



**Truth and Reconciliation Commission**  
**DRAFT Minutes – Public Meeting**  
**January 7, 2025**

The meeting was started at 5:01 PM by Commissioner Schultz.

**Attendance:** Melody Mackin, Mia Schultz, Faith Yacubian, Mariessa Dobrick, Michele Olvera and Ann Miller. **Members of the public** included: Van Dora Williams, Jess Wisloski, Mary Gerisch, Dan Coutu, Lexi Krupp and Richard Witting.

Commissioner Schultz facilitated the meeting by explaining accessibility. Asked public to place name, pronouns, where from in the chat if they would like.

Language and accessibility rules were reviewed. 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 \(vermont.gov\)](#).

Staff introductions and backgrounds were shared.

Commissioner Mackin reviewed the VTRC's working pledge which is posted on our website: [About Us | Vermont Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#). Also reviewed by Commissioner Schultz 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 December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2024 public meeting minutes as final.

**Executive Director Yacubian reviewed the budget criteria:**

As December was a slower spending month, we do not have new expenditures outside of our normal operation expenses.

We are well positioned this fiscal year (2025) to hire research fellows, Marketing and Care Consultants, and partially fund truth telling events. We are in the process of reaching-out to donors and provide specific asks for funds.

### **Executive Director Yacubian gave the VTRC Team Update:**

- Research continues to focus on coding information, data, and research from 2023 to the present and diving into Vermont's histories that are either under-told or less known, such as poor farms.
- On the legal side, we are continuing to identify the evolution or stagnation of laws in Vermont that contribute to institutional discrimination.
- Social media and other forms of communication are focused on informing the public about truth telling opportunities, which include virtual, in person, and group sessions.

Commissioner Schultz reviewed the **Commissioner deliberations**.

- December was a fragmented month with holidays, not a lot of 1-1 deliberations between the Commissioners. More time spent with full VTRC team. December 16<sup>th</sup> was the only date that month that the Commissioners brainstormed on the subject of Truth Telling and the process. Discussed the vision of how that would be received and the formats.
- Tuesday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, the Commissioners continued the discussion on Truth Telling.

Commissioner Mackin shared the Committee Member Search process. The VTRC has closed out the *Building and Planning Phase* of Committee Members participation. We asked those current committee members if they wanted to stay on for the next phase, and most will. The shift is now for the Truth Taking Statements and the Committee's role in that process. They will become honorary witnesses in the process. A Care Coordinator will be brought on to train all of us. Link placed in chat for anyone that is interested in [becoming a Committee Member for 2025](#).

### **Old Business:**

Commissioner Schultz explained that there was a delay in getting a select panel together for hiring the new 3<sup>rd</sup> Commissioner. That group has now formed and met and have published the job description. It has been [posted in several places](#). No job applicant will come through the VTRC office. The selection committee is separate from this Commission and hiring a 3<sup>rd</sup> Commissioner of their own accord.

Commissioner Mackin reviewed Statement Gathering and our Care Coordinator Search. [Links to how to participate in truth telling](#) was discussed and shared.

Between the RFP for Care Coordinator and the RFP for Marketing Consultant, we have about 10 applicants.

**New Business:**

Save the Dates were shared from our website for the various events that will take place in 2025. Starting with 2 virtual events in the spring and moving to Office Hours around the state. After that, we will hold 5 in-person, videoed events around the state.

Research Consultant Program explained by Commissioner Mackin and Lead Researcher Mariessa Dobrick. It will not be a full-time position. Consultants hired will work with the Lead Researcher. “It is good to have other people’s perspective,” stated Researcher Dobrick.

**Announcements by Executive Director Yacubian:**

The Select Panel requested that we submit the Commissioner Job Description to VT Professionals of Color Network, Seven Days, and Common Good Vermont. This was done on January 7, 2025. Deadline for receipt is January 14, 2025.

Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA) in conjunction with the VTRC will be hosting an in-person event at the Records Center. Location is 1078 Route 2 in Middlesex, VT. Date set for January 30<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM

**No comments from the public.**

With no further questions or comments, Commissioner Schultz closed the meeting at 5:37 PM.

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

**NEXT Public Meeting is SCHEDULED for Tuesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 5PM.**