VTRC
Vermont Truth & Reconciliation Commission

July Committee Meeting #3
Facilitator: Commissioners Mia Schultz and Melody Mackin
Notetaker: Ann Miller

	AGENDA	
3:00 pm	Language Accessibility	Mia
5 min	Land Acknowledgement	Mel
2 min	Attendance -place name, pronouns, where from and organization you are representing in the chat - optional unless speaking during the meeting. Share email addresses with us if you want periodic emails and updates.	Mia
3 min	Working Pledge	Mel
30 min	Welcome and introductions PROMPT	Mia
2 min	Meeting agreements review	Mel
2 min	Administrative Updates	Ann
Old Business		
5 min	Accessibility Protocol Part I	Faith
5 Minute Break		
New Business		
20 min	Accessibility Protocol Part II	Faith
15 min	Virtual and In-Person Events - Safety Protocol	Faith
10 min	Outreach Strategy	Mia / Mel
10 min	Committee Members Update -Update us on your community news	
	Public comments -limit of 2 minutes per person	
5:00 pm	Adjourn	

All meeting materials, when available, can be found on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission webpage https://vtrc.vermont.gov .

Meetings will be transcribed, and minutes will be posted in a timely manner.

To request language translation, including American Sign Language, please contact us at VTRC@vermont.gov. Please contact us 72 hours in advance if you need these services for meetings.

Accessibility Part II

Plain Language Checklist

"x"   **Actions**

	Grade Level – Use everyday words; 6th – 8th grade level
	Pronouns – Use you and other pronouns
	Active Voice – Use an Active voice, not passive (ex: "Wash fruit. Then, cut and peel them." Passive voice = "Fruits should be washed before they are cut and peeled.")
	Direct Speech - Avoid metaphors, imagery, and acronyms
	Tone – Use positive tone; inflection
	Pace and Patience - Take the time necessary to ensure clear understanding and give time to put the thoughts into words, especially when responding to a question
	Concise - Keep it concise, simple, and main point at the start. Repeat when necessary
	Directions – Avoid directional terms, like east-west
	Sentences - Short sentences and paragraphs; avoid sentences with comas or semicolons
	Questions - When asking questions, phrase them to get accurate information. Verify responses by repeating each question in a different way
	Design - Easy-to-follow design features (lists, headers, tables)
	Visuals – Offer visuals to accompany directions, procedures, or learning
	Limit Text – Reduce wordiness; consider bullet-points with only necessary details
	Write "Decorative" - If an image does not have substantive information
	Electronic Versions – Send to participants prior to event (PDF & PowerPoint)
	Instruction – Give direct instruction. Ex: "Be back from lunch at 12:30," not "Be back in 30 minutes". Avoid giving multiple instructions at one time

Work Cited

- Kirsten Murphy (VT Developmental Disability Council)
- document-accessibility-basics.pptx (sharepoint.com)

	Word & PDF Checklist

"x"   Actions

	Plain Language – Limit the use of jargon, abbreviations, acronyms, and technical language when possible.
	Contractions – Avoid break words, like "can't". Write-out the word, like "cannot"
	Color as an Indicator - Color cannot be the only indication of information. Ex: "The red text identifies tasks that have not been completed.
	High Contrast - Use high color contrast text colors like dark grey on white
	Font – Use Sans Pro or Arial and Size 12+ (update your default settings)
	Columns and Margins – Reduce use of columns, unless in tables. Use wide or normal margins.
	Charts and Graphs - Describe charts or graphs in one or two sentences; add trends or relevant information in the visual
	Content – Avoid cramming information into a single page
	Subject Line - Add a descriptive subject (ex: "Welcome Email to Committee Members")
	Background - Don't use background patterns. (Adjust windows view settings to adjust color display.)
	Font Emphasis – Avoid all Caps, Italics, Bolded small text, and underlining
	Text-to-Speech – When possible, use text-to-speech
	Visuals – Limit emojis and always use Alt Text or detailed captions
	Images – Place images in line with text. Shapes must have alternate text or detailed photo captions. Mark images as "decorative" if they don't offer substantive information or if the information is already conveyed in the body of the document
	Lists – Use lists or bullet-points to organize information
	Tables – If you use tables, use styles, headers, and alternat text. Use built-in headers
	Descriptive Links – Links should be the title/descriptive of the link. Avoid "click here". www.examplelink.com. Example of descriptive link: Microsoft	Create Accessible Links Video here"
	Styles – Use headings and subheadings
	Use the Microsoft and PDF Accessibility Checker
	Files - File names should reflect the document 1. Use lower-case letters and dashes, such as "document-accessibility-checklist"

	2. Avoid dates in the file name or "draft" unless it's the title of a report, such as 2020 Report on Health Differences
	PDF Conversion – for Adobe Acrobat Pro DC use "Create PDF" 1. For Adobe Reader use "Save as Adobe PDF" 2. Avoid "Print to PDF" and "Save As" by using PDF extension

Work Cited

- SOV – Inclusion and Accessibility

Resource

- Video: Check the accessibility of your document - Microsoft Support

Social Media Checklist

"x"   **Actions**

	Plain Language - Use [Plain Language Protocol](#) from Green Mountain Advocates. Adjustment for readability, write numbers between zero and nine (Ex: Five, not 5)
	Capitalization – Only capitalize first word in a sentence and titles
	Contractions – Avoid break words, like "can't". Write-out the word, like "cannot"
	Camel Case – Use multiword hashtags, such as iPhone or #BlackLivesMatter
	Descriptive Links – avoid vague terms like "click here", "this", "link", etc.
	Visuals – limit emojis and always use Alt Text or detailed captions
	Contact Information – make phone number and email available on the account page for the public to access VTRC
	QR Codes – Create QR Codes that direct the public to events, sign-ups, website, etc.
	Charts and Graphs – Describe them in one or two sentences with trends or relevant information
	Videos – Add descriptions and provide descriptive audios
	Write "Decorative" - If an image does not have substantive information
	Interpretation or Translation – use ASL and other translated versions to increase reach
	Multi-Channels – Create easy access threads, daily email digests, or social media widgets to website
	Support Services – Add contact of supportive staff and post accommodations

Helpful Links
- [Minimum Accessibility Requirements (sharepoint.com)](#)
- [Accessibility by Disability](#)

Power-Point Checklist

*In addition to Social Media recommendations

"x"   Actions

	Color as an Indicator - Color cannot be the only indication of information. Ex: "The red text identifies tasks that have not been completed.
	Contractions – Avoid break words, like "can't". Write-out the word, like "cannot"
	Slides and Written Word Color - Use high contrast color schemes. Link: WebAIM Contrast Checker. Avoid white writing when possible. It causes fuzziness, or halation. It's difficult to read for folx with astigmatism.
	Font Size – Use a large (size 24 or greater), clear, Sans Serif font such as Sans Pro, Arial, or Calibri.
	Font Emphasis – Avoid all Caps, Italics, Bolded small text, and underlining
	Animation - Avoid excess animation. Avoid use of it if you can.
	Use the Accessibility Checker and Immersive Reader in PowerPoint
	Limit Text – reduce wordiness; consider bullet-points with only necessary details
	Write "Decorative" - If an image does not have substantive information
	Electronic Versions – Send to participants prior to event (PDF & PowerPoint)

Resources

- Department of Health - document-accessibility-basics.pptx (sharepoint.com)
- Accessibility Checklist - Document Accessibility Checklist (vermont.gov)

Work Cited
- Video for Accessible PDFs: https://youtu.be/DUPHWF2ZPPg
- Accessibility tools for PowerPoint - Microsoft Support

	Email Checklist

*In addition to Social Media recommendations

"x"   Actions

	Plain Language – Limit the use of jargon, abbreviations, acronyms, and technical language when possible.
	HTML – Use HTML when possible (see "Email Messaging Using")
	Color as an Indicator - Color cannot be the only indication of information. Ex: "The red text identifies tasks that have not been completed.
	Contractions – Avoid break words, like "can't". Write-out the word, like "cannot"
	High Contrast - Use high color contrast text colors like dark grey on white
	Font – Use Sans Pro or Arial and Size 12+ (update your default settings)
	Text – Avoid all caps, italics, and underlines (except links)
	Subject Line - Add a descriptive subject (ex: "Welcome Email to Committee Members"
	Background – Avoid using background patterns. (Adjust windows view settings to adjust color display)
	Font Emphasis – Avoid all Caps, Italics, Bolded small text, and underlining
	Text Walls - Avoid large text/wordiness, use bullet points or lists, and headings
	Visuals – limit emojis and always use Alt Text or detailed captions
	Images – Place images in line with text. Shapes must have alternate text or detailed photo captions
	Tables – If you use tables, use styles, headers, and alternat text
	Descriptive Links – Links should be the title/descriptive of the link
	Styles – Use headings in Word
	Accessibility Checker – Test accessibility with Immersive Reader and Microsoft Accessibility Checker

Work Cited

- SOV – Inclusion and Accessibility

	Spreadsheet and Tables Checklist

*In addition to Social Media recommendations

"x" **Actions**

	Plain Language – Limit the use of jargon, abbreviations, acronyms, and technical language when possible.
	Contractions – Avoid break words, like "can't". Write-out the word, like "cannot"
	Color as an Indicator - Color cannot be the only indication of information. Ex: "The red text identifies tasks that have not been completed.
	High Contrast - Use high color contrast text colors like dark grey on white
	Font – Use Sans Pro or Arial and Size 12+
	Text – Avoid all caps, italics, bolding small text, and underlines (except links)
	Images – Use Alternate Text or detailed photo captions
	Visuals – limit emojis and always use Alt Text or detailed captions
	Images – Place images in line with text. Shapes must have alternate text or detailed photo captions.
	Tables – If you use tables, use styles, headers, and alternat text. Insert tables, avoid drawing tables. Headers should repeat if the table exceeds the first page. Minimize merging or splitting cells.
	Descriptive Links – Links should be the title/descriptive of the link.
	Styles – Use Headings in Word
	Accessibility Checker – Test accessibility with Immersive Reader and Microsoft Accessibility Checker

Work Cited

- [SOV – Inclusion and Accessibility](#)

Safety Plan

Virtual Safety Checklist

Important Numbers

Ann Miller, Executive Assistant	802-261-7387
Faith Yacubian, Executive Director	802-261-7386

Before Event

"x"   **Actions**

	Zoom Registration – Require registration for documentation purposes
	Breakout Rooms – Create breakout rooms to offer healing space. Assign invitees a room but do not open rooms until it is needed
	Accessibility – If applicable, check ASL and other interpretation contacts are invited
	Private Chat – Remind the public that "private chat" is recorded on transcripts
	Care Team – Determine if a Care Team is needed and Protocol of Care Team (include a document with brief details about who they are)
	Victim Services Directory – One-sheet of services
	Apply Individual Personal Safety Plan and Follow-Up – If possible, send an email in advance that requests safety needs. See Appendix 1. Draft – Individual Safety Plan Purpose (Michele Olvera, Esq.)

At Event

"x"   **Actions**

	Pledge and/or Agreement – State VTRC standards of conduct and culture of humility
	Breach of Civility – Share actions that will be taken to reduce harm, including warnings and removal
	Introduce Care Team Members and Role – Explain their function and how you can reach them during the event.
	Breakout Rooms – Explain use of breakout rooms and when they will be used, such as when a violation of our agreement has occurred and assessing harm and creating healing space are important

	Accessibility – If applicable, discuss how to access ASL and other interpreters on Zoom
	Communication – Use plain language to reduce confusion/misunderstanding. Avoid command statements • Ex: "Keep both feet on the floor while doing this breathing exercise," can be written, "If it's more comfortable, you can keep both feet on the floor while doing this breathing exercise.") - <u>National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health - Writing Guide</u> • Ex: "FAILURE to respond by …" feels intimidating, but "You have the right to request or disagree with the determination…."" <u>Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) - Tip Sheet</u>

After Event

"x"   **Actions**

	Debrief (if applicable) – Check-in with Presenters, Interpreters and Impacted Communities
	Send Survey – Ask participants to fill-out survey (make available in hardcopy and electronic formats) to assist with improving events.

Helpful Resource
- Outright VT <u>LGBTQ+ Youth Support and Empowerment — Outright Vermont (outrightvt.org)</u>
- Kristen Cameron, MPA, Vermont Department of Health; HealthVermont.gov
- <u>Trauma-informed Design Resources</u>
- <u>Vermont Victim Service Directory</u>

In-Person Safety Checklist

Important Numbers:

Ann Miller, Executive Assistant	802-261-7387
Faith Yacubian, Executive Director	802-261-7386

Before Event

"x"   **Actions**

	Zoom Registration – Require registration for documentation purposes
	Accessibility – If applicable, check that ASL and other interpretation contacts are invited.
	Private Chat – Remind the public that "private chat" is recorded on transcripts.
	Hire Chocolate Thunder as Safety Personnel – Follow contracts/agreements
	Care Team – Determine if a Care Team is needed and Protocol of Care Team (if needed, create a document that describes some details about them and make it available at event).
	Victim Services Directory – One-sheet of services
	Head-Sets – Purchase heads-sets for Event Team and provide protocol/use one-sheet
	Protocol for Imminent Threat – Apply Protocol, for example: moving to virtual platform.
	Check First Aid Kits – Purchase more supplies if inventory is low.
	Extreme Weather Conditions – Assess safety and, if necessary, implement Protocol for Imminent Threat.
	Apply Individual Personal Safety Plan and Follow-Up – If possible, send an email in advance that requests safety needs. See Appendix 1. Draft – Individual Safety Plan Purpose (Michele Olvera, Esq.)

At Event

"x"	Actions
	Pledge and/or Agreement – State VTRC standards of conduct and culture of humility
	Breach of Civility – Share actions that will be taken to reduce harm, including warnings and removal
	Introduce Care Team Members and Role – Explain their function and how you can reach them during the event
	Lock Doors (if appropriate and does not limit egress) - To reduce non-invitees from causing safety threats
	Position Safety Personnel at Entrances/Exists and Inside Main Room
	Accessibility – If applicable, discuss how to access ASL and other interpreters on Zoom
	Communication – Use plain language to reduce confusion/misunderstanding. Avoid command statements • Ex: "Keep both feet on the floor while doing this breathing exercise," can be written, "If it's more comfortable, you can keep both feet on the floor while doing this breathing exercise.") - National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health - Writing Guide • Ex: "FAILURE to respond by …" feels intimidating, but "You have the right to request or disagree with the determination…."" Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) - Tip Sheet

After Event

"x"	Actions
	Debrief (if applicable) – Check-in with Presenters, Interpreters and Impacted Communities
	Send Survey – Ask participants to fill-out survey (make available in hardcopy and electronic formats) to assist with improving events.

Helpful Resource

- Outright VT LGBTQ+ Youth Support and Empowerment — Outright Vermont (outrightvt.org)
- Kristen Cameron, MPA, Vermont Department of Health; HealthVermont.gov
- Trauma-informed Design Resources
- Vermont Victim Service Directory

Appendix 1. Draft – Individual Safety Plan Purpose (Michele, Olvera, Esq.)

An individualized safety plan for our purposes in a unique plan that addresses whatever that individual is contending with or might need to contend with if they participate in any public forum or other event with the Commission. The first step is for the person to identify the risk and also what they have as a goal related to their participation in the event. It's important for them to guide the plan. For example, if there is an individual that may attend the event that they do not want to have any opportunity to speak to them perhaps pre-planned seating will work or perhaps they need a dedicated person to watch the individual's location at all times. It is also possible we could prearrange with the individual who is the threat to follow a certain protocol. In other words, we can all brainstorm a solution but the person whose plan it is must be comfortable with it or else it is not a safety plan. There are many different reasons for a person to feel unsafe and we cannot name them or judge them. Too many for us to even try to name them all here. Our goal is for everyone to feel safe and free to participate in the Commissions event fully, peacefully, and freely.

PHASE II - COMMITTEE OUTREACH PLAN

Below is a plan for how to engage committee members in the outreach process.

In outreach the audiences that we are reaching out to include:

- Impacted Communities
- Members of the Public
- Community Organizations
- Vermont Legislators
- Institutions

METHOD	DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	COMMITTEE MEMBER INVOLVMENT
Website	This will serve as one of the primary ways each audience gets involved, shows up and gives input. This will serve as the primary site to receive information on public meetings. This will serve as the primary place to learn about research and TRC's documentary record.	Ongoing	Direct audiences to learn about VTRC, work and education: • Mission Statement and Pledge | Vermont Truth and Reconciliation Commission • Educational Series: VTRC Narratives from History to the Present Day: Extending the Olive Branch through Education | Vermont Truth and Reconciliation Commission • Legislative Reports | Vermont Truth and Reconciliation Commission Direct audiences to ways they can get involved on website : • https://vtrc.vermont.gov/who-can-get-involved

METHOD	DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	COMMITTEE MEMBER INVOLVMENT
	This will serve as the primary place to learn about online and in person events		Direct audiences to ways to participate in open meetings or to catch up on the minutes and work: • Meetings	Vermont Truth and Reconciliation Commission Direct audiences to research: • Resources for Personal Research	Vermont Truth and Reconciliation Commission • Emblematic Cases	Vermont Truth and Reconciliation Commission • Problematic Place Names in Vermont	Vermont Truth and Reconciliation Commission The website is constantly changing and additional information is included above are some entry ways to having discussions
Social Media (facebook, instagram, LinkedIn	This will serve as a place to notify all audiences of: Meetings Events Research Announcements/Updates General connection	Weekly share outs	If a committee member is connected to social media and feels comfortable following the VTRC networks, they are encouraged to share announcements as they see fit.

METHOD	DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	COMMITTEE MEMBER INVOLVMENT
Events-Coordinated by others	Invites to speak, attending events coordinated by others for networking purposes, tabling	Ongoing	Committee members will receive brochures. We ask that they share any events they believe could be attended by them or VTRC and keep the team informed. Events worksheet
Events – coordinated by TRC	Coordinated In Person and Virtual Events in various places around the state	Ongoing	Committee members to inform others of events as they are able and participate in the events as able (not required).
Public Meetings	Virtual Monthly Meetings – This is to learn about the day-to-day overall updates of the TRC. Public input is welcomed.	First Tuesday of Every Month 5:00 pm –6:00 pm	Committee members to attend (if able – not required) Committee members to invite others as they are able.
	Virtual Monthly Building and Planning Committee Meetings– This is to ensure that plans for implementation have been through a process of review	Time and Date varies May 2024- December 2024	

METHOD	DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	COMMITTEE MEMBER INVOLVMENT
	through a diverse perspective and lens		
One-on-One (emails, phone, in person, video)	Conversations with people from all audiences	As applicable	Committee members to have conversations as they arise and when applicable about the work of the TRC
Email Newsletter	List serv to send all announcements, reminders on meetings etc.	Monthly	Committee members to forward any email communication that is broadcasted to anyone they see fit as they see fit.
Video	Informative videos. This is to be shared on social media and website, potential advertising	September (possible)	If the VTRC can do promotional videos – we ask for any participation from committee members as they see fit.
Thank you's -- Gratitude	Gratitude is essential for successful and reciprocal relationships	Within one week of each interaction	Gratitude is important throughout this process, if there are people who have listened or participated because of your discussions, be sure to show gratitude in a way that feels comfortable for you.