

**VT Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance Steering Committee meeting**  
**January 14, 2021                      1:00p                      via Zoom**

**MEETING MINUTES**

Attendance

Steering Committee:

Margaret Atkinson	Morgan Nichols
Faye Mack	Judy Pransky
Tabitha McGlynn	Sonja Raymond
Barbara Petrie	Sarah Teel
Ann Dillenbeck	Joanna VonCulin
Deb Gass	Nicole Whalen
Sarah Kenney	Cassie Willner (for Holly M.)
Pam McCarthy	Mary Zentara

Not in Attendance: Amanda Cochran, Diane Nichols-Fleming, Ellen Drolette, Floyd Nease

Staff: Matt Levin, Amy Russo-Perler, Dan Brown

1. Welcome, logistics, agenda review

Introductions were made, virtual meeting logistics were reviewed, and there were no changes made to the agenda. Matt noted that an updated Committee roster was in the meeting packet. Dan Brown, the new Public Engagement Director, introduced himself to the Committee.

2. Minutes from 12/2 and 12/16/20 Meetings

Matt presented draft minutes from the December Steering Committee meetings. There were no edits or corrections suggested, and the drafts was **accepted by consensus**.

3. Executive Committee updates

Matt noted that the minutes from Executive Committee meetings held between Steering Committee meetings are always included in the meeting packet. There were no questions about the December meeting minutes.

Matt then reviewed the roster for the Policy/Advocacy Committee, noting that the roster was included in the meeting packet and that the Chair had appointed Tabitha to serve as the at-large member of the Committee at the December 14 Steering Committee meeting.

4. ECDL Planning Update

Amy provided an update on planning for ECDL '21. A discussion followed. Matt provided additional details on BBF's more limited role in the event for this year, noting that their reduced staffing levels and financial capacity are hopefully short-term. He indicated that a broader discussion about the roles of all three sponsors – the Alliance, BBF, and LGK – would likely be considered as planning began for the next in-person version of the event, hopefully in '22.

## 5. Administrative Report

Matt provided an update on the developing organization of staff responsibilities, as Dan continues settling in to his role.

Amy then reviewed the proposed forms related to the new Alliance Steering Committee stipend policy. Committee members were encouraged to fill out and submit the form regardless of their interest in the stipend, among other reasons because the form is being used to collect their contact information. A brief discussion followed about various possible scenarios for eligibility for the stipend, and the importance of sharing information about the program at future Committee meetings.

Matt provided a financial update. He noted that while the '20 year-end financial close-out was not complete, he expected that actual spending would be modestly less than forecasted levels, primarily because of the timing of Dan's hiring. He also noted that forecasts for the '21 surplus were likely to be unchanged, as the revised forecast for increased personnel costs due to benefits would be more than offset by the unexpected \$10,000 discretionary grant from a Turrell trustee. He also provided a brief update on his efforts to secure additional funding from new foundation sources for '22, with the support of Turrell staff.

Amy then reviewed her quarterly Communications Report, which was included in the meeting packet. A brief discussion followed.

Amy reminded Committee members about the DEI discussion group meeting happening the next day, noting that Committee member Mary Zentara was facilitating.

## 6. State House legislative update

Matt and issue leads provided brief updates on a number of issues on the '21 Legislative Agenda. Issues discussed included FaMLI and the Governor's (apparently short-lived) proposal to reorganize some child care functions into the Agency of Education.

## 7. Legislative Agenda approval

Matt reviewed the draft graphical presentation of the '21 Legislative Agenda. A discussion followed. Two main points were raised, including some fine-tuning of graphics and the best wording to use to describe early childhood education (instead of "child care"). After noting changes that Matt and Amy would ask the designer to make to address those issues, the Committee then **consented to** the graphical layout of the 2021 Alliance Agenda.

## 8. Transforming Early Childhood Education/"Childcare is Essential" Campaign

Sarah and Sonja presented an in-depth review of this campaign, which is being jointly sponsored by LGK and VTAEYC. In the discussion that followed, Committee members asked a variety of questions about the details of the campaign, timing, possible legislative outcomes, etc.

## 9. Announcements

Hunger Free Vermont is hiring a Universal School Meals campaign director. Nicole announced she will be leaving the Foodbank in early February, and a new Steering Committee member will be named as part of her transition. Committee members wished her luck and expressed their

thanks for her work. Main Street Alliance will be having a fundraising event on February 3. Let's Grow Kids will have a briefing for legislators on January 15 and a press conference tentatively planned for January 26, pending the timing of the Governor's Budget Address. Faye will be on maternity leave starting later this spring.

10. Scheduling next meeting

Matt noted that typically the Committee would next meet in late March or early April, with the Annual Membership Meeting happening in late May or early June. Given the lateness of the Agenda-setting process and other uncertainties about scheduling, it was not clear if that timing would make the most sense this year. He indicated that the Executive Committee would discuss meeting schedules at their next meeting, later in January.

After thanks was offered all around, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm.