

# Center on Disability & Community Inclusion

## Community Advisory Council Meeting

### DRAFT NOTES September 17, 2025, 12-3pm

**Several documents were shared in advance for this meeting.**

- The agenda
- [June draft minutes](#)
- [Vermont DD Network Impact Flyer](#)
- [Community Needs Assessment – Quality of Life](#)
- [CAC Group Agreement](#)
- CAC Meeting Roles (see last page of this agenda)

### **Agenda Summary**

12:00-12:30	Welcome & membership updates
12:30-1:00	Federal funding and sharing impact
1:00-1:30	Updates: Communications, Teaching, Service
1:30-1:40	Break
1:40-2:15	Community Needs Assessment – Quality of Life
2:15-2:45	Home and Community Based Services
2:45-3:00	Public comment and discuss how meeting went

## Meeting Notes

### 12:00-12:30 Welcome!

- Ocean started off the meeting by calling on members and CDCI staff to introduce themselves with names and pronouns.
- Members chose meeting roles to help run the meeting (see last page of agenda).
- Ocean asked members to share how they're doing. Members shared many things they are doing now. Many are feeling very busy. Examples included
  - participating on groups to improve inclusion,
  - supporting accessibility at UVM,
  - preparing to testify at the Vermont Statehouse,
  - trying to accept that cannot do everything and
  - preparing information on housing (Act 69).
- **VOTE: Do you approve minutes from June meeting?**
  - Michael recommended a consensus vote and there were no objections.
  - The June draft minutes were unanimously approved.
- The table below shows who was present for the meeting and meeting roles chosen.

Council member	Present	Roles
David Frye	Left board	
Melissa Houser	No	
Matthew LeFluer	Yes	
Kristofor Medina	Left board	
Kirsten Murphy	Yes	
Lindsey Owen	Yes	Equalizer

Council member	Present	Roles
Skye Peebles	Yes	Jargon buster
Persephone Ringgenberg	Yes	Time keeper
Michael Shor, Co-Chair	Yes	Keeper of the rudder; Processor
Summer Stelter	Yes	
Ocean Streeter, Co-Chair	Yes	Facilitator
Max, GMSA	Yes	Jargon buster
Total 9 out of 10	90% of current members	

**CDCI Personnel Present:** Rachel, Maureen, Winnie, and Jesse

**Member of the public:** Audrey Homan (former CDCI employee)

## 12:45-1:00 Membership (added agenda item)

- Jesse shared there Audrey's membership application needs to be voted on. It was not part of the agenda. The co-chairs agreed to add this agenda item.
- The membership committee met with Audrey before the meeting. Membership committees shared what they learned. Audrey had worked at CDCI for several years. They now are the head of web and digital accessibility at UVM. Committee members shared parts of their advocacy work. All committee members shared positive
- Skye called for a vote; Persephone seconded. Audrey stepped out of the meeting during member discussion.

Council member	Vote
Melissa Houser	Not present
Matthew LeFluer	Yes
Kirsten Murphy	Yes
Lindsey Owen	Yes
Skye Peebles	Yes
Persephone Ringgenberg	Abstain
Michael Shor, Co-Chair	Yes
Summer Stelter	Yes
Ocean Streeter, Co-Chair	Yes
Max, GMSA	Yes

- **VOTE: With 8 Yes votes, 0 No, and 1 abstention Audrey Homan became the newest Community Advisory Council member!**
- Audrey shared they are excited to join the board. Believe UVM needs to do more to support accessibility.
- Jesse shared other member updates:
  - Kris Medina and David Frye have not been able to attend meetings. Jesse contacted them and both decided they do not have time to continue on the council and stepped away.
  - Mel, Matthew, and Skye completed their first 3-year terms.
    - Skye shared that she is not seeking a second 3-year term. She is working on too many things.
    - Mel and Matthew do want to continue for a second term.
    - Ocean made a motion for a vote for a 2<sup>nd</sup> 3-year term for Matthew and Melissa. Seconded by Lindsey. Michael asked if

there were any objections to their serving a second term. With no objections, the vote passed.

- Jesse shared there are currently 8 council members. The CAC can have up to 20.
- Skye shared they will ask people at VT LEND if anyone would apply.
- Persephone shared she asked a friend to apply.

## **1:00-1:15 Federal funding and sharing impact**

- Jesse shared updates about our federal funding. The latest news is positive. After the White House recommended ending funding for Centers like ours, Congress voted to approve the continued funding for our Centers.
- CDCI, Disability Rights Vermont, and the Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council created a 2-page summary of our work.
- Matthew shared that Republicans control House and Senate so have more power to make decisions.
- Max said he is trying to focus on the facts and not politics.
- **QUESTION: What else should we do to share our impact?**
  - Audrey asked if now might be a good time to record testimonial videos. Suggested people on CAC may be willing to do that.
  - Michael important to share big picture of what center does to bring together community input.

## **1:15 – 1:25 Brief Communication Updates**

- We still cannot hire a replacement for Audrey. There is a hiring freeze at UVM. We are also not certain about the future of our funding.
- We are working with a few different people to help with website.
- Kirsten said it is an important time for communication.

## **1:25 – 1:30 Brief Teaching Updates**

- Winnie shared continuing to work on online training for introduction to disability.
- Winnie working with VT LEND intern on the Include curriculum.
- New disability studies micro-certificate started this Fall. Several students are interested but none have signed up yet.

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## 1:30 – 1:40 Break

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### 1:40 – 1:50 Brief Community Service Updates

- Jesse shared news about I-Team and CARES project director is on leave. Earlier this month he was charged with embezzling money from a job outside of UVM and the Center. There should be more news soon, and Jesse will update the CAC.

### 1:50 – 2:20 Community Needs Assessment

- This Fall we will conduct a survey and listening sessions. Goal is to hear from Vermonters about experiences of Vermonters with disabilities.
- We need to ask questions about different parts of people's lives. One way to do that is to learn about their Quality of Life.
- We will look at 8 areas of Quality of Life (see handout).
- **Question: What do you think about these 8 areas? What is missing?**
- The CAC gave the following feedback and asked questions about this:
  - Skye: Will this be paper or online?
  - Max: How accessible will it be?
  - Summer: Agreed important for the questions to be clear and understandable.
  - Skye: I think these categories look good. Maybe consider having some examples about other kinds of adult learning - workshops, classes, certificate programs, etc.

- Ocean: Shared important to ask about a job that addresses interest and skills, not just any job.
- Michael: Shared that he did similar work with the UVM Autism Collaborative. It was difficult to get all the feedback they wanted. For this community needs assessment we can ask people about whether they get specific services. We can also ask about policy needs like inclusion.
- Michael said people can become upset about some parts of this. One thing people can be upset about is language. Example, saying “high functioning” when talking about some people with autism. Michael recommended CAC talk about language like this. When there is language we don’t agree on, can we choose something else?
- Persephone: Instead of non-discrimination ask if they have been discriminated against. Can we also ask if they had disability from birth or later in life.
- Matthew: Important to include people from all over Vermont. Often people in southern and rural areas of Vermont are not included.
- Persephone also shared that there should be questions about experiences with services and supports. Could be part of each area (For example: “Are you getting support you need for this area?”)
- Max: Need to be careful when asking personal questions.
- Audrey: There are many people who wouldn’t consider themselves disabled too.
- Next steps:
  - Jesse will take this feedback to help create the survey and plan listening sessions.
  - He will send an invitation to council if they want to help between now and next meeting.
  - At the next meeting he will share what has been learned.

- Michael will put an agenda item to talk about language at future council meeting.

## 2:30 – 2:50 Home and Community Based Services

- Vermont needs to measure the quality of Home and Community Based Services. State agencies have chosen new measures provided by the federal government.
- September through December, CDCI will get feedback from Vermonters with disabilities, their families, and providers about the new measures.
- Jesse described this new work and the Center's role to create educational materials and get community feedback.
- **Question: What do you think about the new measures? What is missing?**
  - What about having enough money and staffing for HCBS?
  - That is not focus of these measures. Getting feedback is an opportunity to give state more broad information.
  - Michael: Can people with disabilities learn about services available without giving information to a gatekeeper?
- **Question: Do you want to help with this project?**
  - A few members expressed interest. Jesse will follow up with an invitation so people can decide.

## 2:50 – 3:00 Process Today's Meeting

- Michael volunteered to be processor today. He shared we covered all of the topics today. Also there are many opportunities for members to participate outside of our council meetings. Might feel incomplete if only had these meetings. Appreciate federal funding news is somewhat more positive.
- Matthew said important to recognize environment keeps changing and everyone does know what is coming. Important to share what we know.



- Was positive and productive meeting.
- Next meeting agreed to share updates about:
  - Member updates
  - Community services
  - Teaching
  - Community Needs Assessment
  - Home and Community Based Services
  - Conversation about difficult language.
- Persephone recommended during welcome ask for names and check-in at the same time.

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**At 3pm, the meeting ended.**

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