VALA Bi-Monthly Hybrid Meeting Minutes

 **Wednesday, November 9th, 2022 at 9:30 a.m.
 West Rutland Town Office and Zoom**

The meeting began at 9:33 AM with board members Lisa Wright, Cheryl Tudhope, and Jacob Dorman present, the secretary spent time leading up to the meeting establishing the quorum. Lisa Truchon arrived shortly after the meeting started. It was verified with the following delegates or alternates present: **Addison:** Absent; **Bennington:** Absent; **Caledonia:** Larry Willey; **Chittenden:** Karen Lemnah; **Essex:** delegate vacancy, no rep; **Franklin:** Absent; **Grand Isle:** Sue Lawrence; **Lamoille:** Terri Sabens; **Orange:** Absent; **Orleans:** Maree Bushey; **Rutland:** Marcia Chioffi; **Washington:** Absent; **Windham:** Hardy Merrill; **Windsor:** Stacey Bradley.

Present via Zoom – Robert Vickery, Bill Basso, Meg Eberhardt, Russ Collins, Noel Walker, John Kerr, Bob Quaderer, Cheyenne Latimer, Cristina Tardie, Joe Turner, Marty Lagerstedt, Diane Cota, Theresa Gile, Karen Folger, John Fike, Jen Meyers, Mimi Burstein, Dave Davis, Karen Folger, Chris Miele, Todd Leblanc, Terri Gildersleeve, Christie Wright, Jill Remmick, Pat Santoso, Megan Wheaton-Book, Ed Clodfelter.
 Also in-person present –Elizabeth Curran, Jeremiah Sund, Howard Burgess.

**Minutes Approval:** The minutes from the August meeting were submitted for approval. Dave Davis moved a motion to approve the March minutes; Hardy Merrill seconded the motion. Following a short discussion of a spelling correction and addition to the attendance, the motion carried.

**Treasures Report:** Lisa Truchon reports about $14,000 of expenses for the 2022 Annual Conference. Adequate sponsorship and vendor participation should meet expenses for the conference, breaking even for the event. Education invoices have started to arrive. Expenses remain low due to remote coursework but anticipate this trend will not continue. Short discussion continues on coursework and in-person options and the contribution potentially from PVR. Finances remain strong presenting options. No further discussion.

*Committee Reviews*

**Membership:** Elizabeth Curran reports about half of the Vermont’s towns and entities are VALA members, totaling 136. Members list can be viewed on the website. Lisa Wright, Lisa Truchon and Cheryl Tudhope discussion on how to recruit remaining towns and entities.

**Education:** 101: 10 of 23 were Vermont Students, 155: 20 of 20 were Vermont Students, 171: 11 of 11 were Vermont Students, 300: 18 of 35 are Vermont Students, and 452: 10 of 12 are Vermont Students. Income totals $23,920, IAAO Invoices total $26,709, Instructor Expense $6,550. State to reimburse costs for 57 in-state students, costs for education break even. Plans for next year to offer 6 IAAO courses.

**Finance:** Lisa Truchon states that the annual balance sheet from 2021 needs to correct the phrasing of the term “net” as VALA as an entity does not produce a profit.

**Guest Speaker:** Megan Wheaton-Book – Vermont State Archives & Records Administration (VSARA). Presentation on best practice for municipal record keeping. Comments from Christina Tardie, Howard Burgess, Christie & Lisa Wright. Related documents can be found on the VALA website.

**Legislature:** Committee members had no pressing matters to report. Lisa Wright continues ongoing discussion of acquiring more members/volunteers to monitor legislation and represent VALA. Christina Taride suggests it be a paid position. Lisa Wright concurred past discussion with mixed reactions of a lobbyist like representation for VALA and budget restrictions, but agrees it should be discussed in the future. No further discussion on the matter.
 Christie Wright notes that work is almost done on the equalization study and elects Pat Santoso to discuss the phase rollout of the VT Pie system. All town municipal sales are in and validated. Phase 1 has been deployed, phase 2 will be deployed in January of 2023, and phase 3 February – October rinse and repeat for 2024. Lisa Wright inquires about the report capabilities of VT PIE, and how new Span numbers will coordinate with the system. Lisa Truchon inquires about the transition of data from CAMA systems to VT PIE. Stacey Bradley inquires about the merger of Axiomatic and Catalis.
 Jill Remmick begins with discussion about new lawmakers and the benefits of establishing lines of communication, and the necessity to keep an eye on legislative committees of the House that discuss listing and assessing information. “The House Government Operations Committee & the House Ways and Means Committee (finance) accompanied by Senate Gov. Ops + Senate finance committee.” The report required for the time share bill will be presented in January. In Regards to Act 163. The 54-12 reimbursement pot was raised from $100,000 to $1,000,000 “Grand list reduction reimbursement provided best practice” which will be supplemented with a state appraisal and litigation assistance program, to help municipality’s value complex property. VALA to assist in implementation of the budget allocated to these programs. That report will be accompanied with the PVR’s annual report summarizing education property tax, 54-12 summary from last year, tax rates. Jill Remmick Ended her time summarizing the new LUCT proposal. Mixed reactions regarding the proposal from Board of Director members Lisa Truchon, Cheryl Tudhope and Lisa Wright. Lisa Wright notes the need to offer an “easy out period” and that the LUCT is a valuation, and as such should be done by valuation professionals with local market knowledge and the understanding of HBU. Lisa Truchon gives examples defending the high variance of the tax amounts, and states some towns get good money for the LUCT’s. Cheryl Tudhope talks about how people are getting thrown out because of notice letters and expresses her concern for the arbitrary rate the state is putting on the LUCT proposal. Lisa Truchon ends the discussion talking about the intent of enrolled users. The floor opens to questions. Stacey Bradley suggests more training for listers and assessors and gives an example, Stacey states it will benefit land developers and not people without great means. Mimi Burstein comments her feelings about the proposal and its current process and some issues with the penalty. Christie Wright answers some questions purposed during Jill Remmick’s presentation. Christina Tardie gives her opinion on the matter. Lisa Wright urges members to send their comments to Jill Remmick. Jeremiah Sund notes the timing of the proposal in correlation with high values and the easy out clause presenting no penalty options. No further discussion.

**Annual Conference:** Elizabeth Curran states the annual conference will be held at the Killington Grand Hotel on September 8th 2023. The message and information is up on the website. Expenses are projected to increase. 55 rooms are reserved at a discounted rate. Vendor participation is high. Discussion of the theme commenced. Topics included technology and attracting a younger workforce. Lisa Wright touches on the rising star award. Lisa Truchon makes a motion to table the decision on the conference theme until the next meeting, Howard Burgess/Bob Quaderer seconded the motion. The motion carried. No further discussion.

 **New Business:** Chris Miele opens thanking VALA Veterans. NEMRC updates and changes, .Net, VFP. Transfer file testing, and current use updates. NEMRC is offering some upcoming webinars. Current use and end of the year tips/reminders.
 Dave Davis (North Hero) summarized his letter to VALA which can be found on the website. It talks about the future of assessing in Vermont and the lack of a workforce, upcoming reappraisals stretching the state, and the responses from the Board members. Lastly he noted on the potential of combining towns under one assessor. Discussion on reaching out to the legislature ended the meeting.

**Adjourned:** Motion to adjourn the meeting from Howard Burgess, Lisa Truchon Seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at promptly 11:43

respectfully submitted, secretary, Jacob Dorman