

# VERMONT LEAGUE OF CITIES AND TOWNS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, April 16, 2026

## MINUTES

**VLCT Board Members Present (in person):** Mary Ann Goulette, Charlie Hancock, Scott Tucker, Julie Hance, Mike Hogan, Brian Shupe.

**VLCT Board Members Present (via Zoom):** Ann Lawless, Jessie Baker, Mayor Emma Mulvaney-Stanak

**VLCT Staff Present (in person):** Ted Brady, Jessi Hill, Abby Friedman, Phil Latvis, Katie Buckley, and Jeremy Weiss.

**VLCT Staff Present (via Zoom):** Seth Abbene.

**Guests Present:** Lynn McNamara of Paladin Consulting

### **Agenda Item #1: Call to order by the President**

President Mary Ann Goulette called the meeting to order at 12:20 p.m. and welcomed Scott Tucker the newest VLCT Board member with introductions of those present.

### **Agenda Item #2: Additions and Deletions to the Agenda**

Charlie Hancock moved to reorder the agenda to consider Agenda Item #11, Approve NE Delta Dental Renewal prior to the legislative Update. Mike Hogan seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **Agenda Item #3: Consent Agenda**

Charlie Hancock moved to approve the consent agenda including the meeting minutes of March 19, 2026, and accept the April Personnel Report and April Organizational Update. Mike Hogan seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **Agenda Item #4: Executive Session to Discuss VLCT / PACIF / VERB Administrative Agreements and Addendum**

Julie Hance moved that the evaluation and discussion of the Board's goals and strategies regarding the anticipated modifications of our administrative contracts with PACIF and VERB is needed. The public disclosure of the discussion of these goals and strategies would clearly place VLCT at a substantial disadvantage. Therefore, Julie moved that the Board find the public disclosure of the discussion of the Board's goals and strategies would clearly place VLCT at a substantial disadvantage. Charlie Hancock seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Julie Hance moved that in accordance with 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A) to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing the VLCT/ PACIF/VERB agreements and invite the Ted Brady, Jessi Hill, Phil Latvis, Seth Abbene and Lynn McNamara of Paladin Consulting to join. Mike Hogan seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. At 12:25 p.m., the Board entered executive session. The recording was paused and all other staff left the room.

At 1:14pm the Board exited executive session. No action was taken.

### **Agenda Item #5: Adopt VLCT Policies**

Ted explained that no substantive changes had been made to existing policies and instead attention was directed to a newly proposed Public Records Inspection, Copying, and Transmission Policy, found in the meeting packet. The policy is based on the VLCT model provided to members and

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has been adapted for VLCT's use. Ted reported that the draft had been reviewed by legal counsel with no concerns identified. The policy affirms VLCT's decision to comply with the Public Records Act and to operate as an instrumentality.

Ted highlighted for the Board the section of the draft policy addressing where appeals of the Executive Director's determinations would be directed. As written, the policy assigns this responsibility to the full Board and requires that appeals be resolved within three days, which could necessitate convening emergency meetings.

Mayor Emma Mulvaney-Stanak expressed concern about the practicality of assembling the full Board on such short notice and suggested that the Executive Committee serve as the appellate body instead. Board members discussed this alternative and generally agreed that delegating this responsibility to the Executive Committee would be a more efficient and workable approach.

In response to a question about the policy's origin, Ted explained that its development was prompted by a Vermont Supreme Court case involving the School Boards Association, which raised questions about public body status under the Public Records Act. Subsequent legal consultation and a prior public records request led VLCT to formalize its approach through policy adoption.

Charlie Hancock moved to adopt the Public Records Inspection, Copying, and Transmission Policy with an amendment designating the Executive Committee as the appealing authority for denied public records requests. Mike Hogan seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **Agenda Item #6: Acrisure Relationship**

Ted reported that shortly before the meeting, input had been received from the president of the PACIF Board outlining several requested revisions to the proposed agreement. These proposed changes were characterized as largely clarifying in nature, including a request to refine language regarding non-compete provisions to specify whether such restrictions would apply to all of Acrisure or only its New England operations. Additional feedback included a preference to structure the agreement to conclude at the end of the calendar year, reflecting PACIF's intent to incorporate provisions in a future VLCT contract addressing sponsorship parameters in relation to potential competitors.

The Board was reminded that the prior agreement, valued at \$80,000 annually, had expired at the end of December, though VLCT remains obligated to continue providing Business Alliance program membership benefits under existing terms. Acrisure has expressed interest in renewing the relationship at an increased level of \$84,000, and the proposed agreement has remained under consideration since January. It was noted that the requested revisions, particularly the proposed end date, may require further discussion with Acrisure and could impact the structure of the agreement moving forward.

In discussion, it was clarified that PACIF is supportive of maintaining the relationship through the current calendar year to align with VLCT's budget assumptions but has indicated that the existing structure would not be acceptable beyond that timeframe. Ted indicated an intent to continue negotiations with Acrisure in light of this feedback and to return to the Board with a revised agreement for consideration at a future meeting.

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Mike Hogan moved to approve. Julie Hance seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **Agenda Item #7: Health Insurance Consultant Scope of Work**

The Board next turned to consideration of the health insurance initiative, with Ted requesting guidance on whether to authorize \$20,000 in unbudgeted funds to complete the current phase of consultant work. It was explained that these funds would support updating VLCT's bylaws to permit the offering of an association health plan, legal work to engage with the Department of Financial Regulation regarding approval of such a plan, and continued collaboration with Gallagher to design the plan itself. The Board was reminded that approximately \$80,000 had already been invested in the exploratory process and that, should the initiative move forward, VLCT would likely need to administer the plan directly. Ted also outlined the anticipated timeline, noting the need for bylaw amendments, including creation of a healthcare subcommittee and other governance updates, to be approved by the membership in advance of a potential plan launch aligned with a January 1 enrollment period.

Board members discussed the risks and benefits of proceeding, including the uncertainty of regulatory approval and the ambitious timeline required to bring a competitive product to market. It was noted that delaying the expenditure would likely preclude the ability to offer a plan in the upcoming year, while authorizing the funds would allow the organization to fully evaluate feasibility without committing to final implementation. Jessie Baker reported that the Executive Committee reported that it had considered the matter in depth and supported continued exploration, emphasizing that health insurance remains a top priority identified by members.

Scott Tucker moved to approve the requested \$20,000 expenditure. Julie Hance seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. The Board then agreed to adjust the agenda order to accommodate scheduling needs, advancing the Northeast Delta Dental item to allow for timely participation.

## **Agenda Item #8: Break**

At 1:33 the Board took a break. The recording was paused and no business was conducted during this time. The board reconvened at 1:40 p.m.

## **Agenda Item #9: Legislative Update**

Josh Hanford began the conversation referring to a detailed legislative update Board members received regarding ongoing work in the Vermont Legislature and sought board input on recommended positions. Discussion focused on legislative updates and policy positions related to (1) Act 181 / S.325 (Tier 3 habitat connectors and the road rule), (2) municipal authority to regulate agriculture following the Essex case, and (3) transportation funding tied to the local option tax (LOT) and the PILOT fund surplus.

On Act 181 / S.325, members discussed new signals from legislative leadership and key committee chairs that repeal of the Tier 3 and road rule is the likely path forward, with a "repeal and start over" approach described as politically viable given the volume and intensity of testimony and broad concern about implementation readiness and unintended impacts. Discussion emphasized the importance of a replacement process developed "from the ground up," with meaningful involvement by municipalities and regional planning commissions, and noted the need to avoid

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conflating these issues with unrelated programs while retaining important Act 250 criteria (including criterion 8c).

Jessie Baker moved to support repeal of the road rule and Tier 3 land use designations and to encourage future work in partnership with RPCs and communities to improve a future bill aligned with the needs of rural Vermont. Julie Hance seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a roll call vote.

The results of the roll call vote are as follows:

First Name	Last Name	Municipality	ROLL CALL(Y,N)
Jessie	Baker	South Burlington, City of	Y
Karen	Barber	Huntington, Town of	Absent
Tracy	Borst	Thetford, Town of	Absent
MaryAnn	Goulette	West Rutland, Town of	Y
Julie	Hance	Chester, Town of	Y
Charles	Hancock	Montgomery, Town of	Y
Michael	Hogan	Cabot, Town of	Y
Ann	Lawless	Wheelock, Town of	Y
Emma	Mulvaney-Stanak	Burlington, City of	Absent
Brian	Shupe	Waitsfield, Town of	Abstained
Scott	Tucker	Wilmington, Town of	Y

On municipal regulation of agriculture following the Essex case, the Board reviewed competing legislative approaches and reiterated the municipal priority of retaining locational authority to regulate commercial agriculture in dense areas such as historic villages and downtowns, where local land use rules are relied upon for compatibility and fairness.

The Board then discussed transportation funding concerns tied to a growing surplus in the PILOT-fund, driven in part by more municipalities adopting the local option tax, and reviewed a Senate Transportation Committee concept to direct surplus toward Town Highway Aid through an initial transfer and an ongoing “waterfall” approach after obligations are met.

After discussion, the Board indicated no action on agriculture and chose not to take a formal position on the transportation proposal at this time in order to preserve flexibility while continuing to engage with legislative counterparts.

## **Agenda Item #10: VLCT Board Appointments**

The Nominating Committee reported it recently met and recommended the VLCT Board of Directors appoint Pantown Town Clerk and Treasurer Kyle Rowe to one of the two vacant seats on the VLCT Board of Directors with terms expiring in October of 2027. Mike Hogan moved to appoint. Charlie Hancock seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **Agenda Item #11: Approve NE Delta Dental Renewal**

The Board agreed to adjust the agenda to accommodate scheduling needs and proceeded to take up the Northeast Delta Dental renewal prior to the planned break. Ted invited Kelly Avery to present, and an introduction was provided noting her role overseeing the Unemployment Trust as well as ancillary benefit programs for VLCT, including dental, life, and disability offerings, which transitioned to VLCT’s administration in 2021.

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Kelly then reviewed the renewal materials included in the Board packet and reported that the proposed rate increase of 2.58% for the upcoming cycles represents a favorable outcome compared to recent years and is below prevailing market trends. It was further noted that Northeast Delta Dental has agreed to cap rate increases at no more than 6% for the next two renewal periods, providing added predictability and budget stability for participating members.

The program continues to demonstrate strong participation, with approximately 174 VLCT members currently enrolled and additional entities in the process of joining. The Board also reviewed the financial structure of the program, including the administrative fee associated with group dental coverage and the smaller, supplemental revenue generated through individual direct dental offerings.

Brian Shupe moved to approve the July 1, 2026 and January 1, 2027 Delta Dental Renewal. Julie Hance seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. The Board then took a break.

## **Agenda Item #12: Executive Director Evaluation**

No action taken.

## **Agenda Item #13: Executive Session (If Necessary)**

No action taken.

## **Agenda Item #14: Other Business**

The Board scheduled a meeting for Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup> at 9 a.m.

## **Agenda Item #15: Adjourn**

Charlie Hancock moved to adjourn. Ann Lawless seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 3:21 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Jeremy Weiss,*

*Membership and Administrative Coordinator*

*As approved by VLCT Board of Directors Thursday, May 21, 2026.*

## **View Meeting here:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/play/wD4MinxE4oagZltQM0XMVfdgvfXhCHGarJzIRntNc2YK6P7zcDLUB78ab8ipgmaflnzXvVBIVI-QywWC.G-7u7FMAY9AbtbOL>