



Green Mountain Self-Advocates Board Meeting
1/26/2015 - 9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Vermont Technical College, Randolph, VT



Officers (3): Lori Jones (Secretary), Randy Lizotte (President), Nicole Villemaire (Treasurer), Vice-President Position is vacant.

Board Members (10): Raymond Gordon, Kaiya Andrews, Joel Marshall, James Paradis, Heather Raymond, Danielle Viau, Rachel Colby, Taylor Terry, Conor Cleveland, Linda Monette.

Self-Advocates (6): Robert Martin II, Josh Dumais, Lorna Merrill, Nick Zechinelli, Molly White, and Levi Gardner.

GMSA Staff (3): Max Barrows (Outreach Director), Karen Topper (Administrative Director), Skye Peebles (Program & Development Director).

Allies (9): Jayne Webber, Amy Anderson, Paula Collins, Paul Tidyman, Danielle Cote, Rich Atkinson, Rich Young, Fletcher Dean, Barbara Bruno.



Roll Call:

- 1. Advocates in Action: Linda Monette**
- 2. Bennington: Sarah George absent**
- 3. Burlington Self-Advocacy Club: Danielle Viau**
- 4. Capitol Advocates Together: Kaiya Andrews**
- 5. Champlain Voices: Taylor Terry**
- 6. Communication Alliance: Conor Cleveland**
- 7. Connections Of Peer Support: no representative**
- 8. Families First: board member resigned waiting for replacement**
- 9. Friends Helping Friends: Rachel Colby**
- 10. Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Questioning: no representative**
- 11. Getting Acquainted Through Self-Advocacy: Raymond Gordon**
- 12. Next Step Self-Advocates: Heather Raymond**
- 13. Rockin' Advocates Montpelier Barre: Joel Marshall**

14. Randolph Area Peer Support: absent
15. Our Drop in Center: Donna Corkins Absent
16. Self-Advocacy Voices and You: Patti Grassetto absent
17. Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered of Rutland: no representative
18. Speak Up, Addison County: Craig Davis absent due to illness
19. **Vermont Choices: group here**
20. **Windsor Self-Advocates: James Paradis**

We have 20 established groups and 2 new groups developing. Today 11 board members are present. Five board members were absent. Two groups have board positions that are vacant. Two groups have not elected a board representative in the past year.



AGENDA #1: Should we do anything about groups not electing a board representative to attend board meetings?



Discussion:

- Kaiya Andrews: It affects us if a board member is not here. If they aren't here, how will they relay information back to the group? If they can't be there, they need to let us know or send someone else to take over for them.
- Kaiya Andrews: why aren't they coming? What kind of communication happens to the members before the meeting? Max Barrows answered that he calls and emails all the groups before the meetings.
- Karen Topper: It might be good to think about two different situations:
 - What do we say to groups who have not elected a board representative to attend meetings?
 - What do we say when a group and their board representative when they miss a meeting?
- 16 groups have board members elected.

- Jayne Weber: We didn't use to come and it was because of funding. Sometimes people don't have the money to come. Randy Lizotte let people know there is reimbursement money available for mileage.
- Karen Topper: Green Mountain Self-Advocates needs to call Vermont Technical College the week to tell them our lunch #s.
- Comments from board members:
 - We should make groups aware that we lose money if they don't attend meetings because we pay for their lunch.
 - Let groups know we are only going to order lunch for people who SAY they will be there.
 - Ask groups to pay us back for their lunch costs if they don't show up for meeting.

Suggested Actions:

- 1) Max Barrows will call board members and allies on Monday before the meeting. Ask how many lunches we should order.
- 2) Call the people who don't usually come and ask why they don't come. Talk to them. Report back to the board about why they don't come.
- 3) Make sure people know there is funding available for transportation.
- 4) Board members need to call to let us know if they will not be attending. These are the legitimate reasons for not showing up: Being sick, weather, family emergency.



AGENDA #2: Introductions and local group updates:



Lori Jones from **GATSA: Getting Acquainted Through Self-Advocacy:**

- We are selling pizzas for a fundraiser.
- We are doing training for local police officers about interacting with people with disabilities.

- We are also doing trainings on these topics: self-esteem, stress management, making friends, and how to budget. We are having elections at next meeting.

Raymond Gordon from **GATSA: Getting Acquainted Through Self-Advocacy:**

- At our last meeting we talked about goals and trainings from last year. We want to go to schools to talk about the R word.
- We talked about fundraising for different conferences.
- We had a holiday party last month – lots of fun.



James Paradis from **Windsor Self-Advocates:**

- We sold \$109 at our bake sale. The money will go towards the t-shirts we are making for our group.
- We are going to the State House on Feb 4th.



Linda Monette from **Advocates in Action:**

- We are going to have a Valentine's dance.
- We are going to the State House on Feb 4th.



Conor Cleveland from **Communication Alliance:**

- Still working on our learning collaborative. We have made disability awareness presentation to agency staff. We are preparing to do presentations in schools.



Kaiya Andrews from **Capitol Advocates Together:**

- We just finished up fundraising.
- We are working on new goals for this year.
- One thing we are doing next month is using an iPad to make a video about what self-advocacy means to us.



Nicole Villemaire from **Next Step Self-Advocacy:**

- Just did a legislative training with GMSA staff to learn how to educate our elected officials about issues that impact people with disabilities.
- Going to the state house on Feb 4th.

Heather Raymond from Next Step Self-Advocacy:

- We held a movie night. It was supposed to be a dance but we ended up canceling because we didn't have enough people coming to our dance.
- Trainings we are planning on having: therapeutic options, code red/crisis training, relationship training (want help with this), and 7 habits training.
- We want to learn how other groups do fundraisers.



Rachel Colby from **Friends Helping Friends:**

- We are moving the location of our meetings from Jones Brothers to Grandview.
- We are going to see a video on fire safety and having a smoke detector in your house.
- We will talk about fundraisers at our next meeting.



Danielle Viau from **Burlington Self-Advocacy Club:**

- We are going to be having Valentine's Day fundraiser on 2/13 from 7-10pm. This benefits the Humane Society.
- We want to teach 2 workshops at the Voices and Choices Conference: healthy eating and relationships/communication.

Joel Marshall and Molly White from **RAMB: Rockin' Advocates of Central Vermont.**

- Our last meeting was last week. We met at Moretown Hall. I reported to my group that the date is set for Voices and Choices. My group wants to know how much it will cost.



Vermont Choices: Josh Dumais and Levi Gardner

- Planning to have a Valentine's Day dance. Doing a fundraiser.



AGENDA #3: Group Agreements

When groups get together, they decide that they're going to come up with a list of rules that the entire group agrees to follow. We call these rules "group agreements". All board members made suggestions and agreed to the following:



- Confidentiality - personal stories stay in the room
- Raise your hand if you want to speak
- Encourage others to speak and give their answers. Be open to everybody.
- Only one person speaks at a time.
- No question is silly
- No texting or calling during a meeting.
- During conflict, consider different ideas. No judging.
- Ask before taking pictures.



AGENDA #4: One Page Profiles

Everyone worked on their one-page profiles. This is a way of sharing who you are with other board members. It asks you about

your personal strengths and what is important to you in life. They will take them home to finish them up. People shared some of their comments. People's information on their one-page profiles was discussed to be posted on the Green Mountain Self-Advocates website.



AGENDA #5: What Board Members Do? What Board Members Will Get from Green Mountain Self-Advocates?

Everyone worked in small groups to read aloud and discuss the lists. They circled the ones that they have questions or want help to understand.

Draft	
What Board Members Do	What Board Members will get in return
1. I will learn about what Green Mountain Self-Advocates does and tell others	Green Mountain Self-Advocates will teach me about our programs and give me information to share.
2. The board meets 4 times a year. I will do my best to go. If I can't make it I will tell the President. If I miss 2 meetings in a row and do not tell the President, I will be off the board.	I want board meetings to run smoothly. Green Mountain Self-Advocates will send me an agenda 1 week before the meeting.
3. I will learn what Green Mountain Self-Advocates believes in and teach others	I will need materials and may need training in public speaking
4. I will learn how to review a financial report, ask questions and vote on how Green Mountain Self-Advocates spends money	Green Mountain Self-Advocates will send me financial reports one week before the meeting. Green Mountain Self-Advocates will make sure I have training and support to understand.

5. I will bring back information to my local group and share my group's opinions	Green Mountain Self-Advocates will give me information to share. I can also find information on the Green Mountain Self-Advocates website and Facebook page.
6. I will help with fundraising	I will choose from a list of fundraising activities. Green Mountain Self-Advocates will provide training and support.
7. I will evaluate Green Mountain Self-Advocates staff	Evaluations will be based on goals
8. I will help Green Mountain Self-Advocates plan for the future	Green Mountain Self-Advocates will make the plan with the board. It will be written up and easy to understand.
9. I will evaluate what Green Mountain Self-Advocates does and make sure we are sticking to our plan	Green Mountain Self-Advocates will give me short reports on what our programs are doing.



DECISION: Rachel Colby motioned that all local groups get a binder in addition to each board member getting one. This motion was seconded by Kaiya Andrews. Discussion was split. Some supported this idea while others thought it may be a waste of resources. Green Mountain Self-Advocates was asked to put the by-laws and other info on the website. Vote was a tie (6-6). Motion did NOT pass. Solution: staff will bring a few extra binders if people want to take them.



AGENDA #6 Leadership Training

The third Vermont Leadership Series is now accepting applications! Deadline has been extended to Monday, February 9, 2015.

The Vermont Leadership Series trains Vermonters with developmental disabilities, family members, and people who want to help, about steps to be a leader, how to get your point across, and key issues in disability rights.

The workshops will include presentations, panels, and interactive exercises illustrating the history and meaning of the disability rights movement. Those who attend will learn about organizing for change and participating in media campaigns - including defining tasks, targets and tactics.

Awareness activities will increase each emerging leader's commitment to making Vermont a better place to live with a disability. Green Mountain Self-Advocates handed our applications for 2015 Leadership Retreat. They are due on 2/9/15. The training will take place in 3 sessions. We think the sessions will be like this:

Session 1: March 7 - 8 in Montpelier

Session 2: April 18 - 19 in Stowe

Session 3: June 6 - 7 in Killington

The sessions will begin Saturday morning end Sunday afternoon.

Karen Topper took down the names of people who are interested.



AGENDA #7: Green Mountain Self-Advocates Vice-Presidents position open:

Randy Lizotte talked about David Frye resigning because he took a new position working reviewing agencies and cannot get the day off of work to attend meetings. We reviewed the bylaws. Next meeting we will elect a new vice-president.

Meeting ended at 12:35 p.m.

