



Steering Committee Meeting Notes

1 – 2:00 PM

February 17, 2023

Present: Michele Bailey, Sally Blanchard-O'Brien, Carrie Cleveland, Eileen Corcoran, Amy Cunningham, Jamie Duggan, Tom McMurdo, Rachel Onuf, Joseph Watson

Crisis Analysis and Mitigation Training

The Steering Committee decided to hold the Vermont session in May, picking 5/15, 5/17, 5/22, and 5/24 as potential dates. **Carrie will run these dates by the CAM group as well as Ben and Taiga to select a final date.** The intended audiences for the training are individuals from the creative and emergency management sectors, and we should aim to have 25-30 participants. While Steering Committee members are welcome to attend, it is also a great opportunity to bring in people from the greater VACDaRN network.

VACDaRN Strategic Planning Session

Rachel and Sally met on Monday with facilitator Stephanie Lahar and went over a draft agenda. Steffi will tweak the agenda a bit and get back to Sally and Rachel. **Committee members will be receiving the agenda, the meeting notes from December on VACDaRN priorities, and the list of priorities identified in 2019 to review in advance of the strategic planning session.** The strategic planning session will be held at the **Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (1078 US Route 2, Middlesex) on March 21 at 10 AM** (with a backup date of March 30). Please **bring your own lunch** or order for pickup ahead of time from Red Hen: <https://www.redhenbaking.com/order-online/>. Feel free to stay after the session for a tour of the State Archives!

Updates

Joseph: The Addison County- based Cultural Heritage Emergency Response Network (CHERN) will be meeting for the first time since the pandemic. This is an opportunity to join more fully with VACDaRN; it's possible that the group will be dissolved and become a VACDaRN subgroup.

Jamie: has been visiting public libraries to provide technical assistance with historic building issues, and libraries are very excited about the capital improvement money coming from the Department of Libraries. The Historic Sites Division has hired a new chief; she's coming from Texas with a diverse skillset. With her on board, staffing is getting back to normal in the division.

Tom: A lot of funding is coming for capital improvements of library buildings; \$10 million through congressional earmarks and another \$16 million from treasury funds. The Department of Libraries is working with Senator Welch's office to get more guidance on how to use the \$10 million. If the money has to be spent quickly, DOL might have to limit funding to projects that are ready to go. With the other funding, DOL has the approval to hire a limited-service building projects manager. DOL has some hope that, if Vermont demonstrates a successful capital improvements project, it may pave the way for a permanent program in the future. DOL has also been in contact with the Vermont State Colleges given the recently announced plan to shift the Vermont State University to all-digital libraries; DOL and the VSC share a lot through interlibrary loan and they are investigating how this change will impact that and other services to Vermonters. DOL has also been told that the schools' archival holdings will be preserved.

Eileen: The Pavilion was under lockdown last week due to the school bomb threat hoax at Montpelier High School (and other state schools), which was a learning experience for some new Vermont Historical Society staff. The recent cold weather has taxed the sprinkler system at the VHS Library in Barre. VHS received money to construct a new open storage area in Barre, which should hopefully be constructed this year, with the movement of materials happening as the next phase. The library building will also have a humidifier installed this year, which will help with climate control.

Amy & Michele: The Vermont Arts Council has been busy recently at the State House, first with Creative Sector Day (<https://vermontbiz.com/news/2023/february/16/vermont-creative-sector-shares-impact-state-legislators>), an opportunity to make cross-sector connections and advocate to lawmakers about the importance of arts and creativity, and later to testify on an update to the art in state buildings statute, whose language and budget have not been updated in 35 years. The current Cultural Facilities Grant cycle is open, with a deadline in May. VAC is looking at two finalists for their executive director position.

Carrie: CERF+ is onboarding their new executive director, who started in November. CERF+ has shifted to a fully remote staff, relinquishing its office in Montpelier, though its mailing address remains in Vermont for now. Another cycle of the Get Ready grants (<https://cerfplus.org/get-ready/get-ready-grants/>) is taking applications until March 7.

Rachel & Sally: The Vermont State Archives & Records Administration has undertaken a vault cleaning project, partly spurred by the understaffing of janitorial staff in the building. It's also an opportunity to take inventory and to create a process for ongoing vault housekeeping in the future. The Norwich Historical Society reached out to Rachel and Eileen to host a roundtable or other program about

vandalism in the cultural heritage sector, and VACDaRN may want to be a cosponsor of this event. Rachel delivered disaster supply bins to the Old Stone House Museum and the Calvin Coolidge Historic Site; others will go to Middlebury College and Carolyn's Works on Paper studio. These bins are available to the host organizations, as well as other area organizations: we need to make sure they know (and remember!) that they are available. Rachel and Tom briefly attended the most recent open-to-all Alliance for Response network meeting.