

**GMSA Board Meeting**  
**7/27/2015 -9:30am to 12:30pm**  
**Vermont Technical College, Randolph, VT**

**Officers:** Randy Lizotte (President) Levi Gardner (Vice-President) Lori Jones (Secretary) and Nicole Villemaire was absent.

**Board Members:** Raymond Gordon, Heather Raymond, Beverly Williams, Linda Monette, Kaiya Andrews, Jeremiah Gerbais, Tesha Thibodeau, Craig Davis and Patti Grassette.

**Self-Advocates:** Donna Corkins, Tiffany Martinez, Debbie Demars, Amanda, Alyssa, Diane Robinson, Michelle Haberern, Lorna Merrill, Antoine Polgar, Cy Trombley and Adam Mozdzierz.

**Allies:** Emily Anderson, Paul Tidyman, Tammy Maberry, Mary Ruffing, Molly Steinmark, Edward Thorndike, Amy Anderson, Amy from WCMH.

**GMSA Staff:** Nicole LeBlanc, Hilary Clark, Skye Peebles.

**Group Updates:** All the local self-advocacy groups who were present gave updates on their activities.

**Capitol Advocates Together:** For more than 8 years the group has made disability awareness signs and banners and marched in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade in Montpelier. It was a success; we encourage you all to march in the parade. We finished filming our video of what self-advocacy means to us (Stirling is editing) and we want to put the video on the GMSA website. Finally, we just got our new T-shirts for our group

**Our Drop in Center (Newport):** arrived late - no updates

**Next Step Self-Advocacy:** We are going to be working on a Look Through Our Eyes training for the new staff and service coordinators. We are going to teach a portion of the new employee training.

**GATSA:** group members touring a fire station on 9/21. We are doing a first aid training with our members. Max came to our meeting last Monday. We are going to be working on Respectful Language training to go into schools so we can teach about not saying the R word.

**Champlain Voices:** On 8/17, we are having a legislator visit. They are going to visit our group to meet us and take a tour of our agency.

**SAVY:** Some of our members are getting involved in the Bernie Sanders campaign. We are going to do something for Bernie Sanders locally. Our group just got back from Boston We went to Quincy Market and the duck boat, did some site-seeing around Boston.

**Windsor County Self Advocates:** We are working on our t-shirts and trying to figure out something new to do with fundraising

**Vermont Choices:** We also marched in a local parade and carried signs about inclusion and treating people with disabilities with respect. Some of us are also doing a 5K this summer.

**Advocates for Action:** Having a spaghetti dinner to raise money

**Families First:** arrived late - No update

**Speak Up, Addison County:** In August our group is going to have our annual picnic to celebrate the “birthday” of our group being founded.

**Gala:** Everyone broke up into small groups and brainstormed ideas for how local groups can be part of the gala planning. Here are the ideas people came up with:

- Each group is responsible for gathering donations for the silent auction, recruiting sponsors and for selling tickets
- Local groups could help out at the gala: registration, set up and clean up
- Local groups could make centerpieces or flowers
- Local groups can help spread the word! Lots of ways to do this...  
Post flyers at your agency; Post on our local agency and community calendars; Public Service Announcements; Put info about it on social media; Put it in lots of newsletters; Send emails to the DS directors; Speak up at your meeting; Talk about it at your local standing committee; Use social media to spread the word and to setup plans for carpooling.

### **Discussion about When & Where**

- The group talked about when and where to have the gala. One question was if having it on November 14<sup>th</sup> would be a conflict for anyone going to the Special Olympics annual meeting? The group said it was not.
- Nobody wanted the gala to happen on a Mon-Thurs. The group did pros and cons of having it on a Saturday vs. Friday. The pros of a Friday are that people might have services; but if you ask in advance for a change in the schedule you can change it to a Saturday. The

pros of a Saturday are that families might be able to come and it is easier on a weekend with children.

### **Board Vote**

- 1) *Kaiya made the motion to have the gala on Saturday, Nov 14<sup>th</sup>.*
- 2) *Jeremiah seconded the motion*
- 3) *Discussion happened.*
- 4) *Vote.*
  - In favor – 12*
  - Opposed – 0*
- 5) *Vote passed to have gala on November 14<sup>th</sup>.*

### **Budget**

Randy went over the GMSA budget for 2016. People had many chances to ask questions. The board talked about the format of the budget information. The board liked having both the pie chart and table.

### **Board Vote**

- 1) *Lori made the motion to approve the budget*
- 2) *Kaiya seconded the motion.*
- 3) *Discussion: Someone asked, “Is there an emergency fund anywhere? If there is no emergency fund, what happens if something comes up and there is no money to pay for it?” The board and allies did not know the answer to this question. The board asked that the Administrative Director talk about this topic at the next board meeting.*
- 4) *Vote.*
  - In Favor – 12*

*Opposed –0*

*5) Vote passed to approve the budget.*

## **Voices & Choices Conference**

The board discussed the questions related to the conference:

- Do all, some, or few people use one-time money for attending the conference? **Most people said they were not sure.**
- Do we know if there will be one-time money to use for the conference? **Most people said they were not sure.**
- If there is no one-time money and our registration numbers are down, should we use a smaller venue? Would people be open to going back to the Killington Grand Hotel? **Some comments: “I think it would be a good idea.” “Yes, that place was awesome.”**
- If we DO find out there is not going to be one-time funding, could we switch to the Killington Grand? **Folks said yes, they are open to switching if we find out there is not one-time funds. GMSA said we would hopefully have more info on hotel updates by August meeting. The board did not feel like they needed to vote on this.**

## **Fall Elections**

Randy explained we are going to be voting on the GMSA Board officers in the fall. He went over some of the next steps for the board members. Board members should talk to their local groups about how they want to do the voting. The two options are the new way (groups vote for 1 person) or the old way (everyone gets a vote).

People asked questions. Now that GMSA is a 501-c-3 there is a question about Officers and Guardianship. What if someone wants to be an Officer but has a guardian? Can someone's guardian sign GMSA documents on their behalf? We need to follow up on this to get more information but it looks like if you have a guardian you cannot run for the President, Secretary or Treasurer since the By-Laws require these three officers to "sign official documents." More on this at the next meeting.

### **Board Committees**

Randy talked about what is a committee. The GMSA board is going to have committees to help with different parts of the organization. The group brainstormed different committees to have. Board members volunteered for committees. The GMSA board committees and their members are listed below:

- Finance/ Fundraising Committee: Michelle, Alyssa, Levi, Jeremiah
- Conference Committee: Lorna, Jeremiah, Tesha, Diane, Hilary, Lori, Levi
- Gala Committee: Levi, Hilary, Kaiya, Jeremiah, Tesha
- Public Relations/ Media: Kaiya, Levi, Craig, Raymond