget Sheet that was included in the mailed materials. On the sheet there were two proposed adjustments: 1) \$10,000 taken from Grants and moved to Spring Retreat, and 2) \$1500 from Conference Registration and moved to Staff Training.

**Motion:** Kay made the motion to accept the proposed budget adjustments. Steve seconded. **Motion adopted: 14-0-0.**

## 7. Membership Committee Report:

- New Member Nomination – A short summary of the interview was distributed. Kay talked about the interview and her impression of the candidate. She shared an email from Dr. Carol Hassler, who participated in the interview but could not attend today's meeting.

**Motion:** Kay made the motion to accept Candace Price as a member. Steve seconded. **Motion adopted: 14-0-0.**

## 8. Lunch with Legislators:

Legislative Candidate Jane Pompeo joined Council Members for lunch. Dion, Steve, Lisa, Courtney, and Crista talked on behalf of the Council to discuss: (1) independence, staff turnover, and lack of services; (2) self-management for parents of people with disabilities; (3) the fact that funding is an investment, not a “benefit”; and (4) financing of education and special education.

Jane talked about her sister who lived in a residential setting and the value of staff. Regardless of whether she is elected or not, Jane intended to continue to work with advocates, government and legislators.

At the end of lunch, Adrian announced that he would resign at the end of his first term in March 2019.

**“If it wasn’t for the Council I would not have extended my horizons.”**

– Vice-Chair, Lisa Rudiakov

## **9. Program Committee Report:**

- New Grant Summary – Kirsten presented for the committee. She distributed and talked about a draft of the Grant Summary sheet and asked for feedback. The largest problem has been that Grantee’s have not been drawing down funds from their awarded grants.
- New Projects – Requests for Proposals will be issued within the next month for: (1) the renewal of VTDDC major grants to Green Mountain Self Advocates and to the Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights; (2) a new round of SEEDS grants; and (3) a grant for \$50,000 for educating parents about special education rights and procedures. The Program Committee is encouraging groups to apply for a SEEDS grant to support developing a Story Bank, which is part of VTDDC’s Five-Year Plan. They are also seeking applications in the area of entrepreneurial employment for people with disabilities.

## **10. Intelligent Lives, Film by Dan Habib:**

- Movie Preview – Council members watched the first 17 minutes of the documentary on young people with disabilities, inclusion, and the wide range of ways in which people show their intelligence and talents.
- Discussion – Following the video, members had an opportunity to “debrief”. The conversation was often emotional. Some points that were shared:
  - A low IQ score can be the “green light to quit...”. In other words, educators and others quit on people with disabilities instead of helping them to reach their full potential.
  - While it may appear that people were cared for at the Brandon Training School, 90% were victims of abuse because there were no “eyes on”; residents were hidden from the community.
  - We have to make changes – we cannot go back to the way we were.

**“I don’t want to be a number. I want to be a person.”**

– Vice-Chair, Lisa Rudiakov

**“I am concerned for the future of developmental services and the funding. We need to pay close attention because there are people that are counting on us.”**

– Member, Jennifer Stratton

**“There is something wrong with this system when parents have to pray that their children have low-enough IQ’s to get services.”**

– Chair, Miriam Stoll

Council Members also discussed how VTDDC can use this movie as a tool to further VTDDC’s mission and goals: Members suggested partnering with schools to ensure that young people see the film’s positive images of people with developmental disabilities. There is also interest in showing the movie in the evening at the State House to educate legislators. Kirsten shared that VTDDC is helping to sponsor a showing in connection with Vermont Family Network’s annual conference; film maker Dan Habib will be speaking after the film.

## **11. Public Comment:**

- Visitors are welcome to speak – There were no guests.

## **12. Summarize Meeting:**

The Processor noted two things 1) The most involved discussion/more participation was when Council members prepared for Lunch and discussed the movie; we are energized, and 2) A lot of people are asked “what can I do outside of the Council?”.

Council members also shared gave “two words” to reflect on the meeting.

## **13. Adjourn:**

- The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chelsea Hayward

# Quarterly Meeting Parking Lot ~ September 27, 2018

Vocational Rehabilitation, St. Johnsbury

- **Retreat –**

- Inviting partner agencies to (be a part of) the retreat.
- Can we meet in the Bennington area?
- Please communicate date as soon as possible so I can request time from work.
- Will it be a weekend?
- Brainstorm as an organization how to implement our own initiatives more quickly and with greater input from entire Council since we meet only quarterly.

- **Candidate Score cards –**

- Where candidates stand on issues?
- Who can do this? How can we do this?
- Pros vs Cons
- Roll of VTDDC – can we help fund such an effort?