



# Vermont Suffrage Centennial Alliance

## MEETING SUMMARY NOTES

Thursday, June 27, 2019, 10:00 – noon

Center for Achievement in Public Service (CAPS), Schulmaier Hall  
32 College Street, Montpelier, campus of Vermont College of Fine Arts (VCFA)

### ▪ WELCOME + INTRODUCTIONS

#### Welcome New Participants:

Becky Cook, Norwich Historical Society, Tabitha Armstrong, Business and Professional Women/VT Inc., Maisie Howard, Vermont Works for Women

#### Present

Vivianne Adair, American Association of University Women  
Becky Cook, Norwich Historical Society  
Cyndy Bittinger\*, Laura Daudelin, Susan Dineen, Sandra Dooley  
Molly Gray, Office of the Attorney General  
Maisie Howard, Vermont Works for Women\*  
Pamela Kraynik\*, Raylene Lissor, Del McDonough  
Karen Madden, Northern Vermont University  
Business and Professional Women/VT Inc: Tabitha Armstrong\*,  
Donna Rae Heath, Alice Kitchel  
Rachel Onuf, VT State Archives & Records Administration  
Lila Richardson, Donna Smyers  
Ericka Reil, Vermont Center for Independent Living\*  
Joy Worland, Vermont Department of Libraries

**Presiding:** Sue Racanelli, League of Women Voters

**Recording:** Lilly Talbert, Vermont Commission on Women

#### Regrets

Marguerite Adelman, Jessica Barquist, Lyn Blackwell, Barbara Butler, Edna Curtin, Karin Hunta, Andrea McAulsan, Madeleine Mongan, Jill McKeon, Linda Radtke, Leslie Sullivan Sachs, Sonya Schuyler, Christine Smith, Yvonne Straus, Margaret Tamulonis

*\* Participating Remotely via Conference Call*

### ▪ PROGRESS UPDATE

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/VTSuffrage2020>

**Tabitha Armstrong:** volunteers her time to manage our Facebook page. She plans posts week to two weeks ahead. Tabitha has developed a document for members to sign up. She would like to receive posts a day before the week begins. Some members have direct access; others can send postings/images to Committee Chairs to be forwarded to her. While there is a lot of national information, we'd like to focus on Vermont-based history/stories as we can.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Sharing events on our [Events Calendar](#) flows to Tabitha. *Our thanks and gratitude to Tabitha for time and energy spent managing VSCA's Facebook.*

**Action Items:** *Share Facebook content with Committee Chairs.*

**Website:** <https://vtsuffrage2020.org/>

The website is now live. Although delayed, it was important to take the time to get it right, particularly highlighting the racism present in the suffrage movement and its aftermath. As we evolve, it will be important to continue to uncover and elevate stories of grassroots support and minority voices. Sue and Lilly acknowledge the contributions of many who provided advice, directions, edits, and feedback on the language, and particularly, Pamela Kraynik, who came up with the Pledge initiative. Web developer Amber Roberts charged a nominal fee and donated many hours to create the website. *Our thanks and gratitude to Amber for her patience and responsiveness.*

Sue attended the League of Women Voters National Council for League leaders in Leesburg, VA. One of the speakers, Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins, spoke of her experience being the first and only woman of color to ever be President of the national LWV and the history of racism in the League's founding, women's suffrage, and women's movement. She is writing a book to be published in January on African American suffragists who are often left out of history books.

## Group Discussion

Sandy Dooley reminded us to use the word *commemoration* when referring to our work instead of celebration. Group had conversation about wearing the traditional color of suffrage white. What colors to wear – lavender?

**Recommendations:** Books: *The Myth of Seneca Falls* - Lisa Tetrault, *The Woman's Hour* - Elaine Weiss, and video, [One Woman, One Vote: A PBS Documentary](#).

## Donna Smyers: Suffrage Scramble 5K. Saturday, August 15, 2020. 9 or 10 AM

Date is set. Location, Waterbury. Race needs approval from State complex officials and Waterbury and Duxbury Selectboards and Central Vermont Runners. Course is the one used by Annual Leaf Peepers 5K. It doesn't cross roads, follows Main Street, Rt 100, along river and a right on Winooski over bridge to walking path and back to state complex. We'll want T-shirts with logo and by-line. Two dollars per runner goes to VSCA. Not a competitive event, and walkers are welcome.

## Action Items

***Anyone with Duxbury contacts who could speak to selectboard members in support of this race, please do so soon!***

## Becky Cook: Norwich Historical Society Debate

Considering a reenactment of debate presented by the Norwich Women's Literary Club in 1914 featuring four speakers; two for and two against the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment. Details to follow.

## Presence at Public Events

VSCA can get exposure by participating in town fairs and tabling events and conferences. Here are some opportunities:

**July 3.** Montpelier Independence Day Parade. League of Women Voters is marching in the parade. VSCA can join.

## September

**12-13.** Vermont Municipal Clerks' & Treasurers' Association Annual Meeting & Conference. Lake Morey Resort, Fairlee

**21.** Norwich Old Home Day. Becky Cook and Cyndi Bittinger.

Vermont Bar Association. Women's Division, and Attorney General. Molly Gray

## October

**2-3.** Vermont League of Cities and Towns Town Fair Conference, Killington.

**15.** Northern Vermont University-Johnson TRIO Conference. \$50. Karen Madden

**19.** Senator Leahy's 23rd Annual Women's Conference, Vermont Technical College. Randolph Center

Vermont Historical Society Annual Meeting. Rachel Onuf

League of Local Historical Societies & Museums. Eileen Corcoran.

## November

**8.** Vermont Alliance for the Social Studies. Burlington. Fee \$125. Can share table for half the cost. Christine Smith.

7-9 New England Museum Association conference. Rachel slated to participate in panel titled, **How will Your Museum Commemorate the Woman's Suffrage Centennial?**

**April/May.** Vermont Youth Lobby Rally for the Planet. Montpelier.

**May.** Vermont Library Conference. Joy Worland.

## July 2020

Most historical societies march in July 4 parades. Request they organize suffragist-themed floats and displays.

## Action Items

**1) Attending one of these events or any other event? Can you bring our gear, speak or present at one? Let Sue know!!**

**2) Develop materials (bookmarks, flyers, business cards) for display and distribution.**

## **Executive Committee Report**

Improving internal communications was the main item and the desire to create more interactive monthly meetings, delegating and using skills and time well to accomplish tasks and work, in addition to reviewing progress. Assign people so they come back with work done. The group discussed this and seemed to like the notion of time at each monthly meeting to group think or problem solve tasks that members are working on.

### **▪ SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### ***Events: Vivienne Adair, Dell McDonough***

Spoke to Todd Provencher, Finance Director with the City of Montpelier regarding the city taking care of the cost of insurance for VSCA Parade. Described event, parade and state house gathering. He said it should not be any problem but could not make it official until six months before, January or February. Sent email verifying our conversation. Next, will complete parade application.

Vivienne contacted radio stations to seek interest in airing a *Suffrage Centennial Minute*. She had composed a radio PSA/podcast draft introducing VSCA and read it aloud. It was well-received and the group thought it would be a great addition, and in addition to radio play, have it as a link on our website and Facebook.

Devon Byers, Manager of Capital City Farmers' Market in Montpelier is interested in talking with Del to hear our suggestion of incorporating Farmers' Market within our event. Del contacted the Montpelier Business Association and was invited to speak at their meetings, which are held the first Wednesday of each month. *Molly Gray will accompany Del to the Montpelier Business Association meeting on August 7<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM.*

#### ***Outreach: Lilly Talbert***

Member Cyndy Bittinger, writer and historian has arranged for five diverse commentaries on the centennial theme on VPR during Women's History Month (March). Cyndy has been managing this project for years and we thank her for coordinating this theme in 2020 and her leadership! Additionally, she will speak on suffrage at *Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)* in Newport, St. Johnsbury, Stowe, and Manchester. Cyndy teaches at Community College of Vermont and her latest book is, "Vermont Women, Native Americans and African Americans: Out of the Shadows of History."

**Middlebury College Presentation.** Karin Hanta invited us to talk about VSCA to students on Friday, September 13 during lunch. On October 4th Middlebury College will present Elaine Weiss author of *The Woman's Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote*.

### **Action Items**

- 1) VSCA members are invited to participate in the VSCA presentation, take a campus tour and attend the exhibit, Votes...for Women? with Prof. Morsman at 5:30. Let us know if you plan to attend!***
- 2) Lilly is recruiting for a volunteer co-leader in marketing and promotion for VSCA. She's developed a description and will post it on Idealist***

#### ***Research & History: Lyn Blackwell & Rachel Onuf***

We continue to help with fact-checking for website and Facebook content. Members are creating and submitting Facebook posts focused on Vermont history. Can turn to research and develop original content. Rachel is working with Chris Burns, UVM Center for Digital Initiatives and Paul Carnahan at Department of Libraries in the fall to digitize Vermont suffrage primary source material, such as publications of the Vermont Equal Suffragist Association meetings. Biographies of grassroots suffragists available online.

#### ***Fundraising | Budget | Marketing***

Looking for folks to join the Fundraising Committee. We have Sandy, Rachel, Melinda Moulton, and Madeline Motta. Need lead or co-lead! Sandy not available to lead. Sue and Lilly to conference call with Sandy and Melinda first week of July. We're generating lots of events, but must prioritize the parade for fundraising, as it's our headliner and most costly event. We have slightly less than 7K now and should raise between 30-40K through grant writing, corporate sponsors, and individual donations. Need to develop sponsorship opportunities. Must have flier and business cards.

### **Action Items**

- 1) Do you have expertise, skills, experience in fundraising or know someone who does and would support our mission and work? Let Sue know.
- 2) Would anyone be interested in putting together a basic fundraising letter on letterhead?

### **• OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **Bookmarks and Flyer**

Bookmarks featuring suffragists can be given out by libraries. Make these collectible. Joy will research and check on funding. Alice Kitchel and Susan Dineen will help. Karen has art students who could help with design. Available in the Fall. **Deadline: in-hand Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>. Draft review at August 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.** We will also develop a flier on VSCA as a handout.

#### **Theatre Production**

Sandy met with Laura Roald and Mary Beth McNulty of Complications Theatre to discuss a small two-month production where 2-3 women actors in period dress would present a play based on historical speeches given by suffragists. There would be 10 presentations, 45 minutes long, at different venues including Main Street Landing and possibly, Town Halls. Budget of \$5,000, does not include cost of space.

The group discussed and expressed a preference for Fall 2020. Suggested the productions include opportunity for voter registration – *Own Your Future. Vote!* **Locations:** Cyndy asked about WRJ Northern Stage as a venue. She could help make that connection. Joy suggested colleges. Lila Richardson suggested a portion of the theater project be presented outdoors at parade as reenactment.

### **Action Items**

**Interested? Contact Sandy to join Work Group, [dooleyvt1@comcast.net](mailto:dooleyvt1@comcast.net). Next meeting to flush out concept and characters - July 29 at Red Hen Cafe, Middlesex, 1 p.m.**

**Karen Madden.** Suggest screening at Savoy of PBS documentary *One Woman, One Vote* narrated by Susan Sarandon. True history of suffrage. Amazing individuals working at grassroots gives you hope – you can be a minority voice and push the envelope. Johnson University has theatre majors. Students can write and put on their own work.

**Intern.** Iris Hsiang of Essex High School is interning with VSCA and LWV. She is creating a list of principals and social studies teachers at every high school in Vermont. This will help us send communications about our work and, in August, information on the national *Women Leading The Way* project.

**Task List.** Sue will create a list of all the ideas that were generated over the past months to share with members. This will allow us to focus on what needs to be done and assign responsibilities.

**Announcement.** Governor Phil Scott appointed Xusana Davis to be Vermont's first executive director of Racial Equity. She will oversee a five-member Racial Equity Advisory Panel.

### **MEETINGS SCHEDULE**

**July 2019: No meeting: Happy Summer!!**

**Thursday, August 8th | 10 a.m. to noon**

**Thursday, September 5th | 10 a.m. to noon**

**Thursday, October 24th | 10 a.m. to noon**

**Tuesday, November 19th | 10 a.m. to noon**

**December 2019: No meeting: Happy Holidays!!**