



**Truth and Reconciliation Commission**  
**FINAL Minutes – Public Meeting**  
**September 3, 2024**

The meeting was started at 5:05 PM by Commissioner Schultz.

**Attendance:** Melody Mackin, Mia Schultz, Faith Yacubian, Michele Olvera and Ann Miller. **Members of the public** included: Van Dora Williams.

Commissioner Schultz facilitated the meeting. Language and accessibility rules were explained. We ask that the public request access to any assistance needed in language translation or ASL via [our email](#) at least 72 hours in advance of any public meeting the VTRC holds.

Commissioner Mackin shared our land acknowledgement which is found here on our website: [Land Acknowledgement.pdf \(vermont.gov\)](#).

Commissioner Schultz reviewed the VTRC's working pledge which is posted on our website: [About Us | Vermont Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#). Also reviewed were the protocols of the open meeting and potentials for removal of a person in a meeting if it becomes contentious.

Commissioners voted and approved the August 6, 2024 public meeting minutes and August 8, 2024 Public Committee Member Meeting Minutes as final.

Discussion took place regarding amendment of the VTRC Mission Statement.

**Old version:** We exist in a pursuit of community-centered, justice and holistic healing centered on impacted Act 128 communities, which include per §902 (b).

Ended with: We seek collective liberation from violence and discrimination systemically perpetrated by the State of Vermont. We do this by uplifting community voices through storytelling, researching, and community relationships, and making legislative recommendations.

**Amended Version** of our Mission Statement voted and approved:

We exist in pursuit of community-centered justice and holistic healing that prioritize impacted [ACT 128](#) communities which include:

- Individuals who identify as Native American or indigenous;
- Individuals with physical, psychiatric, or mental conditions or disability, and the families of individuals with the physical, psychiatric or mental health condition or disability;
- Black individuals and other individuals of color;
- Individuals with French Canadian, French-Indian or other mixed ethnic or racial heritage;
- Other populations and communities at the discretion of the Commissioners.

Ending with: We seek collective liberation from violence and discrimination systemically perpetrated by the State of Vermont. We do this by uplifting community voices through truth-telling, researching, building relationships, and making legislative recommendations.

Executive Director Yacubian reviewed the budget criteria:

- Similar to VTRC team's compensation, the monthly committee meeting stipends and the research, legal, and social media interns' pay are deducted from VTRC's budget.
- Supplies for public events, such as tabling tent.
- iPad rentals for listening sessions with communities.
- Stipends for TRC consultants who are providing expertise and guidance example: trauma-informed interviewing and community events.
- Stipend for Social Media Consultant whose work has shifted to creating a Strategic Plan brochure

Executive Director Yacubian gave the VTRC Update:

- Early August, we held our first Research Listening Session with the Missisquoi Abenaki tribe, which build connections that will drive our work in Phase III (implementation).
- Working with interns to extract data from researching laws and identifying implications that affect Vermonters today.
- Planning our first in-person community event (October 11th) titled **Truth and Healing: In Search of a Common Memory** to showcase our Strategic Plan and hear from community advocates.

- Planning an in-service on trauma-informed practices for research/interviewing, events, listening sessions, ceremony, etc.
- Supporting the legislative process for rehiring a commissioner. The Select Panel has been identified.
- Held our 5th Education Series session on August 28<sup>th</sup> - Families of People with Disabilities.

Announcement of the loss of our Lead Researcher, Adam Kersch who has left the Commission for personal reasons. We thank Adam for their dedication and acute knowledge to the VTRC Commission. We are grateful for the time we had with Dr. Kersch. We are currently searching for a replacement for this position.

Commissioner Mackin reviewed the Commissioner deliberation with an update. On August 7<sup>th</sup>, the Commissioners planned visits to some of the State Historic Sites with someone from the Historic Division, looking at history through an anti-racist lense and trying to get around the state and meet people, partnering with some of the state entities that are already doing some of the research. On 8/12 the Commissioners looked at planning the Montpelier event which will take place on the State House lawn Friday, October 11<sup>th</sup> at noon. The event, Truth and Healing in Search of a Common Memory. Speakers for the event are in discussions. Dates are being considered for Truth-telling events in the summer of 2025. Dates and hours discussed for Truth-telling sessions and geographical areas around the state. On August 29<sup>th</sup>, the Commissioners reviewed their research list and created some things that they want o address such as decolonizing a campus. What would that look like. Creating timelines of the State or different organizations. On August 30<sup>th</sup>, the Commissioners reviewed the report.

Commissioner Schultz reviewed what has taken place with the Committee Members.

**Old Business** - Commissioner Mackin discussed the approved protocols which are uploaded to our website: [Reports and Protocols | Vermont Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#)

**New Business** - Commissioner Mackin reviewed the Strategic Plan. Legal Counsel Olvera updated team on the Intern procedures and accomplishments.

Announcement by Director Yacubian: We will host our sixth Education Series session on Wednesday, September 25<sup>th</sup> from 5pm-6:30pm. This session will highlight voices and experiences of French Canadians/Franco Americans.

With no questions or comments, Commissioner Schultz closed the meeting at 5:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Ann Miller, Administrative Assist  
Faith Yacubian, Executive Director

**NEXT Public MEETING is SCHEDULED for Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup> – the third Committee Member Session- also a public meeting.**

**NEXT regularly scheduled PUBLIC MEETING is TUESDAY, Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup>**