



## **Community Advisory Council Meeting**

### **DRAFT NOTES: March 19, 2025, 12-3pm**

#### **Meeting Documents**

- This agenda.
- December draft minutes.
- CDCI Website Feedback
- [Letter from director about federal funding.](#)
- DD Act Summary
- [CDCI Plan for 2024-2025](#) (reviewed in September)
- [CAC Group Agreement](#)

#### **Agenda Summary**

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 12:00-12:30 | Welcome!   |
| 12:30-1:00  | CDCI updates.                                      |
| 1:00-1:15   | Teaching: New certificate and supporting students. |
| 1:15-1:30   | Research: 2 new grant opportunities.               |
| 1:30-1:45   | Break.   |
| 1:45-2:45   | CDCI Website Feedback                              |
| 2:45-3:00   | Public comment and discuss how meeting went        |

## Meeting Notes

### 12:00-12:20 Welcome.

- The meeting began at 12:06 once we had 6 members and quorum. A quorum is a majority of council members.
- Members introduced themselves. They shared what they want to do on the council. Things members shared included:
  - Giving feedback on website and other activities at Center.
  - Some are focused on what is happening at federal government and funding.
  - Kris shared wants to represent people using communication supports.
  - Lindsey shared wanting to do a film screening with CDCI that Disability Rights Vermont developed.
- A motion was made by Skye to accept the draft December minutes. It was seconded by Michael and the motion passed: 6 yes, 1 abstain, 0 no.
- The table below shows who was present and the vote to approve the minutes.

| Council member   | Present | Approve December Minutes? |
|------------------|---------|---------------------------|
| David Frye       | No      | Not present               |
| Melissa Houser   | No      | Not present               |
| Matthew LeFluer  | Yes     | Yes                       |
| Kristofor Medina | Yes     | Yes                       |
| Kirsten Murphy   | Yes     | Yes                       |
| Lindsey Owen     | Yes     | Abstain                   |
| Skye Peebles     | Yes     | Yes                       |

| Council member           | Present        | Approve December Minutes? |
|--------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Persephone Ringgenberg   | Yes            | Not present               |
| Michael Shor, Co-Chair   | Yes            | Yes                       |
| Summer Stelter           | No             | Not present               |
| Ocean Streeter, Co-Chair | Yes            | Yes                       |
| Total 8 out of 11        | 73% of members |                           |

**CDCI Personnel Present:** Audrey, Maureen, Winnie, Jesse

## 12:20-12:30 Review agenda.

Today focus on:

1. Sharing and talking about recent updates at the Center.
2. Topics we did not cover in December: Teaching and Research.
3. Focus on the new CDCI website. Getting your feedback.

## 12:30-1:00 CDCI Updates (JESSE)

CAC members have asked to be better informed about CDCI. Jesse is sharing a few recent updates. Members should ask questions to learn more.

- Two state projects supporting adults are ending at CDCI:
  - Supported Employment agreement with HireAbility ended in the Fall.
  - Assistive Technology Project with CDCI ending September 2025.
  - Persephone asked if funding was cut because of new presidential administration.
  - Kirsten shared that HireAbility had a funding cut before the new administration.
  - Michael asked if there are ways CDCI will stay involved in assistive technology. Jesse shared plans for our 3 personnel. Michael shared

need for more options to provide adaptive equipment and technology that is more personal than off-the-shelf options.

- Kirsten offered to talk with CDCI more about Medicaid funding options.
- With the new administration in DC there are many questions and concerns. Jesse has started to send updates to answer some questions.
  - On 2/13/2025 Jesse sent a [public letter and video](#). This was a response to accusations that hiring people with disabilities led to an airline crash. Letter also included information on our federal funding.
  - On 2/14/2025 Jesse sent an internal memo to educate personnel about the Developmental Disabilities Act.
  - Do you have any suggestions for future updates?
    - Kirsten shared concern in her national network about messaging and actions from new administration.
    - Especially concerned about executive order “Make America Healthy Again” that described autism in unfavorable ways.
    - Matthew wants to see UVM have a connection with Vermont Environmental Justice Network. Matthew will follow up with Jesse.
    - Jesse shared change in language on website for organizing our projects.
    - Michael asked if there are new opportunities to educate people about our work.
    - Skye said information is changing fast now. Many executive orders, decisions in courts, and more. Wonder if there are lessons learned from COVID. Important to make sure messages are in plain language.
    - Michael – important to share clear information. Also acknowledge what is not known and can change.

- Kirsten shared important to share what the impact is of our work. Her national network is asking for stories that show the good our work is doing.
- Submitted our request for funding next year: July 2025 – June 2026. We do not yet know what our budget will be.

## 1:15 – 1:25 Teaching (WINNIE & JESSE)

- Winnie shared that the Disability Studies micro-certificate has been approved. It will start in September 2025.
- Students need to have completed their undergraduate degree. They do not need to be in a graduate degree program.
- She asked how CAC could help us get the word out.
  - Michael said important to know who are trying to reach.
  - Winnie said we want to find:
    - People who want to go back to school, but not wanting to complete a whole degree.
    - Working professionals who want more information on culture of disability.
  - Michael said getting legislators to participate would be helpful. Want to reach people who need this information. Could also be clinicians or government employees.
  - Lindsey recommended going to conferences. Department of Mental Health and Vermont Family Network conferences are in April. Also film screenings could be opportunity.
  - Skye asked about students in other colleges or universities in Vermont. Also technical schools could be another source.
  - Winnie shared it will be fully online so accessible for reaching
- **Goal 5: Better support students with disabilities at UVM.**
  - Jesse shared new UVM Office of Accessibility Services plans to hire two new people next month. One to provide accessibility support for

digital resources and websites. The other to coordinate accessibility supports around campus.

- The director invited CDCI to work with them to improve accessibility on campus. Excited to learn more about this and will share updates with CAC.

## 1:25 – 1:30 Research (JESSE)

- **Goal 4: Apply for funding to do more research.**

Jesse gave a quick update about two grants we plan to apply this year. If you are interested in learning more about either, please contact Jesse.

### 1. ***Create an Autism Research Consortium.***

The purpose is to bring together researchers to help autistic kids and youth. CDCI supports the UVM Autism Collaborative which has similar goals. We are not sure what the Center's role will be yet and will learn more soon.

### 2. ***Study national Think College programs.***

There are many Think College programs around the country. Jesse wants to learn more about how they are similar, different, and how they help students. This kind of grant comes from the US Department of Education. We hope they will still offer this grant this year.

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~~1:30 – 1:45 Break~~

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## 1:45 – 2:45 CDCI Website Update Feedback (AUDREY)

- CDCI has built a new website. You can find it at [go.uvm.edu/cdci](https://go.uvm.edu/cdci).
- Audrey is seeking feedback to make the website more useful and accessible. If you are interested in participating in a research study to give feedback, contact Jesse or Audrey.

- **Please note:** CDCI recorded this portion of the meeting. The recording will only be used to create a written transcript of the discussion. The transcript is only for CDCI. After we make a transcript, the recording will be destroyed.
- During the CAC meeting, Audrey asked 4 questions. The questions and feedback are listed below:
  - **What's one word you'd use to describe this website?**
    - Acceptance.
    - Clear, open, lots of white space.
    - Clean.
    - Organized. Drop-down menus look intuitive.
  - **On this website, what are you most likely to click on first?**
    - "News and Events"
    - "About" to learn what CDCI is.
  - **What's one feature you wish we would add to this website?**
    - Michael suggested a table to show who can receive services. Want to know how I could be involved.
    - Skye suggested a "Get involved" button.
    - Matthew suggested a calendar for events. Michael added feature to add events to personal calendar. Persephone agreed this would be helpful.
      - Audrey showed "Upcoming CDCI Events" on the home page.
      - Matthew said a monthly view would be more helpful. Currently there is a list of events.
      - Is there a way to subscribe to all events or just one at a time?
      - Also recommend adding who the event is for and what day of the week.
    - Skye would like to know who we partner with. Where are there connections and influences.

- **Do you have any suggestions for how we could improve this website overall?**
  - Matthew liked the overall layout. Like to see a darker background.
  - Michael: It would be helpful to have more information about opportunities at UVM for people with disabilities. This would include academics, research, and other opportunities around campus even if they are not at CDCI. For example, what academic programs outside of CDCI focus on disability?
  - Skye: Recommend the home page use the “What we do” language from the About Us page. Say “We teach” rather than “Academics”
  - Michael: These efforts could help shine a light on how prominent disability is within.
- **More time was available, so Audrey showed the CAC website and asked for feedback.**
  - Matthew and Persephone prefer a darker background. White background too glaring.
  - Matthew recommended featuring CAC members with pictures and bios.
- **Audrey shared next steps:**
  - Send any more feedback to Audrey or Jesse.
  - If you are interested in participating in a short survey and interview as part of a research study, also let us know.
  - Audrey will summarize the feedback shared today.
  - Audrey ended by sharing appreciation

## **2:30-3:00 Process Today's Meeting**

- We started this agenda item 15 minutes early!
- No members of the public were present, so there were no public comments.



- Michael asked members if they would like to share anything else. No additional comments were made.
- Members were asked how today's meeting went. Are there things members would like to see change for the next meeting
  - Kirsten shared the pace of the meeting went well. There were opportunities to pause and respond.
  - Lindsey agreed. She recommended that we assign people roles at the beginning of the meeting. Jesse shared previously team decided it was taking too long to assign roles, so everyone should share the roles. In practice, today Jesse may have taken on too many roles.
  - Matthew said he liked not losing time to assign roles.
  - Skye said she liked assigning roles. It helps with running the meeting.
  - Michael brought up sometimes there are topics that are upsetting. Important to provide enough time. And asked how can we make sure all members can contribute what it is important to them?
- CAC executive committee will meet soon to plan the next meeting.
- Next meeting is June 25, 2025.
- The meeting ended 10 minutes early.

**Thank you for your time. We appreciate you.**