



## Steering Committee Meeting Notes

11 – 12:00 PM

November 23, 2021

**Present:** Sally Blanchard-O'Brien, Carrie Cleveland, Eileen Corcoran, Amy Cunningham, Ann Lawless, Rachel Onuf, Joseph Watson

**Guests:** Meredith Brinker Ferguson, Douglas Babcock

### Introductions by Steering Committee Members

#### Working Group Updates

*Supply Bin Working Group:* The group has spent time determining what should be in the supply bins and the best places to deploy them. They believe it makes sense to have them stored with VACDaRN steering committee members who are willing to respond in their areas. The next steps are to get the supplies and put them together, and they will be reaching out to steering committee members.

*Training Working Group:* The group is tabling the training for the winter and wants to try again in the spring. Carrie has been participating in a pilot analysis of crisis mitigation training for cohorts of regional arts organizations that aims to get the arts and emergency management sectors together. The training consisted of five sessions and will inform a model that can be used going forward and Carrie is hopeful that it can be piloted in Vermont; she will work with VACDaRN to determine who should be at the table.

*Communications Working Group:* Has been very quiet. VACDaRN is now part of the online community that AIC has built for all AFRs but currently only VACDaRN steering committee members are part of it. The online community has space for file sharing and a forum for people to start their own conversations. Sally would like to see the online community open to all VACDaRN members in the coming year and become a robust place for peers to communicate and share with each other. Sally is continuing to maintain the VACDaRN Facebook page, but it is a pretty minimal engagement.

*Cultural Asset Mapping Working Group:* Georgia has an existing cultural asset mapping initiative and Massachusetts is about to launch one, working with the state's emergency management. If we wait a

little longer, we can learn from their framework. With the collection of data comes the responsibility to maintain it, so we need to have a workflow for this.

Amy suggested using the New England Foundation for the Arts' CreativeGround database to help populate some information, and they're about to launch a second version in January.

*Insurance Working Group:* The group exists to offer outreach and training to creatives and cultural heritage organizations about insurance issues and they plan to develop resources in the coming year.

## **Other Updates**

Rachel recently sent out a group text with all steering committee cell numbers to use in the event of a disaster.

National Heritage Responders are looking for new volunteers and steering committee members might be interested. Applications are due mid-December and, if accepted, there would be a two-day training in California before the AIC conference.

There was an activation of VACDaRN in Middlebury recently. The town clerk discovered a mold bloom and reached out to Rachel who asked Joseph if he could do an in-person assessment. The bloom was in a basement storage area, not the vault, but after working with records and information management at VSARA, it was determined the affected records are mostly permanent. Currently, the town clerk is working with insurance and Polygon to see what remediation can be done, a dehumidifier has been placed in the storage area, and Joseph has helped her monitor temperature and humidity using a datalogger. Prior to this incident there was a mold outbreak at an academic library that is now working with professional remediation and an environmental consultant. Rachel wants us all to be familiar with the process for responding to a suspected mold bloom and she and Sally will work to place basic information and links to resources on the VACDaRN website.

Rachel has been giving a series of disaster preparedness webinars to rural librarians through the Association of Rural & Small Libraries. At the end of the series, the librarians should have a complete or nearly complete disaster plan. They've been using the Vermont-specific designed template to keep it simple.

The Vermont Creative Network issued their action plan earlier this year and increasing advocacy and strengthening disaster resilience are two of the goals. The Vermont Arts Council now has a lobbyist and the Creative Futures Act is being drafted by the legislature to provide money for pandemic recovery and facilities improvements. The Arts Council has offered a series of advocacy sessions

(<https://www.vermontartscouncil.org/vermont-creative-network/vcn-connect/events>) and they want municipalities and creative advocates to know that municipal ARPA funds can be used for creative

businesses and the arts. The last session will be held on Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> and demystifies Federal funding that

impacts the creative sector

([https://www.vlct.org/sites/default/files/documents/Resource/Use\\_ARPA\\_funds\\_CreativeSector.pdf](https://www.vlct.org/sites/default/files/documents/Resource/Use_ARPA_funds_CreativeSector.pdf)).

It's Amy's understanding that only about half of Vermont's state ARPA funds have been allocated and the rest will be divvied up in the next legislative session – and will need to be figured out in conjunction with the Federal infrastructure bill. Ann wants to see a special advocacy group for town halls because so many of them are used as arts and cultural centers as well, and once you start looking at ventilation you can start to look at the entire building envelope. Rachel has asked Meg at VSARA if she is aware of

municipal ARPA funds being allocated for records project and will ask Jenny Prosser (Municipal Assistance at the Secretary of State main office) what kinds of questions municipalities are asking about the use of ARPA funds. States have until 2024 to obligate funds and through 2026 to use them. There's no requirement to involve the public but some communities are asking residents to help prioritize (like Burlington). Learn more about the Arts Council's advocacy efforts:

<https://www.vermontartscouncil.org/get-involved/advocacy>.

Rachel is on the AFR advisory committee, and they've decided to have one big meeting for all AFRs each year. The first one will be about network communications, on January 13<sup>th</sup> 3-4. Join here:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87628070041?pwd=SHc4NzJkRUlwai9yWm03REpGU2pXQT09>

### **Guest Introductions**

Doug is the director of security at Dartmouth, president of the Vermont Emergency Management Association, and as an active participant in the stakeholder meetings that resulted in the creation of VACDaRN. The Vermont Emergency Management Association has created a field resource guide to incident command and response, designed to fit in the back pocket, that will be sent to all association members.

Brinker is a professor in Dartmouth's anthropology department and is the director of the digital cultural heritage lab. Prior to Dartmouth she worked in documentation for UNESCO, monitoring building decay through 3D laser imaging. She's interested in preservation and the effects of climate change on local cultural heritage sites. She, along with Doug, is interested in setting up an alliance for response network for the greater Hanover area, or all of New Hampshire, and collaborating with VACDaRN. She plans to apply for the National Heritage Responder training. She will reach out to VACDaRN as questions come up, and she'll keep getting steering committee and VACDaRN mailing list communications.

### **Next meeting**

The next meeting will be in January and Craig Nutt of CERF+ will be invited to speak to VACDaRN about advocacy.