

VAPDA

March 4, 2021 Minutes

Present: Tasha Wallis, Bonnie Waninger, Charlie Baker, Ed Bove, Tom Kennedy, Peter Gregory, Dave Snedeker, Catherine Dimitruk, Jim Sullivan, Chris Company, Adam Lougee

Guests: Susan McCormack, Sarah Carpenter, Kerrie Lohr

Welcome, Agenda Changes

Chair Wallis called the meeting to order at 9:32 am. No agenda changes.

Approval of February Minutes & Treasurer's Report

C. Baker moved to approve; C. Dimitruk seconded. Motion carried.

Bylaws Update

P. Gregory reviewed the changes

- Changed president to chair: Article 5, Section 3 needs this updated
- Changed Secretary and Treasurer position to one position: Secretary/Treasurer
- Secretary/Treasurer is responsible for tax filing and lobbyist disclosure reporting
- Minutes posted on VAPDA website

The bylaws will be noticed for a vote at the next meeting. The VAPDA letterhead and website will be updated after approval.

Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

RPCs discussed their Commissions' Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) efforts to date. Susan McCormack, Creative Discourse, provided a definition of racism. Racism is a marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produces and normalizes racial inequities. She shared that fear of saying the wrong thing or having things blow up is common and real. She provided advice for getting started and moving forward, recommending that individuals consider why addressing racism matters personally for themselves and Vermont. She recommended centering discussion around voices that have been impacted by racism.

McCormack suggested leveraging RPC skills for conversations by:

- Gathering data and using it to explore how inequities are showing up and what this means. She recommended having people with marginalized identities define the indicators that matter.
- Leveraging RPC long term planning skills to address the sense of urgency to make changes now and to think about long-term change.
- Connecting municipal and school district efforts. School districts are ahead of municipalities. They can provide coaching about what's working and what the

challenges are. Children and staff come from the community, and schools need help to make progress.

Resources shared:

C. Campany

- <https://www.amazon.com/Sum-Us-Everyone-Prosper-Together/dp/0525509569>
- <https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/otm/episodes/on-the-media-40-acres>
- Podcast explaining how racist policies of the past continue to have direct effects on people today: <https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/otm/episodes/on-the-media-40-acres>
- <https://www.iamavermonter.org/region/southeast-vermont>

S. McCormack

- Street Data can help think about the issue of the stories data tells - <https://us.corwin.com/en-us/nam/street-data/book271852>
- <https://www.creativediscourse.org/blog/2018/10/18/swimming-in-the-muddy-pond-of-racism>
- <https://us.corwin.com/en-us/nam/street-data/book271852>
- Excellent podcast: <https://www.sceneonradio.org/seeing-white/>

Rental Housing

Sarah Carpenter, Chair of the Vermont Rental Housing Advisory Board, discussed S.79. It proposes moving municipal code inspection via health officers to the Dept. of Fire Safety and proposes a statewide rental registry with a fee. She discussed the issues the bill addresses and challenges and concerns about the bill.

Committee Reports

Community Affairs: **A. Lougee will seek guidance from DHCD about when DHCD might have its Zoning for Great Neighborhoods training available for RPC use.** Contractually, RPCs may, but are not required, to providing the training during FY21.

Natural Resources: C. Baker said DEC is starting work on Clean Water Service Provider guidance. **Baker will follow up with DEC staff regarding the CWSP scope/scale discussion.** He noted Act 250 does not appear to be a priority for this legislative session.

Emergency Management: C. Dimitruk said she will be scheduling a VAPDA Emergency Management Committee meeting with Lee Dorf to discuss EMPG program goals and the transition to statewide LEPC. She noted language released about local REMC representatives drafting language was not VEM's intent and clarifications will be forthcoming. RPCs were reminded that LGER is available as EMPG-S cash match. Also, REMC is replacing EMD roundtables as an EMPG deliverable.

Transportation: C. Company provided a recap of the RPC/VTrans Municipal Roads General Permit meeting. Category A REI projects will be awarded funds. VTrans will clarify what products will be required as contract deliverables. VTrans may use the TPI contract as the funding pass through vehicle, although TPI funds cannot be used for implementation activities. **Company requested B. Waninger email her question about supplemental Category A grant applications so he can follow up with VTrans.**

Company noted the VPSP pilot is rolling out and requested Directors talk to Transportation Planners regarding whether help is needed, TAC discussions, etc. VTrans continues to seek feedback. Baker suggested an equity screen as part of prioritization process, especially related to racial equity. **He will share his VTrans feedback with all RPCs.**

Energy: J. Sullivan noted he provided the PSD with long-form comments from VAPDA. Data needs continue to be discussed. A LEAP model update will be done. RPC and PSD staff will be meeting regarding energy standards update.

Health: No updates. VDH staff are focused on pandemic response.

Climate: Company noted subcommittee formation is ramping up. D. Snedeker has been assigned to the Resilience Subcommittee. Company was assigned to the Just Transition Subcommittee.

Government Affairs: T. Kennedy discussed RPC appropriations. He requested RPCs with representation on the House Appropriations Committee contact legislators. Other significant discussions included:

- potential federal COVID funds for counties and municipalities,
- brownfield funds,
- a potential State Planning Office, and
- place-based TIFs. T. Wallis noted the TIF concept may be modified to RLFs. n

Adjourn

C. Baker moved to adjourn at pm; E. Bove seconded. Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by Bonnie Waninger.