

Community Advisory Council Meeting

DRAFT NOTES

June 24, 2026, 12-3pm

Documents for meeting

- This agenda (pdf)
- [March draft minutes](#) (pdf)
- [CDCI Year in Review 2025-2026](#) (pdf)
- [CAC Group Agreement](#)

Agenda Summary

12:00-12:30	Welcome & Updates
12:30-12:50	CDCI Year in Review: Communication
12:50-1:20	CDCI Year in Review: Community Service
1:20-1:35	Break
1:35-1:55	CDCI Year in Review: Teaching
1:55-2:15	CDCI Year in Review: Research
2:15-2:45	Open feedback and discussion
2:50-3:00	Public comment and discuss how meeting went

Meeting Notes

12:00-12:30 Welcome! (Ocean facilitator)

Ocean asked everyone to:

- Introduce themselves with names and pronouns.
- Choose a meeting role (see table below), and
- Share how they are doing.
 - Matthew shared he is busy and spending time with his niece.
 - Summer shared that she was just selected to be co-chair of the Special Education Advisory Panel (officially starts in September).
 - Maureen shared her Amazon Alexa now understands that she likes cloudy and overcast days.
 - Max had successful Voices and Choices Conference last month. Doing work in high schools with students with and without disabilities.
 - Ocean shared she is moving to new home in South Burlington. Very excited because she has been living with parents since December.

Membership update

- Jesse shared that we have not scheduled an interview between Crista and the membership committee. That is in the works and should happen soon.
- Mel Houser decided she needs to step down from the CAC. She contacted Jesse before the meeting. She had one more year as a council member but has too many conflicts and has been unable to attend this year.

VOTE: Do you approve minutes from March meeting?

- Ocean made a motion to approve the March minutes as shared.
- Matthew seconded the motion.
- Max abstained; all others (6) voted in favor of approving the minutes
- Minutes were approved

Table below lists who was present for the meeting and meeting roles chosen.

Council member	Present	Roles
Max Barrows	Present	
Melissa Houser	Resigned	
Audrey Homan	Not present	
Matthew LeFluer	Present	Timekeeper
Kirsten Murphy	Present	
Lindsey St Amour	Not present	
Michael Shor Co-Chair	Present	Co-facilitator
Summer Stelter	Present	Processor
Ocean Streeter Co-Chair	Present	Co-Facilitator
Total 6 out of 8	75% of members	

CDCI Personnel Present: Maureen, Winnie, and Jesse

Member of the public: none

Jesse shared updates about Center funding and national news.

- Center funding:
 - We have been told our funding is secure for at least one more year (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027).
 - Kirsten shared that even when we receive level funding, it is often a cut.
 - Matthew shared concerns that the system is breaking and things can't last like this.
- Funding for CDCI projects:

- As shared earlier this year, the Assistive Technology project at CDCI ended this past Fall.
- We are waiting for funding decisions about other projects.

Today we will focus on your feedback on the CDCI Year in Review. And we will have time for open feedback at the end.

12:30 – 12:50 Communication (Ocean facilitator)

- Challenging year with no head of communications.
- We restarted our newsletter (CDCI Connects) after hiring an undergraduate student for help.
- We have managed to keep our websites fairly up-to-date.
- A new Green Mountain Disability Stories podcast is coming soon. Audrey (CAC member and head of Digital Accessibility at UVM) is restarting the podcast.
- CAC questions and feedback:
 - Are students being paid? Yes.
 - Members shared it is helpful for students to be paid and learn skills.
 - What about hiring consultants to help with communications? Jesse said we are paying a web developer for more complicated changes to our website.
 - Kirsten suggested hiring a technical writing firm for certain kinds of communication.
 - Michael: How can Center be more inviting to these types of roles? Could we further split up the position by skill sets to allow more people (especially people with disabilities) to fill these roles?
 - Michael: This kind of clustering should be part of recruiting and advertising positions. Being clear about what we need to accomplish and what skills we need people to have for different roles.

- Summer: Have some experience with advertising for positions. One thing that came up with All Brains Belong that could be helpful here: Job Sharing. Need to care to make sure language is inclusive. Job descriptions can be intimidating.
- Jesse said one challenge to hiring people with disabilities, or increasing their time, is worry it will affect their benefits.
 - Jesse shared he learned some Centers have been able to pay self-advocates through ABLE accounts.
 - Kirsten agreed this could help in some situations, but does not fix everything.
- Ocean: We all communicate differently and everyone should be supported to work.

12:50 – 1:20 Community Service (Ocean facilitator)

- Spending more time on community services because this is most of our work. Also, CAC has asked to better understand projects.
- Organized this section not by projects. Instead organized by 6 broad areas. Emphasizing progress and issues.
 - Accessibility resources and services
 - Assistive Technology
 - Early childhood
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Health
- What about broad goal for inclusion?
 - Matthew: Have you spoken directly to Zoie Saunders? Yes, and others at AOE.
 - Summer: About to be on special education advisory panel. Spoken to Zoie directly about need for inclusion in advisory roles too. Very hopeful.

- Kirsten: Some kind of campaign about cost of sending people out of state and special programs. Recognize that many legislators only want to talk about school consolidation. Need to do a better job explaining costs. Families out of desperation advocate for other programs, and we should work on this across programs.
- Michael: Thinking about I-Team – could they have their own advisory group of people with disabilities and families? Outreach from I-Team to get feedback. Need more input from people in special education about designing new system.
- What about wanting to share resources and information – like the supported employment series?
 - Summer: These topics feel very relevant for the special education advisory panel. We are having the same conversations. Need to bridge these conversations. All Brains Belong has a Discord group and would be helpful to share with them.
 - Kirsten: Recommend talking with Jennifer at DDS (Emma Rose McFadden) and Vermont Care Partners professional association.

Note: The conversation was taking longer than expected, so the agenda times were updated.

1:30 – 1:45 Break

1:45 – 2:15 Teaching (Michael facilitator)

- Winnie shared main goals for teaching this year:
 - Supporting Think College.
 - Changing plans for Certificate in Disability Studies.
 - Designing online classes in disability studies and accessibility.
 - Better support students with disabilities at UVM.
- Feedback from CAC:

- Think College
 - Ocean and Michael: Wish there was no age restrictions on Think College.
 - Matthew: What about satellite offices around Vermont to be more accessible? It can be hard for people to attend UVM since it is in the northwest corner of the state.
- Winnie shared update about Disability Studies.
 - Moving from graduate certificate to undergraduate minor. This move is being made because more undergraduate students take disability studies courses than graduate students.
 - This Fall, Winnie is part of a group bringing together faculty focused on disability from all over the university.
- Winnie shared update about Basic Digital Accessibility course. She developed this with Audrey. The course is offered for free and online.
 - Kirsten: Could this be available for the state? Yes, though the current course is somewhat focused on UVM.
 - Summer: What about continuing education units needed for professionals?
- Supporting students
 - Jesse shared updates
 - Matthew said spoke with President Marlene Tromp.

Research (Michael facilitator)

CAC members decided to use the remaining time to hold an open conversation.

2:15 – 2:55 Open Conversation (Michael facilitator)

This is a chance to talk about any areas for the CDCI Year in Review. This is also a chance to share other things you want people at CDCI to know.

Discussion about recent federal news:

- Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services announced to move to Health and Human Services.
 - OSERS includes special education and HireAbility.
 - Plan is to move to the Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. This is the office where the Center and the Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council report.
 - Plan is to close the US Department of Education.
 - Michael noted that services only seem to be available if you are in crisis or need significant support. Services are not available to help keep you out of a crisis.
 - Matthew really feels like people with disabilities are being pushed out. All about money. Vermont should be calling out what federal government is doing.
 - Jesse asked if GMSA has been hearing about this or getting questions about this or other recent news? Max said many concerns about not recently.
- Work requirements or community engagement requirements for Medicaid.
 - Information about rules came out recently. Only people who are “medically frail” are eligible for waiver.
 - Comment period mid-July
 - Rules are in effect January 1, 2027.
 - Asked if this is similar to welfare restrictions? Yes. Part of move to describe people receiving financial assistance as lazy.
- What can the Center do in our role?
 - Jesse shared goal to help share information and news in accessible ways. Newsletter this month focused on sharing news from VTDDC

and DRVVT. Next month focusing on federal news and ADA awareness month.

- Summer: Knows a public relations person wonder if we could work with them to bring us together and help educate others.
- Kirsten shared that federal Office of Management and Budget has new rules giving political appointees more control over discretionary funding. Concern that this may later include non-discretionary funding such as the Developmental Disabilities Network funding.
- Michael: Could we have more opportunities for community discussions about topics like this? Kirsten is interested in exploring this.
- Follow up conversation: Summer, Kirsten, Michael, Ocean, Jesse re: communication and ADA Awareness Month.

2:55-3:00 Process Today's Meeting

- There was no public comment.
- CAC members shared it was an important discussion and like having open time in the agenda to talk about important issues.

At 3pm, the meeting ended.

CAC Meeting Roles

CAC members choose roles to meet our goals. Members can choose different roles each meeting.

Facilitator: Leads the group through the agenda. Introduces each agenda item.

Timekeeper: Makes sure the group stays on time. Keeps track of time for each agenda item. Gives reminders to stay on time.

Keeper of the rudder: Keeps the group on track. Reminds group to stay on topic.

Jargon buster: Helps make sure conversation is clear. Listens for unfamiliar words or terms. Then asks for clarification.

Equalizer: Makes sure everyone can participate. If someone has not participated, they invite them to share.

Processor: Starts conversation at end of the meeting. They share what went well and what did not. Invites others to share.

Recorder: CDCI staff take notes for the meeting. These notes become the meeting minutes. Minutes are shared after the meeting.