



Vermont Suffrage Centennial Alliance

MEETING SUMMARY NOTES

Thursday, October 24, 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)

Present

Vivianne Adair, American Association of University Women
Business and Professional Women/VT Inc: Donna Rae Heath, Alice Kitchel
Elaine Alfano, Cyndy Bittinger*, Laura Daudelin, Sandra Dooley
Gail Carrigan, Friends of the State House
Judith Dillon, Vermont Bar Association*
Office of the Attorney General: Molly Gray, Natacha Tremblay
Karin Hanta, Middlebury College, Feminists' Resource Center*
League of Women Voters: Lyn Blackwell, Barbara Magaliff, Anne Mixer,
Madeleine Mongan, Sonya Schuyler
Karen Madden, Northern Vermont University
Dell McDonough, Andrea Olsen, Linda Radtke, Donna Smyers, Yvonne
Strauss*

Rachel Onuf, VT State Archives & Records Administration
Rachel Siegal, Peace & Justice Center
Margaret Tamulonis, Fleming Museum
Doris Sumner, Empowering Gender Opportunities
Joy Worland, Department of Libraries

Presiding: Sue Racanelli, League of Women Voters

Recording: Lilly Talbert, Vermont Commission on Women

Regrets

Marguerite Adelman, Edna Curtin, Susan Dineen, Ericka Reil, Lila
Richardson, Christine Smith

** Participating Remotely via Conference Call*

WELCOME + INTRODUCTIONS

Welcome New Participants

Barbara Magaliff, League of Women Voters, Andrea Olson, VSCA Social Media volunteer, Doris Sumner, Empowering Gender Opportunities.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

EVENTS: VIVIENNE ADAIR, DELL MCDONOUGH

Dell McDonough on Parade Plan

Parade will depict history of the struggle, include accomplishments, and work left to be done. Timeline represents the following periods: 1848–1920; 1920–1965 and 1965–present. Invitations to groups and organizations to march or enter floats, choosing which period to depict; other interested parties such as men who support women/ERA [SuffraGents]; community and school bands as well as choral groups to sing about the struggle. Like the original 1913 parade, woman on horse leads, statements on banners; antique car with Parade Marshal. Dell asked about participation of Bread and Puppet Theater. Group discussed parade vs. performance. Madeleine Mongan will ask her contact. Linda Radtke said Maiden Vermont, women's barbershop group is interested and would be willing to "float" around the State House lawn day-of. They could render the national anthem.

How individuals and organizations can help. Start talking the parade up to organizations, community members, and folks you know who might like to march or help. We'll need to find a **photographer** and **videographer**.

Vivienne Adair on Festival on State House lawn

Created a plan for two sides of the State House Lawn to ensure there is space for all activities. Worked out health and safety concerns for dunking booth for Governor Clemons. \$175. Activities and elements: Photo booth for selfies with the likenesses of Elizabeth Stanton, Ida B. Wells, Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth. VPR Story Corp booth – recording family stories of suffrage, voting for first time, importance of voting. Poetry slam for youth. Voting corn hole game – using our circular logo to depict votes (bean bags) going into the ballot box. Puppet show for littlest participants. High school students acting as ambassadors, especially about voting and The Pledge. Tent space for alliance members and perhaps for political candidates to display materials, if appropriate. Note that putting structures on lawn means insurance! Rachel Siegal suggested requesting Ben and Jerry's have their free ice cream truck. Check flavor [Pecan Resist](#).

How individuals and organizations can help. We need someone to step forward and take on coordination of vendors. Anyone want to volunteer to continue promotion of 2020 themed B&J flavor – could work on social media messaging and



Vermont Suffrage Centennial Alliance

with other state alliance organizations ▪ **Events subcommittee would welcome more members!**

VSCA action item: Create new Google Drive. Add Dell's parade plan, the budget.

Donna Smyers: Suffrage Scramble 5K Race Update

Met with Shams Ferver (U32 student) and Lilly. Discussed engaging student athletes, promotion and project timeline. Will submit safety plan to Duxbury Town Selectboard at their meeting October 28. Racers will get a purple T-Shirt with *Votes for Women* sash as part of the design across front. We can sell those at parade too. On the arm will be *Votes for All*, and the back will feature VSCA and sponsor logos, along with Central Vermont Runners, host of event. Will target Dec. 1 for race online sign-up to go live and promotion plan launch.

How individuals and organizations can help. Need Race Committee, sponsors, volunteers, social media, parking. Shams will be responsible for Instagram.

Sonja Schuyler: Women's Suffrage Symposium

Saturday, May 16, 2020 from 2:00 - 5:00 PM | Ethan Allen Homestead

Met with Dan O'Neil of Ethan Allen Homestead Museum on September 25 regarding symposium and the help the League and VSCA could provide with logistics and publicity. Two sessions with four speakers: Susan Ouellette, *Role of Education in Vermont Suffrage movement*; Kathryn Dungy, *African American Women and suffrage*; Beverly Little Thunder, *Native Americans in Federally Recognized Tribes*; and Melody Walker, *Vermont Native American Women*. Private donor is funding speaker fees. Light refreshments. If more than 100 guests, will need to rent a tent, estimated cost: \$3,500. VSCA expected to pick this tab. Dan wants to start publicity in January, so can estimate if additional space is needed. Museum has on-line ticketing capability and will take reservations. Free to public but registration required. Work on the symposium name – include women of color.

OUTREACH: LILLY TALBERT

Andrea Olson joined us in September and has created a VSCA Instagram account, feeding it content from our event calendar. She can also help with postings for Facebook, along with other social team members, Ericka Reil, Tabitha Armstrong, and Amber Roberts. Andrea introduced herself. She'll be streaming our Nov. 3rd event on Facebook.

How individuals and organizations can help. Like us! Share our posts! Follow us: Vtsuffrage2020. Send your photos and draft message text to our social media team members for posting.

Historic Sites Markers: Laura Daudelin

Laura volunteered to be Coordinator for historic markers project with the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites (NCWHS), a non-profit that supports and promotes preservation and interpretation of sites and locales that bear witness to women's participation in American life. The *National Votes for Women Trail* is collecting sites from all states to tell the untold story of suffrage for all women, of all ethnicities. History and Research members will assist Laura in this work.

<https://ncwhs.org/votes-for-women-trail/>. Lyn remembered the Vermont Women's History Project organized a tour of remarkable women of Franklin Country funded by Agency of Transportation.

VSCA action item: Lilly will find and share those materials with Lyn.

Elaine Alfano, Madeleine Mongan, Lila Richardson: Social Justice and Identity Organizations Outreach

Elaine explained this effort to touch base with organizations who haven't responded to our invitation to participate in the Alliance. They reviewed original list, made edits and additions, and are now ready to share that with all Alliance members, asking them to act on our behalf and invite those they have a relationship with. Want a more personal approach. In the process of developing an outreach letter to invite participation in any way they see fit. Letter could turn into talking points. Let us know of organizations we have missed. Group discussed options for invitee's participation: [Take the pledge](#), share our messaging on social media, march in the parade under their organization's banner, day-of support for events, donate.



Vermont Suffrage Centennial Alliance

How individuals and organizations can help. Please review the list and sign up to contact organizations or people you have relationships with. Use the message template to make your contacts in any way you like: phone call, in-person, letter, email, text.

VSCA action item: Add current member contact sheet, contact tracking, invitee list, and invite message template to new VSCA Google Drive.

Event Tabling

October 15. Karen Madden/Laura Daudelin: TRIO Conference – pre-college programs

October 17. Lilly/Rachel/Sue: Women Can Do Conference

October 19. Lilly/Laura: Senator Leahy's Women's Economic Opportunity Conference

We developed materials, refined talking points for introducing VSCA at these events, discovering what resonates with community members. Recommend mentioning that while women got the vote, groups of people were targeted and people continue to be denied access; also mention our pledge. Special thanks to Laura who DIY'd VSCA chocolates – printing and gluing VSCA logo stickers on chocolates she bought!

How individuals and organizations can help. Be like Laura: have an idea for something that supports our work? **Just do it!** Got an event that would be good for us to be at? Volunteer to table at it and we'll get you our banner and materials. Take our pledge!

Professor Morsman Talk & Discussion, November 3

Relying on members, especially greater Burlington area folks to get word out to groups, social media, community, and friends and family.

How individuals and organizations can help. Share our FB event, Morsman event flyer and press release, use social media kit, hit Front Porch Forum! Outreach is still seeking a Marketing and Promotions volunteer to co-chair with Lilly.

VSCA action item: Push event once more week of 10/28.

RESEARCH & HISTORY: LYN BLACKWELL & RACHEL ONUF

Lyn Blackwell. Working on bios of Vermont suffragists for traveling exhibit, *Because of Women Like Her...* Meeting with designer, Maja Smith next week, prior to funding being released, to talk about banners for the exhibit. Challenges: photographs of suffragists. Most are in old magazines and poor quality. Wrote article on VSCA and the 19th Amendment for Montpelier Bridge. Lyn's "Vermont and the ERA: A Case Against Exceptionalism" now published in VHS journal.

Action item: Pull and share Lyn's interview in *The Montpelier Bridge* to social and our site.

Rachel Onuf. Submitted full proposal to Vermont Humanities Council asking to supplement Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership grant, *Because of Women Like...* with funding for Coordinator and Educator and extending to schools beyond Champlain Valley. With Christine Smith, spoke about VSCA to teachers at Historical Society's VT History Day prep event. Rachel addressing suffrage activities in a panel at New England Museum Association Conference, November 6-8. Online portal at UVM Center for Digital initiatives closer to being available, featuring suffrage as a topic, specifically Vermont Suffrage Association annual reports. May find additional suffragists via this project.

Stopped at Town Clerk's office in Calais. The Town History Book showed that 46 women had signed the Freeman's Oath and there was a picture of first woman who voted, Olive. While you may not always find records of women who voted in November 1920, the Freeman's Oath shows the list of women who intended to vote. The degree to which information is kept and archived varies by town – sometimes found in "Town Record Book."

How individuals and organizations can help. Interested in researching and writing a biographical sketch of a Vermont suffragist? Talk to Rachel! ▪ Explore possibilities: start at your Town Clerk's office to see what records they've kept from



Vermont Suffrage Centennial Alliance

the 1920 time period! Take pictures, share what you find with social media team and with History and Research team.

Cyndy Bittinger: International Summit of the Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership

Gave keynote address, *Why Women Marched: A History of Activism in New York, Vermont and Quebec*, at International Summit of the Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership on October 7 in Venise-en-Québec, Canada. Started discussion on Native Americans and covered Quebec, which was very conservative then but liberal now with progressive policies to women. (An attendee described Cyndy's keynote as "*thorough, inclusive and very interesting.*") About 70 people in attendance from libraries, historic sites and museums with plans to participate in 2020. [Inez Mullholand](#) coins were given to participants. Cyndy will continue to speak with Vermont audiences statewide on this and related topics.

FUNDRAISING: SANDY DOOLEY

Currently Champlain Housing Trust fundraising chair; once term ends in January, will help lead VSCA's fundraising efforts. **Sandy has also led and coordinated the play project and new VSCA Speaker's Bureau. Cheers Sandy!**

Speaker's Bureau

Should go live shortly. In addition to current speakers (15), we offer Tips for Speakers, Tips for Hosts, and a form to join the speaker's list. We're looking for speakers in southern Vermont; have Meg Mott of Marlboro College. Thanks to Judith Dillon for helping with disclaimer statement, Amber Roberts for website support, and speakers for signing up.

How individuals and organizations can help. Do you have fundraising skills or connections? Please join this subcommittee. Help draft a fundraising letter and message. Think of possible donors, be they individuals or businesses. Provide contacts to fundraising team.

Complications Theater Play Reading: The Suffragist Reenactment Society

Starts as a meeting of the Society and covers time period 1848-1920: trial with Susan B Anthony; 1913 parade; prison time and being force-fed; politics swirling in Tennessee. Playwright Mary Beth McNulty did an amazing job developing concept for original script with the tremendous amount of available information. Cast of three actors – Kathleen Bloom, Chris Caswell, Jena Necrason. Includes audience participation, music, and trivia games. First reading on October 18 in Burlington. Lyn, Linda, Rachel, and Del attended. Dell said it was wonderful – covered conflicts and racism; Ida B. Wells. Linda particularly liked the description of Tennessee's political fight. Very illustrative and easy to imagine. Lyn is reviewing script for historical accuracy. Entertaining: so good! Scheduled to run Sept – Oct 2020 in 10 venues across the state - Newport, St. Albans, Vergennes, White River Junction, Brattleboro, Bennington, Rutland, Montpelier, St. Johnsbury, and Burlington. Free and open to the public. Applying for Arts Impact Grant through the Vermont Arts Council.

DISCUSSION: VSCA TALKING POINTS – Sue Racanelli

Pamela Kraynak spent time developing an outline of Talking Points for us:

1. Introduction: Vermont Suffrage Centennial Alliance
2. Understand the role race played in women's suffrage, timeline for minority voting rights, and methods used to prevent minority voting)
3. Be knowledgeable about current barriers to voting (voter identification, making it difficult for citizens to vote, purging the Voting Register, gerrymandering, preventing felons from voting)
4. The VSCA Pledge (register to vote, exercise your right to vote, know your poll location and hours, request early or absentee ballots, know the issues)

Everyone should have an evolving list of talking points because one may be called upon at any time. Have a Primary Message. This is what we stand for. And Big Picture Message: Commemorate and acknowledge suffrage.

In response to the question, *what could we do better in Vermont to improve access to voting?* Rachel Seigal suggested (i) Create a state holiday to vote and/or allow voting on a Sunday (ii) Allow non-citizen voting on local initiatives



(passed in Montpelier but since this is a charter change, Senate lawmakers deferred action to 2020). - Language change suggestion: instead of felon – use *person with a felony charge*.

Action item: Long and short versions will be available on our [Google Drive](#) ▪ Formulate talking points into a website FAQ .

OTHER BUSINESS

Natacha Tremblay. Vermont Law School (VLS) will join VSCA and may participate in parade. VLS student groups, like Women’s Law Society are working with high schools in their area to educate and register new voters, and would like to work with the League. They’ve established relationships with schools in area. Anne will follow up with Natacha.

Vermont Bar Association and Vermont Law School are exploring the idea of having a panel on voting rights. VLS may host and offer refreshments

Action items: Exchange contact information ▪ Add VLS to our member list.

Speaker Annette Gordon Reed as keynote for our festival event

Group members are working together to explore bringing this scholar and author to Vermont, perhaps she could address more than one event while she’s here. Vermont Bar Association and VLS may work with us.

Action item: Judith Dillon of Vermont Bar Association to follow up.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, November 19th | 10 a.m. to noon

December 2019: No meeting. Happy Holidays!!

2020 MEETING DATES

Note: Executive Committee meets one hour prior

Thursday January 30. 10:00 AM

Thursday February 20. 1:30 PM

Tuesday March 31. 10:00 AM

Tuesday April 28. 1:30 PM **Venue Change: Vermont Historical Society Community Room/ Barre

Thursday May 28. 10:00 AM

Tuesday June 23. 1:30 PM

Tuesday July 28. 10:00 AM

Thursday August 13. 1:30 PM