

Draft Minutes
ADVOCACY, OUTREACH, AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE
Thursday, May 6, 2021
12:15 PM – 1:45 PM
via Zoom

Meeting called by:

Sarah Launderville, SRC Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:16 p.m.

Members Present:

- Asher Edelson
- Bill Meirs
- Calla Papademas
- Cara Sachs
- Courtney Blasius
- Diane Dalmasse (ex-officio, non-voting)
- Emily Marie Ahtúnan
- Helena Kehne
- Martha Frank
- Olivia Smith-Hammond
- Sarah Launderville
- Sherrie Brunelle

Members Absent:

- Brian Smith
- Cari Kelley
- Ana Kolbach

SRC Liaison:

None

SRC Coordinator:

- Kate Larose

Speakers or Presenters:

- Chris Damiani
- Dan Jones
- Karen Lafayette
- Tim Bradshaw
- Zoë Cartwright

Guests:

- Laura Siegel
- Lexia Stanley

Interpreters

- Joan Pellerin
- Virginia Clark

1) Introductions (Sarah Lauderville)

Discussion:

Those in attendance went around the table and introduced themselves.

Conclusions:

Thanks to everyone!

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

None

2) Approval of Agenda (Sarah Lauderville)

Discussion:

Sarah asked for any proposed additions or changes to the agenda. Martha moved to accept the agenda and it was seconded. No further discussion. All approved. Vote unanimous 9-0-0

Conclusions:

Motion passes: today's agenda accepted

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

None

3) Open for Public Comment (Sarah Lauderville)

Discussion:

None

Conclusions:

n/a

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

None

4) Approval of Minutes (Sarah Lauderville)

Discussion:

Sarah asked for any proposed changes or amendments to the [Minutes from March 4, 2021](#). There were none. Asher moved to accept the minutes and it was seconded. No further discussion. All approved. Vote unanimous 9-0-0

Conclusions:

March 4, 2021 minutes were approved

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- Upload approved minutes to the SRC website, **Kate Larose**, 5/11/2021

9) Vote: Chair (Sarah Launderville)

Sarah asked for nominations or self-nominations from the floor. Martha nominated Asher. Sarah twice more requested nominations. Hearing none, and an Australian ballot not being necessary, voting was made by a voice vote. Sarah asked all those in favor of electing Asher Edelson as Chair of the AOE Committee to say Aye. All those not in favor to say Nay. Hearing none, Asher was elected as Chair. Vote unanimous 10-0-0

Conclusions:

Asher Edelson was elected Chair

5) Legislative Updates (Group)**Discussion:**

- [Federal Legislation](#)
- [State Legislation](#)

Sarah introduced Karen Lafayette with Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights (VCDR). Karen provided an overview of [VCDR's](#) work and shared VCDR's current [legislative platform](#). She walked through VCDR membership types and shared that the SRC is a consulting member. VCDR meets twice a month throughout the year to plan outreach and events, convenes Disability Awareness Day at the statehouse, provides training, conducts statewide surveys, analyzes legislative policy and budget, and meets twice a year at their Board of Governors' meetings. Karen invited all SRC members to sign up for the VCDR email listserve by emailing vcdrvt@gmail.com.

Karen shared that meetings generally take place on Mondays between 10am-11:30am via Zoom. Board of Governors meetings take place June and December.

Laura shared that she just received an email stating that the Legislature has recently increased their meeting accessibility with closed captioning in all committee meetings.

Diane said that more intentionally partnering between the SRC and VCDR moving forward would be a great idea. Karen shared that they would be open to integrating SRC platform issues into the VCDR platform. Karen shared that this could be an agenda item for the June Board of Governors meeting.

Conclusions:

See above.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- AOE Members interested in VCDR Board of Governors should email Kate.
- People wanting to be included on the VCDR Alerts listserve should email vcdrvt@gmail.com

6) Presentation: MyRide MicroTransit Pilot Project**Discussion:**

- Chris Damiani, Green Mountain Transit
- Dan Jones, Sustainable Montpelier Coalition
- Timothy Bradshaw, Vermont Agency of Transportation
- Zoë Cartwright, VocRehab

Tim shared an overview of the project which can be found in the whitepaper, [Microtransit in Montpelier](#). In December 2018, key constituents were brought together to form a transportation working group including partners such as the City of Montpelier, VCIL, Department of Transportation, and others. He shared that two fixed bus routes were underperforming in Montpelier: hospital hill and the seasonal capitol commuter route. As a result, they started investigating other options to ensure that taxpayer funds were being best invested. It was decided that working with GMT and a third-party app vendor made sense.

Dan added that Sustainable Montpelier rose out of a design competition to get people out of their cars, minimize carbon footprints, and reduce the amount of parking lots (as currently 65% of downtown Montpelier consists of parking lots). The goal of their organization was to shift transportation and get as many people out of their cars as possible. Sustainable Montpelier views microtransit as an opportunity to better serve people beyond a fixed route bus system with an on-demand platform using a smartphone app to arrange rides. They found that the most popular destination is Walmart. They are hoping to start reaching out to people over the age of 65 as the next target population to engage and are also wondering how to fold Medicaid services into the system so it no longer feels like two separate systems. They are investigating ways to provide call phones at strategic locations so that people can easily get rides back even if they do not have access to or comfort levels with smartphones.

Chris shared that over 6,000 rides have been booked using the current system. They are currently unable to allow flag stop options as it would impact the way the system operates.

Zoë reiterated that this has been a good solution for “first mile, last mile” and shared that extensive outreach has been done to target demographics.

Dan shared that current riders were surveyed in advance of the pilot launch and they did specific outreach through organizations such as the local housing authority.

Diane asked what the future vision of the pilot looks like. Tim shared that transportation organizations around the state are planning to request grants for study requests for micro transit to determine feasibility in their locations to see what it could look like as either a stand alone model or a model to further enhance fixed route service.

Chris walked through statistics for the project since the start of the project which can be [viewed here](#). At the start of the pilot the numbers of riders were lower than pre-pandemic numbers. Those numbers have since gone up, and they are now seeing more shared trips throughout the day.

Zoë shared that the average wait time is now about nine minutes. It had previously been a 30-minute wait window but it now a 15-minute window, with a current average of nine minutes.

Chris shared that one option people can use to book return trips includes working directly with a GMT employee at the downtown transit center to book the return trip for them.

Cara shared that two minutes advance notice is not enough time for people with mobility issues get outside to the wait spot. Chris shared that an hour before the ride a text or robocall will provide more specific information about the updated wait time. One of the software features is that you can request additional accommodations such as additional time to get to the wait spot.

Sarah asked how VTrans will elicit feedback from service users moving forward, and ensure that feedback from people with disabilities is incorporated into future offerings. Dan and Chris shared that user surveys will be sent out moving forward as they determine the future of this pilot project.

Laura asked how they will ensure the right people will be taking advantage of the program and Emily asked how they will gather feedback from customers who can no longer use the service. Chris shared that the advisory committee consists of 25 groups providing a cross-section of constituents.

Tim shared that he knows the changes away from fixed route service were challenging to some folks with disabilities and they are trying to find additional ways to make this work for everyone.

Conclusions:

See above.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

n/a

7) Calendar of Upcoming Events (Group)

A. April 8th and 9th VFN Annual Conference

Martha shared that the keynote speakers from the event are included on VFN's [YouTube channel](#). She encourages committee members to watch it as the keynotes were wonderful.

B. [May 20th Youth Summit](#)

Martha shared that the annual youth summit will be held on May 20th. She asked folks to help spread the word to get youth to sign up. She is excited about the three keynoters they have, their resource fair, and the breakout sessions. There will also be a live DJ. The event will be recorded for those who are unable to attend.

C. [May 7th Hunger Action Conference](#)

Sarah shared that she and Cara are co-presenting a session at tomorrow's conference called, "Understanding Ableism in Food Justice".

D. [May 13th Disability Awareness Day](#)

Vermont student leaders will share their lived social experience of disability and call for respect, rights and education justice in our schools.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- n/a

8) Other Business (Chair)

A. Future Agendas

Sherrie asked if we will be including an agenda setting item to future meetings. Asher said he is in favor of this moving forward.

Martha suggested that we revisit dual enrollment.

Diane shared that lack of PCAs and others in the healthcare workforce is a priority area. Diane suggested inviting panelists in to talk to us about this issue. Sherrie suggested that we work with VCDR on this issue. Sarah said that the Money Follows the Person grant that VCIL and VR are part of can provide an opportunity to discuss this further.

Sherrie said that she found the federal legislation handout from CSAVR extremely helpful and easier to follow. Kate will continue to include these updates along with NCIL updates.

Conclusions:

See above

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- Kate will add "agenda setting" to future agendas, **Kate Larose**

10) Adjournment (Sarah Launderville)

Discussion:

Sherrie moved to adjourn. All approved. Vote unanimous 11-0-0

Conclusions:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:43 p.m.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- Draft minutes uploaded to SRC website, **Kate Larose**, 5/11/2021
- Draft minutes emailed to Committee members, **Kate Larose**, 5/11/2021
- Minutes approved, **Committee**, 9/2/2021
- Approved minutes uploaded to website, **Kate Larose**, 9/7/2021