



Steering Committee Meeting Notes

2:30 PM – 3:30 PM

April 2, 2024

Present:

Amy Cunningham, Ben Rose, Carolyn Frisa, Eileen Corcoran, Jamie Duggan, Joseph Watson, Megan Johnson-Saylor, Michele Bailey, Paddy Reagan, Rachel Onuf, Taiga A. Christie, Tom McMurdo

Agenda:

Event safety discussion with Mike VanAartsen update (Amy)

- On April 26 at 2pm, Amy and Mike VanAartsen of the Santa Fe Opera will be co-facilitating a virtual event for cultural leaders around the state to come together on the topic of threats on free discussion and event safety.
- Working to finalize the save the date and external communication today (April 2nd).

Cultural Heritage Emergency Response Network (CHERN) event (Joseph)

- CHERN has been active for 6-8 years and is made up of folks responsible for emergency preparedness and response at cultural heritage orgs in Addison County and nearby areas.
- An annual meeting is held in the spring each year. The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 16, 10am-noon, at the Davis Family Library of Middlebury College. All on the steering committee are welcome to attend if interested.
- Andrew L’Roe of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission will be the guest speaker and will be sharing information about his work and the Incident Command System used by emergency responders.

Culture For Climate Action workshop series recap (Michele)

- C4CA wrapped up last month. 25 people/organizations registered with about 10-12 folks attending each session.
- An evaluation/survey of participants was just completed, and they will debrief with the presenters April 3rd. Anecdotally, Michele thought it went well, though it was a learning experience for all involved.

Fall event update (working group members)

- The group has decided on Tuesday, September 17 for the Day of Learning. It will be held in Barre at the Old Labor Hall.
- We brainstormed some programming ideas (see below.) Please let the planning committee know if you have additional ideas of your own!
 - Some sort of creative expression/performance
 - Test the emergency response plans at one of the venues by having the attendees run through a specific scenario from somebody's plan
 - Activity to complete a pocket-sized ER plan and attendees would walk away with a completed plan ([COSA Pocket Response Plan PReP Envelopes](#))
 - What's in your go bag? Thinking of artists who work out of their home studio.
 - Large Event Planning for emergency managers (Planning for the eclipse crowds and how it went)
 - Explore how to integrate cultural orgs with emergency management orgs.
 - Explain the ICS and how VEM works
 - Arts role in recovery (projects in Montpelier, Barre, and Johnson)—perhaps as a closing session as this topic is positive and inspirational.

Groups.io migration and initial use (Rachel)

- We will be using groups.io to facilitate easier large group communication with the VACDaRN list as well as the Steering Committee. This platform will allow for all members to post to the group rather than submitting communication to Rachel to send out to a list. If you have not yet accepted the invitation to join, Rachel will be reaching out to you.
- The Steering Committee group will be able to use additional features, such as spreadsheets. For example, spreadsheets could be used for shared information gathering to map cultural heritage orgs.

Other updates and information sharing (the team)

- Rachel: In late June, will be hosting a statewide summit with VHRAB. Rachel and Carolyn, along with Deborah Howe of the Strafford Historical Society, will be presenting a hands-on workshop to thaw, reshape, and talk through the conservation process for salvaged wet materials on May 31st. Working on getting the final funds to the Strafford Historical Society for their films to be restored. Talked to Polygon rep for VT; he is available for training opportunities. Met with NH rural communities emergency preparedness group, who are planning a network-building event June 11.
- Paddy: Focused on the Waking Windows Festival. Encountering issues with high cost of insurance premiums for small venues that serve alcohol and also have live music that includes metal or punk groups. The cost of the premiums is causing owners to consider dropping music performance all together.
- Tom: The construction capital grant application period has closed. They received 71 applications with \$15.9 million requested—which is about three times the amount of money they have. They are currently working on scoring the applications. A new grant cycle is upcoming with Housing and Urban Development. There is \$10 million to grant

out with a rural library focus. Closely following S.220, an act relating to Vermont's public libraries: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2024/S.220>. It includes safety protection for staff at all libraries, not just municipal libraries. Advocates for existing equal protection laws (14th amendment, 1964 Civil Rights Act, and Vermont equal protection laws) rather than only the 1st amendment when dealing with issues of book removal. Most contentious piece of the act is lowering the age of confidentiality from 16 to 12. There will be testimony over the next couple weeks.

- Eileen: Saturday is Vermont History Day at UVM! 300+ kids registered. The 70th annual LLHSM conference will be on May 10th in White River Junction. The keynote is panel of folks who will be talking about Vermont's 250th anniversary.
- Ben: Emergency Management is very excited about the eclipse! Still grinding out FEMA projects from July. A "baby disaster" was declared for the December storm. There are 116 FEMA folks still working in VT. Reported that about \$600 million federal dollars will be coming to VT for about 200 eligible applicants.
- Jamie: New staff are on board at Historic Preservation. They have a new admin coordinator and 5 seasonal part time maintenance techs—one of which will hopefully become a permanent position. Has been struggling through the challenging FEMA application process. Regional Flood Recovery Symposiums are going to be happening soon and they are looking forward to more coordination with regional FEMA folks. They've received more congressionally directed spending for the Bennington Battle Monument and hope to procure federal funding to improve collections storage at the Coolidge Homestead.
- Carolyn: Has completed conservation treatment of objects from Vermont Studio Center. They just opened an exhibition with 40 prints that were impacted by the flooding. The Eames Office Archives thawing, assessment, and treatment is happening.
- Joseph: (see CHERN meeting in main minutes)
- Michele: Grant program deadlines coming up in April and May at the Arts Council.
- Amy: Downtown Conference and Creative Convening in Bellows Falls, June 5-6. Conversations and panels specific to creative community. There will be sessions focusing on disaster resilience. Barre and Montpelier arts scene rebuilding will be featured. There will be a case study on flood remediation in historic buildings.
- Taiga: Call for speakers and exhibitors is open for the 2024 Emergency Preparedness conference. Submit by June 3. Mentioned that Anna Glover, Director of Theater Safety and Occupational Health at the David Geffen School of Drama, is very interested in being involved with both the VEM conference and VACDaRN DoL in September.
- Megan: Posting to VACDaRN Facebook page on a weekly basis. If you have content you'd like shared there (events, resources, news), please let me know! Or if you would like VACDaRN to share a post from your org/dept FB page, poke me and I'll make that happen.