

**Land Access and Opportunity Board**  
***Draft Minutes***  
**August 22, 2022**  
**by conference call**

The third meeting of the Land Access and Opportunity Board was called to order at approximately 5:35 p.m., on August 22, 2022, by Xusana Davis. The meeting was not recorded.

Board members (or interim designees) in attendance, representing a quorum of the Board, were:

- Xusana Davis, Director, Office of Racial Equity
- Pastor Arnold Thomas, Racial Justice Alliance
- Olivia Peña, Liberation Ecosystem
- Lynn Stanley, National Association of Social Workers, Vermont
- Laurie Stavrand, U.S. Committee for Refugees & Immigrants, Vermont
- Kirsten Murphy, Vermont Development Disabilities Council

Organizations not in attendance were: Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs, Vermont NAACP, Vermont Every Town Project, Pride Center of Vermont, Vermont Psychiatric Survivors.

VHCB staff present were: Gus Seelig, Executive Director; Trey Martin, Director of Planning and Program Development.

Guests present were: Jen Daniels, Vermont State Representative Kevin Christie, Jayme Bauer, Wichie Artu, Shalini Suryanarayana, Addie Lentzner, Roy V. Hill, Corali Cotrina, Al Wakefield.

Meeting Notes and Decisions

1. The Board recognized that six members were present, representing a majority of appointing authorities, and this constituted a quorum.
2. The Board unanimously approved the Meeting Minutes from the August 8, 2022 meeting.
3. Trey Martin from VHCB provided an overview of how Per Diem payments will be processed. He will follow up individually with each board member or interim designee present at meetings so far to provide a W-9 form that must be signed before payments can be processed. Per Diem payments are \$50/meeting/member. VHCB will also reimburse mileage and costs for attending meetings when meetings are in person.
4. Board discussion and decisions focused on three key areas: board governance, structure and roles; review of the LAOB Terms of Reference document (attached to these minutes); and the Jan. 15, 2023 Sunrise Report and process for hiring legal counsel to assist the LAOB with that deliverable.

Board decisions regarding these matters were as follows:

- a. The LAOB will not have a chair or other officers, and meetings will be facilitated on a rotating basis. Each facilitator will work with VHCB to form an agenda, facilitate the meeting, send out a reminder before the meeting, and ensure that draft minutes are reviewed by Board members within five days before the minutes are posted on the LAOB's webpage (located under the "Our Programs" tab on the banner of VHCB main landing page).

Xusana Davis volunteered to facilitate the remainder of the meeting.

In addition, the Board agreed it will be necessary to identify a spokesperson or spokespersons for public engagement, including with the General Assembly, at a future meeting.

- b. LAOB meetings shall continue to be scheduled on an every other week basis, on Mondays, from 5:30 – 7 p.m.

LAOB members noted that the next meeting would fall on Monday, Sep. 5, Labor Day. *Xusana Davis circulated a calendar tool by email to identify a different day and time for that week; LAOB members are asked to fill that out asap if they have not already.* Monday, Dec. 26 was identified as another Monday that will need to be rescheduled.

- c. The LAOB will consider the presence of four members a quorum to conduct business and make decisions.

The LAOB will strive to make all decisions by consensus, and include a consensus statement to summarize the will of the group.

Where consensus is not possible, the LAOB agreed that a vote could be taken, and a majority of votes cast would be sufficient to make decisions for the LAOB in those cases.

- d. Meeting minutes will be kept by VHCB, and circulated through the meeting facilitator, for initial review and edits by all LAOB members. According to public meeting law, VHCB must post draft minutes within five days of a warned meeting.

Minutes will be formally adopted by the LAOB at the immediate next meeting, through the decision-making process outlined above.

- e. The LAOB acknowledged and agreed that all business of the LAOB must be conducted in person at publicly warned meetings. Members agreed that decision-making conversations or other LAOB business will not be conducted through email or other electronic means or by sub-groups of the LAOB outside warned meetings, or by groups designated by the LAOB at a warned meeting for the purpose of meeting and reporting back.

- f. The LAOB identified the goal to meet in person when possible, with the town of Randolph identified as a possible central location for such meetings to be held. The LAOB also agreed that in conjunction with future meetings, it would be desirable to schedule visits to affordable housing sites, farm sites, or other destinations of interest for “field trips.”
- g. The next three meeting dates and facilitators are as follows. Trey Martin will be sending calendar invites to save the date once the meeting in early September is scheduled:
  - i. Week of Sep. 6, tbd; facilitated by Pastor Thomas.
  - ii. Monday, Sep. 19, 5:30 – 7; facilitated by Kirsten Murphy.
  - iii. Monday, October 3, 5:30 – 7; facilitated by Lynn Stanley.
- h. LAOB members reviewed the attached “Terms of Reference” document, which was updated based on the LAOB’s discussion.
- i. LAOB members began a discussion about the Jan. 15, 2023 “Sunrise Report,” acknowledging the need to review the draft Request for Proposals for Legal Service circulated by VHCB and decide how to proceed. VHCB’s RFP process will be used to solicit bids for that work.

LAOB members also began a discussion about how to best access our collective networks to solicit bids from legal service providers with the skillset needed to represent the LAOB’s interest effectively.

In addition to formal bids, LAOB members discussed whether consultation would be possible and desirable from in-state partners like the Vermont Attorney General’s Civil Rights attorneys.

LAOB members will return to these questions and this discussion at the next meeting.

### Public Comments Received

- Wichie Artu: will there be a mailing list to provide interested members of the public with information about upcoming meetings? *VHCB will look into an online option for members of the public to sign up to receive notice about upcoming meetings.*
- Jen Daniels: recommended the following links from the *1619 Project*.
  - <https://www.lawyerscommittee.org/lawyers-committee-releases-standing-with-black-farmers-video-detailing-need-for-usda-debt-relief/>

- <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/04/podcasts/1619-slavery-sugar-farm-land.html>
- Corali Cotrina asked how will the public be involved in decisions and recommendations of the LAOB?
- Wichie Artu provided this link following the meeting to the upcoming “VT Racial Justice Housing Jam: <https://www.abundantsun.com/what-we-do/projects/housingjam/>

Zoom Coordinates for future meetings:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7762892697>

Meeting ID: 776 289 2697

Dial by your location:

- +1 646 931 3860 US
- +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)



## LAND ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE

### DEFINING DETAILS

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<b>NAME:</b>	Land Access and Opportunity Board
<b>TYPE:</b>	Advisory Committee
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	To recommend new opportunities and improve access to woodlands, farmland, and land and home ownership for Vermonters from historically marginalized or disadvantaged communities who continue to face barriers to land and home ownership.
<b>INITIAL SCOPE:</b>	To deliver January 15, 2023 "Sunrise Report" to Vermont General Assembly and subsequent engagement with the General Assembly and other stakeholders. To engage with Vermont organizations working on housing equity and land access to recommend changes to provide more equitable access for Vermonters from historically marginalized or disadvantaged communities.
<b>AUTHORITY:</b>	The Land Access & Opportunity Board is established with broad authority to deliver on the mission and purpose summarized above. Initial funding for the Board is limited to meetings in SFY2023 for the purpose of delivering the Sunrise Report and any subsequent engagement with the General Assembly and other stakeholders.
<b>SOURCES:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enabling legislation: <a href="#">Act 182 of 2022</a></li><li>• Administrative and Fiscal Support: <a href="#">Vermont Housing &amp; Conservation Board</a></li><li>• Vermont Open Meeting Laws: <a href="#">1 V.S.A. §§ 310-314</a></li><li>• Vermont Secretary of State: <a href="#">Guide to Open Meetings</a></li><li>• Vermont Per Diem Law: <a href="#">32 V.S.A. § 1010</a></li><li>• Records Retention Law: <a href="#">1 V.S.A. § 317a</a></li><li>• RFPs subject to VHCB procurement policy</li></ul>

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### PRACTICES AND PROTOCOLS

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<b>MEETINGS:</b>	<p>The first meeting of the Land Access and Opportunity Board was called by the Executive Director of Racial Equity for 4 p.m. on July 25, 2022.</p> <p>Subsequent meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Week of Sep. 6, tbd; to be facilitated by Pastor Thomas</li><li>• Sep. 19, 5:30 – 7; to be facilitated by Kirsten Murphy.</li><li>• Oct. 3, 5:30 – 7; to be facilitated by Lynn Stanley.</li></ul>
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Join meetings by Zoom:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7762892697>

Meeting ID: 776 289 2697

Dial up information  
 +1 646 931 3860

<b>REPORTING:</b>	<p>On or before January 15, 2023: Written report to the House Committee on General, Housing, and Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs with initial recommendations related to the goals set forth in 10 V.S.A. § 325u. The report and recommendations shall primarily address</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• legal, constitutional, and governance questions relevant to the functions of the Board, including           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ grant making and</li> <li>○ how to fund, organize, and structure the Board as a permanent instrumentality of the State of Vermont.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>RESOURCES:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$200,000 appropriation for SFY2023</li> <li>• Administrative and technical assistance of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board</li> <li>• The Board may accept from any governmental department or agency, public or private body, or any other source, grants or contributions</li> </ul>
<b>DELIVERABLES:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January 15, 2023 Sunrise Report</li> <li>• Initial work of the Board under 10 V.S.A. § 325u(f) – “Powers and duties of the Board”</li> </ul>

## MEMBERSHIP

Member terms: Terms are 3 years. Members may not serve more than two full terms. Process for selecting a chair and other officers to be discussed at the first meeting.

NAME	ORGANIZATION	APPOINTED BY
Xusana Davis	SOV – Office of Racial Equity	Enabling statute
(tbd)	Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs	Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs
Steffen Gillom (temp)	Vermont branches of the NAACP	Vermont branches of the NAACP
Pastor Arnold Thomas	Vermont Racial Justice Alliance	Vermont Racial Justice Alliance
Ana Mejia	Liberation Ecosystem	Liberation Ecosystem
Kenya Lazuli	Vermont Every Town Project	Vermont Every Town Project
Lynn Stanley	National Association of Social Workers, Vermont	National Association of Social Workers, Vermont
Raheemah Madany	Pride Center of Vermont	Pride Center of Vermont
Amila Merdzanovic	U.S. Committee for Refugees & Immigrants, Vermont	U.S. Committee for Refugees & Immigrants, Vermont
Kirsten Murphy	Vermont Developmental Disabilities	Vermont Developmental Disabilities

	Council	Council
Karim Chapman (temp)	Vermont Psychiatric Survivors	Vermont Psychiatric Survivors