

MEMORANDUM

TO: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
Shirley Jefferson (Chair)
Betsy Ide Bloomer (Vice Chair)
Megan Cluver
Bob Flint
Jim Masland
Jason Musal

FROM: Kathryn Santiago, Associate General Counsel *K. Santiago*

DATE: May 7, 2025

SUBJECT: VSC Board of Trustees DEI Committee Meeting May 12, 2025

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee of the VSC Board of Trustees is scheduled to meet on Monday, May 12, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom.

The focus for this meeting will be for the committee to receive an update on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) at the Community College of Vermont (CCV) and to receive an update on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Social Justice (DEISJ) at Vermont State University (VTSU). Additionally, the new committee liaisons will be introduced.

In preparation for the committee's discussion, in the accompanying materials please find the DEI Committee meeting minutes of March 6, 2025.

Following any additional business the committee will adjourn.

Note: Please be advised that this committee has six members. The quorum to start the meeting and to take any action is four members of the committee.

The committee assistant may be reached at (802) 224-3021 for any questions.

Cc: Council of Presidents
DEI Committee Liaisons
VSC Board of Trustees

**Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee Meeting
Zoom Meeting¹/YouTube Stream²
Monday, May 12th, 2025 at 10:30 a.m.**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment³
3. Approval of *March 6, 2025 Meeting Minutes*
4. Welcome to newly appointed DEI Committee Liaisons
5. Update on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion from the Community College of Vermont
6. Update on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Social Justice from Vermont State University
7. Additional Business
8. Adjourn

MATERIALS

1. Meeting Minutes of March 6, 2025

¹ <https://www.vsc.edu/botzoom>

² www.vsc.edu/live

³ Sign up to make a public comment at www.vsc.edu/signup. You must be present or logged in to the live session at <https://www.vsc.edu/botzoom> to make a comment.

ITEM 1: Minutes of March 6, 2025

**Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
meeting held Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom - UNAPPROVED**

Note: These are unapproved minutes, subject to amendment and/or approval at the subsequent meeting.

The VSCS Board of Trustees Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee met on Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Board members present: Shirley Jefferson (Chair), Megan Cluver, Bob Flint, Jason Musal

Absent: Betsy Bloomer (Vice Chair), Jim Masland

Presidents: David Bergh, VTSU

Liaisons: Marianne Dimascio, CCV staff
Alex Northern, CCV faculty
Michael Reeves, Incoming VTSU faculty
Lisa Zinn, VTSU faculty

Other Attendees: Angie Albeck, CCV Associate Dean of Students
Nolan Atkins, VTSU Provost
Mary Brodsky, CCV Dean of People and Culture
Gretchen DeHart, CCV Sr. Director of Engagement
Ryan DuLude, CCV Financial Aid Director
Kayla Dewey, Executive Assistant
Lisa Hayward, VTSU AVP of Online Programs
Jason Kaiser, Learning Spaces Technology Specialist
Leslie Kanat, VTSU Dean
David Kupferman, VTSU Dean
Joann Larson, VTSU Financial Aid Specialist
Candice Lewis, CCV Associate Academic Dean
Nicole Mace, CCV Dean of Administration
Kim Martin, CCV Sr Dir of Engagement and Academic Centers
Teresa McCormack, VTSU Director of Financial Aid
Katie Mobley, CCV Dean of Enrollment and Community Rel.
Kathryn Santiago, Associate General Counsel
Sharron Scott, Chief Financial and Operating Officer
Rodney Smolla, President of Vermont Law and Graduate School
Deborah Stewart, CCV Dean of Academic Affairs
Paul Suk-Yoon, VTSU Chief Diversity Officer
Sarah Truckle, VTSU Vice President of Business Operations
Patty Turley, General Counsel
Heather Weinstein, CCV Dean of Strat. Initiatives and Student Affairs

1. Call to Order

Chair Jefferson called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

2. Comments from the Public

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of December 9, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Trustee Flint moved and Trustee Musal seconded the motion to approve the December 9, 2024 minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Education Presentation

Chair Jefferson turned the meeting over to Associate General Counsel Kathryn Santiago. Attorney Santiago introduced the presentation topic: “The Impact of Federal Executive Orders on Higher Education” and Rodney Smolla, President of Vermont Law and Graduate School.

President Smolla focused his presentation on the Trump Administration’s interpretation of what is and is not illegal discrimination, the attack on DEI programing, and the attempt to end or revise federal grants including grants that higher education institutions receive. He provided an overview of the SFFA v. Harvard decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, which prohibits institutions from using race as a factor in the admissions process. He then described the recent Dear Colleague Letter and FAQs, which extend the SFFA interpretation to other areas such as scholarships, grants, student groups, and academics. President Smolla used a four-pronged ladder approach to describe the likelihood of the Administration’s success in its interpretations, applying Constitutional law. Of particular concern for higher education institutions is the probability of the Administration conditioning the acceptance of federal financing based on specific activities. Trustees asked questions regarding preparatory steps to address these efforts, the avenues for enforcement by the federal agencies, and the news that the Department of Education may be abolished.

Trustee Jefferson expressed her deep appreciation to President Smolla for his illuminating presentation.

5. Additional Business

There was no additional business.

6. Adjourn

Chair Jefferson adjourned the meeting at 1:57 p.m.