

frank me somebody yeah someone joined can you add the get her waiting in lobby maybe i can do it for mine

0:13

excellent let her in all right and all right kelly did you start the recording

0:20

the recording is started wonderful all right so welcome everyone we are here at the act 133

0:33

open meeting law work group it is the 16th of june and this is our fifth meeting so we

0:39

are approaching halfway through our meetings um so i thought we would start today actually

0:49

i'm going to back up because kate i understand that you're are you you need to leave partway

0:56

through today is that right hi there good morning yeah this is kate um so yeah i am

1:02

um calling today from the road um okay from a child medical appointment so i will probably

1:09

uh not be able to participate for the entirety of the meeting okay so i was so we had scheduled

1:15

to talk about today we are going to wrap up our conversation that we started last week on

1:21

um technical assistance equipment training necessary for towns municipalities to run

1:27

um effective inclusive meetings and then we're going to get started on the um accessibility

1:34

guide that we are required to create the polling location and public meeting location accessibility guide um and so i wanted to think see about what the group thought about whether we would i had us

1:46

doing the wrap-up topic three first than moving to topic four would it make more sense to flip

1:52

that given um folks availability i know kelly also needs to leave early but kate do you do you have

1:58

a preference on which one of those topics we'd hit first um either work it sounded like on the agenda

2:06

was drvt here today this is what we've got i think we are very very slim today so um we're yeah i i

2:16

don't think we have any other folks coming okay um then yeah i guess let's go ahead it would be

2:21

great to flip that then i guess thank you okay so let's flip that um so what we'll do first is start

2:29

talking about the accessibility guide and then we will go back and um pick up where we left off

2:36

on the technical assistance piece um so i think what i plan to do first was just a little bit of

2:45

orienting because we're halfway through and i know this is just a gigantic topic right and and and

2:52

we've been covering a lot of ground we've got a lot of ground yet to cover and so i wanted to sort

2:57

of center where we are in our work and think about where we're headed um because what we've done so

3:03

far right is the best practice um we're supposed to recommend best practices for accommodations

3:10

many many small subtopics within there um we're supposed to summarize the civic health findings

3:15

that was robin's piece from our office um and then what we're going to work on partly today

3:21

which is identifying what municipalities need in terms of technical assistance and equipment and training to be able to do these things that we're hoping to recommend in the best practices guide um

3:32

and i think you know this is a really it's it's a challenging set of topics it's a very very broad

3:40

set of topics a very very deep set of topics and i think you know we've had a lot of successes about navigating the really tough conversations here um and and picking out the resources and i was

3:51

trying to think about what what what tasks i want to assign our myself and our and our office in in

3:56

going forward i think one of our um challenges has been getting all the voices to the table that we

4:03

want here and so um and you know i know today's a really tough day especially with the legislature

4:10

in session and people's schedules went haywire um but going forward i would like our office

4:16

to try to make sure that we get some more folks here specifically i know lauren's been lauren's

4:22

been in touch with the clerks association quite frequently but trying to get some some clerks here

4:28

trying make sure that we have the schoolboards association here because we don't have them and the one that i'm really missing for today's conversation and and next week's conversation is

4:36

the human rights commission so i hope to reach out to them and see if i can get somebody in the room

4:42

um going forward and i noticed also just to be thinking about our our big picture goal here of course is to create this report to infold all of our topics right um and in our con in our

4:54

report we are supposed to consult some other groups too including um communications union

5:00

districts where's my list coods really yes let's consult cuds um and a couple other groups um and

5:11

other folks as needed so one thing that i would like to ask people to think about is who else we

5:17

might want to either try to invite to be here for these discussions and or to be getting an early

5:25

version of our draft guide to give us input um so if anybody has ideas about that we can talk about

5:32

it now but i'm thinking maybe what we should do is just send them send them right to me me and kelly um and we can start compiling that and thinking about that so that's one piece getting more people

5:41

at the table getting more voices here um and then the other piece that i'm going to try to take

5:47

up is getting us started with a draft document because i think you know these topics are vast

5:54

right and we are trying to cover so much ground and i think we're hoping in our office to go back

5:59

through our conversations and just get like the roughest of rough um outline down so we can have

6:07

something to be looking at moving forward so that is my goal to try to have something on paper for the next meeting that we can be using um the next meeting isn't until another month out so we do

6:17

have if these are kind of close together we have a gap um so hopefully we'll be able to um tackle

6:23

some of that inhouse so my other ask for folks is if there are any parts of this that you're looking

6:30

at and thinking um you want to have a hand in the drafting of or you feel comfortable taking on the

6:37

drafting of any of the small subsections please let me know we can we can talk about that as well i know there are certain pieces in here like for example the civic health index piece that's that's

6:47

all our office because we have that division the division of one um but there are other pieces in

6:52

here i think the expertise is outside of our office and so if anybody is feeling up to the task of doing some preliminary drafting that would be amazing um and i guess my third ask is take a

7:05

look at the schedule going forward and maybe i'll send this out to people afterwards and just see if there's other date if you look at the dates if there ones that from here you see you can't

7:13

make um and if we have meetings scheduled that a substantial group of people can't come to maybe

7:20

we'll try to rescheduled just in order to keep the number of voices you know as as as as high

7:27

as possible um and i think that was it oh and i just wanted to say um one more level setting

7:33

just i think it helped last week that we when we stopped having the substantive check stop talk in

7:39

the chat so if we could just keep the chat for listing of resources links etc and try to keep

7:44

all of our conversation in one location in in this um hybrid space but not in the in the chat space

7:53

that would also be a help so does that does that sound anyone have any questions or concerns about

7:59

anything i just said no okay i think the other thing is because we have a small group today

8:06

um it's really possible we'll wrap up early so i think we'll just take this as far as we can get um and if we get to a place where it feels like we've covered what we can in this meeting we'll

8:15

do that and any extra time i will take to um get started on that draft um so so today we're going

8:22

to start with we're flipping the the agenda um we're going to start with the our task force

8:34

obligation to create an accessibility guide um and this is two pieces one is the polling location

8:43

piece which is something drvt has done a lot of work on already the other is i would say broader

8:51

it's the public meeting locations which would include you know town offices but could be anywhere anyone is ever holding a public meeting um so you name it and i think

9:06

i guess i i was trying to think about how to approach this conversation because i don't

9:11

know if we want to start with the substance of what we think should i guess we should start

9:16

with the substance of what we think should be included in this because there's the substance piece and then there's the the delivery mechanism like what would be the most useful

9:24

um way to deliver an accessibility guide we have um drv has a voters's guide we set this out in

9:33

the agenda for the um verters with disabilities um it's pretty big document pretty comprehensive um

9:40

polling places only um do we want a pamphlet do we want a book do we want an interactive

9:50

something or other you know there's all kinds of ways we could produce a guide so i i was messing with that in my head as well at the same time i was trying to think about what substantively we

9:58

we information we want to try to deliver so um where do we start shall we start talking about

10:08

i'm going to pull up the exact chart produce a guide for accessibility for polling and public

10:15

meeting locations so do we have anyone here who has existing familiarity with drv's survey nope

10:28

nobody could say well this is your copy this is my copy i'm sorry if we sent it out um what's the

10:35

gist of it well the gist of it is that there is a federal and state you know mand assorted mandates

10:42

right that polling places be made acceptable made accessible to people who have the full range of

10:49

um disabilities mobility problems but also other ones visual visual challenges um and this survey

10:56

was an attempt to try to assess the progress towns have made or polling places rather have

11:05

made towards you know ma um meeting accessibility requirements and it looks like um kelly did you

11:13

confirm with with drv that this is the most that we have is the most up-to-date one 2018 is that

11:19

right i never i never got a confirmation back that it whether it was or it wasn't but if i okay

11:26

um do get word i will send whatever the most up-to-date thing is that sounds good so what we have in the end right now is their 2018 um survey result which is the one that's up on their website

11:35

so it probably is the up-to-date one um but i'm guessing they're continuing with this work and

11:40

it looks like they surveyed over half of vermont polling polling places um to sort of essentially

11:50

using various checklists that um the ada that puts the feds put out those department of justice and

11:57

some other organizations too um kind of looking at looking at what the strengths are and where

12:03

are the most common places that um polling places are not in compliance and so it's you know really

12:10

a fact-based um survey that they did and they do have some recommendations for followup um and i

12:17

think their goal is as i understand it is to hit every single polling place so i don't know it's quite possible that they would even have done more without having the right up you know in existence

12:27

so that would be a good place to start i think in terms of what we're what we're

12:34

looking for here um and then in addition to that they also have put out this voters's guide

12:40

um which was another thing that we sent out that and this is a this is broader based it's you know

12:47

it's meant for the voters themselves of what your rights are um but it i think in tandem with the

12:55

um survey it's a useful set of documents that identifies um where some of the needs might be

13:07

um stuff it's tough without without the clerks here i think um without that perspective as

13:15

well but so does anyone i'm trying it's does anyone have clerks that might be interested

13:24

well there's that piece oh yeah i talked to my clerk who had not heard anything from

13:30

the state group and was interested okay um karen bot in middbury i don't know who else

13:38

uh would go or why the state association hasn't been more engaged there's a yeah this is got a lot

13:46

going on get very involved yeah and pallet okay and but she's working monday tuesday wednesday

13:54

thursday friday she's off in other burrows so without necessarily the expertise in the room on

14:09

um you know the the the documents we have for starters and i also i'm educating myself some

14:16

about um these guys if you take a look at them reference um various checklists that are in

14:22

existence proping places and and i'm because i'm trying to get my myself up to speed on the

14:28

um existing legal requirements because again our guide is going to be i think when you talk

14:36

about audience actually because i'm thinking it's an accessibility guide for these for for

14:42

polling places our our audience is going to be i think tell me people tell me if you think this

14:48

is wrong both both the users right the voters who are trying to use the polling places but also those who are setting up and running the polling places does it seem like we want to go

14:58

that broad or does it seem like we want to focus on a guide for for users anybody have thoughts

15:09

so i would hope this is kate i would hope that any we uh put together around access for local

15:16

government includes both opportunities to actually exercise the right to vote but also be involved

15:23

and engaged in every level of local government including volunteering being um running for office

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being part of office local government so all parts of local government i also just want to share that

15:35

the what um drbt has in that guide is definitely very much aligned with what um the national um

15:44

government accountability office has in their results and i just want to reiterate that this

15:49

is just for physical ada requirements this is not for when we access this isn't broad-based access

15:58

for people with all varying levels of disabilities it's just a very very narrow starting point of

16:04

like here's what's required not being done for physical overall universal mobility access is

16:12

there a lot of the problems in vermont about that i haven't ever heard of it before oh yeah we did

16:18

at our last meeting from cape i mean the physical access with handicap access well i think if you

16:24

look at if you take a look at the go ahead yeah so if you look at if you take a look at the survey results i mean they're not no one is no one is saying hey we we've got it nailed here there you

16:35

know there it looks like the numbers that they're seeing is between one third and two thirds are not in compliance with ada in various common areas and i'm sure that's wow yeah um and i mean and

16:46

their findings was you know people are making a good their towns are making a good faith effort however however there's a long way to go i think um to kate's point um i also i was cruising the

16:58

hrc the human rights commission's website to see what materials they might have because for

17:03

folks who may not be familiar they um enforce public accommodations laws in vermont um towns

17:11

being places of public accommodation um where town offices and so forth and they have a just a little

17:18

pamphlet this is where i was sort of getting i was thinking about the the various methods of delivery they have a little just a pamphlet on and it's just this one's sort of to piggyback on what

17:27

kate was saying this one is specifically geared towards sex sexual orientation and gender identity um and how to how to public accommodations what accommodations are required under state and

17:38

federal law um sorry jenny where did that one come from focusing on that i'm sorry where did that one

17:44

come from that you're talking about i i found it on the hrc's website um they have a few documents

17:50

like this most of the documents that they have um on their resources page are referencing out to

17:57

um federal government or other organizations so they don't there's not too many in-house

18:02

ones um compliment i'm sorry hrc yes human rights commission vermont human rights commission yeah so

18:12

it's a state entity that's tasked with education and enforcement in various anti-discrimination

18:20

laws generally but one of their areas is public accommodations they also housing employment yeah

18:27

i i know who they are i just and yeah and we do have their um chair is an appointee here um so i'm

18:34

going to try to get them in the room is there a statue there's statutes in place already that are

18:40

saying they have to have handicap access correct i think the point is that we have this framework as

18:49

the floor right and not everywhere everyone is in compliance with that floor and then there's

18:59

going to be a range above that floor that we would hope in order to affect complete universal access

19:09

you would go beyond the bare the bare skeleton on the floor so and i think you know kate is talking

19:14

about is what we have in hand is a very limited um we're addressing a very limited set of protections

19:23

in this document the the drv document and there's going there's there's a there's a lot more groups and there's a lot more um there are there's a lot a lot bigger range of accommodations that

19:35

we're going to in order to be truly accessible besides just looking at physical physical mobility

19:41

situation um so so i but to kate's point i think that so our target audience is going to be both

19:49

voters and also um those who are handling the elections assuming that there are plenty of

19:59

people in both of those groups um and then there will be people in one or the other as well and people might be moving between those groups as well so that makes sense yes frank so if there's

20:09

statutes kate do you know if the statutes are okay have you guys got into that relative to this

20:17

ground floor thing of the the foundation physical location well i think it's possible that we might

20:22

re make recommendations for changes in statute but i don't know that that's necessarily what our group is tasked with it's an enforcement issue of that we just endorse the statutes

20:34

there's a list but the task here is to create a guide so i think what we're trying to do

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it's le it's more about education and less about advocacy for this one number

20:46

not to say that educating isn't in itself a piece of advocacy but i don't think producing a guide

20:53

is going to be the place where we are going to be addressing statutory recommendations i think

21:00

we are doing that in many other places however in this in this um in our charge because we are

21:07

going to be making best practice recommendations right for how to make meetings more effective more inclusive increase participation make them more accessible but this this is the this is so

21:18

what we're talking about right now is is the the guide that we're going to try to produce that something that is going to be useful for voters for people running elections to try to

21:30

ensure that people know their rights and their obligations right that's that's my vision if we

21:37

have different visions i would love to hear it um and i this is katie i'm gonna just because

21:44

i'm not online i'll i'll email an image i don't know if people have seen this um i i have not

21:50

been able to access the previous meeting minutes so i don't know if there's been ground setting around sort of the concept of like why universal design what is accessibility versus accommodation

22:00

right like they are mean very different things um so there's an image that i had put together in the past for state commissions to create hybrid accessible meetings but um and it comes from 508

22:12

but i just oftentimes what i'm finding when i'm working with disabled peers around the state is

22:18

they are being told by their town clerks oh meet ada right because they just spent a bunch of money

22:24

on putting in a wheelchair ramp and so as much as possible i just want to like i i really appreciate

22:32

you saying that this is sort of the ground this is like the very like this is the lowest part of the tier um but it's not all the ad it's not the extent of um accommodations because a lot of

22:43

people think that's the case like oh no we don't need to provide this in a different format because we already have the wheelchair ramp and that's all that ada is or we have a parking spot so

22:53

um so that you know um so i'm just going to send this along because the concept of why accessibility and why universal design as the starting point is because once you create

23:03

accessibility and universal design the amount of effort that is required for individual individual

23:08

accommodations which still must be met um is is is easier and lower for everyone right so there's

23:15

there's a few things that you can do that's going to make everything easier and more accessible in general and then people can ask for asl people can ask for electronic documents people can ask you

23:25

know like all the other various accommodations but the accessible universal design does not

23:31

um take does not meet the requirements of ada so i just wanted to share that thanks kate yeah i i

23:42

continue to be concerned that this is such a broad target and as as i mentioned at the last meeting

23:49

right a solid waste district that entertains two members of the public in a year is very different

23:56

than a select board or a town meeting is very different than sorry than a town meeting right

24:03

and the to do a base level of universal design at every regional planning commission solid waste

24:11

district communication union district um physical meeting place is a high barrier if there is no

24:18

known need for anything beyond ada in those spaces and i think we might want to segment

24:23

our report to different sized organizations we are we do i mean we have it divided up into the

24:35

the guide piece divided into polling places and public meeting locations so there is sort of a

24:40

natural divide there in terms of a polling place where we are conducting votes v the voters are

24:46

gathering to make decisions versus where a meeting is holding a public body is holding a meeting um

24:56

there are very different levels of protection there for the people who are participating there are very different requirements in state and federal law as well sure but

25:05

yeah and yeah i hear what you're saying and i think the universal design we are tasked with what is it the use well recommending best practices for the use of universal

25:16

design so that is something that we will be covering in a different place in the report

25:21

um i think here when we're talking about a guide we're not necessarily well i don't know we are

25:29

making recommendations i suppose we could in in the course of a guide um but i think we are definitely going to want to be hitting what what what existing obligations are there right as the

25:40

floor sure and then and then and i see what you're saying that you're thinking maybe like sort of

25:49

uh i'm saying what i i would expect that the level of base accommodations in universal design made at

26:00

the south burlington city council differs from that at the windham regional planning commission

26:07

and i would not want to set a seemingly unreachable bar for a very small organization

26:16

with no technical expertise or resources and that we absolutely and we've been kelly and

26:21

i were discussing offline just that we don't think we really hit on some of the training um pieces of the recommendations or the the identifications that we were to meet i think

26:30

when we get to that portion of the revisit of last week's or last month's gosh when do

26:36

we meet last week's meeting um we can we can dig a little deeper into that too um but can i just

26:47

um so from our perspective a voting right is a voting right you know and a civil right to be engaged in local meetings is a civil right so why the disparity i guess so voters in more

26:59

resourced areas have more of a right to be having access like i guess i'm just not understanding the

27:06

framework of that as i mentioned at at the last meeting right and as um as kate just repeated

27:16

now right if you go to universal design you still need to add accommodations for access for people

27:24

that are not met by those designs i think i heard kate say that yes i said that yeah so it's and if

27:31

you have a very small audience there is still a huge cost in universal design which may not meet

27:38

the needs of the people who would like to attend or participate there and if you have a very small

27:45

audience the cost benefit of those measures may weigh very high on the cost rather than benefit

27:54

i know that my regional planning office is in the back through some halls that are potentially

28:04

wheelchair accessible or could be made so in short order but there are a whole lot of ada floor

28:12

uh kind of things that they would want to address before they think about um these other layers and

28:20

i don't want to say here's the 25 things that you should enact to an underresourced

28:29

group whose funding is being cut six ways from sunday yeah and i think that's why this guide

28:34

is so awesome and what the power inherent in this guide is is that no one is saying every

28:41

single meeting of every public body throughout the state needs to pay \$300 an hour for asl right no

28:46

one is saying that but with universal access it's not saying it's not saying universal access means

28:53

that everyone has access and no accommodations are needed what it's saying is if you move forward with designing with universal design and universal access the amount of accommodation

29:02

requests that you're going to need to receive and that voters are going to need to make is substantively lower by doing some very small very low cost in the scheme of things actions

29:13

right so if towns were to see zoom meetings as a utility for the cost of running business like

29:20

having heat like having the lights on because it is um the number of accommodations requests

29:25

across the board are going to drop because with zoom access with a website with having

29:32

um you know like uh electronic records available with meeting the absolute law

29:38

requiring you know public meeting spaces and the ada like all of a sudden now the burden

29:44

is so much lower because there's universal access so i just i really want to make sure that the takeaway is that not if universal access doesn't mean everyone's accommodation is met at all times

29:55

it just means this is the standard and once the standard is met the number of accommodation

30:00

requests are going to need to be much lower you may still have people who are red blue

30:05

color blind you still may have people who um you know are have sensory differences that are going

30:14

to need to have access to different spaces but if you have large print font if you have electronic

30:19

means for screen readers right like i just want to make sure that like the conceptual piece of what

30:24

universal design is is something that's understood and shared to add on to that i would say that oh

30:32

go ahead sorry ideally ideally if people see the whole list they become more aware of the

30:40

large variety of ables and however you want and even the way to talk about it which would be an

30:48

education piece which would be a a side benefit um so even if you don't expect all 25 or 50 things to

30:57

be done having them on the list of people are aware oh that's a thing would be beneficial

31:05

and that was that cynthia that is okay i was making sure i saw your hand was up and i wanted

31:10

to make sure that we got you good okay frank i i think what we're um what we can do is brainstorm

31:18

and come up with these resources because the body that's making the decision on this is the

31:23

legislature all we're doing is providing report with options to them that to consider correct

31:29

we're not providing a template for something to just formally adopt i imagine no you know

31:37

i i always assume that the closer we are to something that the reviewing body can adopt

31:46

the better the amount of effort and time that the legislature and its committees have is very restricted we want this to be our best work and and the charge for this

31:58

particular number on here is to produce a guide for use it is not a guide that's

32:04

exclusive for use by the legislature it is a guide for use by the community

32:10

um so we're hoping to be producing a product that is something that can be shared with

32:17

municipalities with anyone who is operating a polling place with anyone who is attending a public meeting like that that is that is the goal for this particular number and i would think for

32:27

the re back best practice recommendations it would be ideal to have something like that as

32:33

well although that is not specific to the charge that is like a small step beyond the charge but that is a way to make our work i think more useful rather than just leave those buried in a report

32:48

right so essentially we're i'm for 100% inclusion with no exclusion in any meeting

32:57

because if anybody wants to go they should be able to go they're just a taxpayer just like everybody else they should be able to go so maybe what we're talking about is an

33:05

inclusion statement that basically is backed up by statute where s cuz people can move

33:12

to a meeting they can move the meeting site location to a place that's going to be like

33:17

the meeting house that used to be famous all over the world you know people would go there

33:24

and that would be the place where they would have the meeting and then now everything is ready to go there plug and play and so that's not too difficult to do i would think um some

33:38

people just may not be going to their regular meeting place if it costs an exorbitant amount of money to redo a stone building to put in a gap and do all this door stuff and and run

33:49

it to historic preservation relative to to changing some of these older buildings is

33:55

is concerned the the we're running it we have grant for two buildings which are historic and

34:00

historic preservation they want to preserve the building uh and so what do you do you know then

34:15

so we're recognizing that polling places and public meeting locations are going to need to

34:31

be addressed differently in this document seems to be we all agree on that right

34:37

do we does does anybody have ideas about what kind of document itself would be a useful mechanism

34:45

for delivering this information if we're for for if we're trying to produce something usable the idea i think would be in our report we'll say for number four here is the guide maybe it'll

34:56

take a paragraph of explaining how we got there or what we felt was important or you know how we developed it but i think that that that what we be what we'll be providing is an actual guide and and

35:06

i i've been going back and forth on the delivery mechanism and what what are you thinking well i i

35:14

guess i'm asking for ideas aside from i mean we could just do a we could just do a document we

35:21

could just do a we could do a pamphlet we could do a handbook we could do something in between

35:27

um but i don't know that we necessarily have to be limited by that and so i was wondering if anyone

35:32

has given any thought to it or has any ideas that they want to throw out there at this point this is

35:39

kate i don't have the raise hand function option so i'm just i'm raising my hand but if somebody

35:44

else is raising their hand go to them first nope you're it go for it thank you um so i would love

35:52

to have a document that starts with the values from which um we are sharing this and i loved

35:59

hearing um somebody say that this is really about inclusion um and so starting with the values of

36:05

why this is important particularly in a tight-knit place like vermont i heard someone share last week

36:11

uh last uh met time we met that um you know about the opportunities for social capital building like there's so much values-based stuff that we can start from and then i think it's equally

36:21

important to also share the actual requirements of the laws um both state laws and federal laws them

36:27

hearing people question what are the actual laws um and so i think having the statutes available

36:33

um and the laws from which to start um is also important um and i would also love to be able to

36:40

almost do like a as like part of the guide would be like a showing by doing right and so like some

36:49

like shout outs like hey look did you notice this this was plain language we just described federal

36:55

law and requirements in plain language this entire guide is designed with large font sap you know

37:01

whatever um and these are the reasons why we're doing what we're doing so sort of a meta guide um that is super accessible to screen readers i have yet to see very many state documents or

37:12

legislative documents that actually have alt text in the images so any of the images are

37:17

completely inaccessible to people with screen readers or vision um and i would love to also

37:23

see some case studies of some stories that we have from people who have just tried to be able

37:29

to be part of their town's government and and what we're hearing time and again is yeah it is easier in large places in more resourced places and the stories that were being that are

37:40

being heard in small places is that oh we don't have money for it when in reality so much of

37:45

access and so much of accommodation actually has nothing to do with money so those are my thoughts

37:54

thanks kate

37:59

the uh our town clerk and go has goes to training and all this other stuff and they're really nerdy

38:08

about it i don't know if you've run into the same thing andy but it's it's there's

38:14

serious business about this polling stuff and uh i haven't run into a case where it hasn't

38:20

been that serious business when it comes to the town clerks uh and so uh i'm wondering

38:29

um where the voting thing is falling short because if it was falling short we would somebody

38:36

be screaming about it and i am now hearing it i have you is is yes that's why we're here disabled

38:48

screaming about it for the voting is is it widespread that people are not able to go vote yes

39:01

in what way oh god every which way um so i'll start with an email i got last week

39:08

um someone in the town of waterberry a resourced larger municipality right

39:13

um had reached out to their town clerk and said "i really want to vote i did not put in a request for an absentee ballot you know what the law is in place they don't have to put in a request for an

39:22

absentee ballot they could do caride voting they were told they could not so that's one example um

39:29

the entire town of brattleboro um i don't know if you've followed any of the well lot going on in

39:34

brattleboro um but people not being able to well okay even uh legislators two years ago there was

39:41

a big uh there was a big illness outbreak in the legislature and a number of legislators like a lot

39:47

were unable to even um provide their town meeting day reports that they needed to do because they were sick and they couldn't even participate via phone on town meeting day um and so it was like

39:57

it was like 15 legislators i think who weren't even able to give town reports um uh myself i

40:03

have not been able to vote for four years my husband is bedbound he will never be able to vote um anyone who is um bedbound or who is living in a correctional facility or living in another

40:15

congregate care setting for 180 pounds um looking at the different level of voting um for public

40:22

options or for elected officials or for town budgets they'll never be able to vote currently based on the way that the law is so those are just a few examples um and then that doesn't

40:32

even include things like running for office in places where there are floor votes and you need to be there in person um or where you need to gather signatures and it also doesn't include

40:42

um people just wanting to be able to be part of the meetings and be able to access meeting records

40:56

tell me how many of those errors or those situations were misunderstandings or a

41:02

lack of education on a behalf of those doing the polling no it's systemic right so the way that so

41:09

uh the folks in the room are going to have the numbers better than i but i think based on the most recent spreadsheet of the different types of local like if we just do town voting um if

41:19

we look at um elected officials representatives uh budgets and then public options i think it's

41:25

at least 175 towns justically by design all the people that i just listed cannot vote

41:34

cynthia i see your hand is up uh this may be irrelevant but sometimes it is a misunderstanding on the part of the say the town clerk or the body uh about what the rules

41:46

are the sos rules are about who can vote and who can't and i'm i wasn't allowed to vote first year

41:54

i was here for a misunderstanding of that nature so that wasn't a an ability thing it was just a

42:01

i would love to see the town clerk get really clear about who gets the vote and who doesn't

42:10

and i think i mean we're not here to lay blame right we're not here to point fingers and say

42:15

we're going to assume that most people are are trying to do the right thing and that some of it a lot of this is going to be misunderstanding about not understanding

42:23

what the law is not fully understanding what the perspective of somebody who's coming at

42:30

um coming at something with a with with different different abilities right like i'm sitting here in

42:36

this meeting i people with off the screen i am hard of hearing when i can't see mouths moving i have a tougher time so this meeting is harder for me right now people who can hear completely

42:47

beautifully might not be recognize that until i until i say that right until i mention it hey you know i'm i'm going to miss some stuff i'm going to need people to say things slower

42:57

or more clearly because i can't read your lips right now you know and that's not something that somebody who is has fully hearing capable is going to necessarily into it right so it's not

43:08

that it's not that i'm blaming anybody for you know and sometimes it's not possible so anyway go ahead susan yeah i just want to differentiate i think kate makes really important points and

43:18

um i think at least i certainly understand um that there are some really key uh universal design

43:25

features that we can that we can highlight so that everybody understands them i think clumping all of

43:30

these issues together and when she said 173 towns i think correct me if i'm wrong kate you're you're

43:36

say you're talking about town meetings uh and town meetings that hold floor votes on on any given issue and when a town holds a floor vote uh by law you have to be in the room in order

43:47

to participate in that floor vote and that's that is a design you can call it a design flaw i call

43:54

it a design feature um it is a part of the fact that that is the legislative body of the town and

44:03

so when we're fixing and i really would love to fix uh town meetings so that it can be uh

44:09

accessible to people who are outside of the room we're fixing it in a way that's very different

44:15

um from um from the way we we we would fix um being able to um say a thing at a public hearing

44:25

um uh because it's a different process you're just you're you're um you have two minutes at the microphone kind of thing is what happens at a at a public hearing or you know a solid waste

44:34

management district um whereas town meetings are again a deliberative legislative body where people are empowered uh to make amendments and things like that and so clumping that all together

44:44

and saying that there are 173 towns that you know just need to you know it's like hey just you know i think when we think accessible we think put in that darn ramp or elevator you know get a zoom you

44:56

know function and think that we can fix it that way when in fact some of these are are structural

45:02

decisions and they need to that we need to be u more surgical in the way that we solve them

45:08

um and and uh some of them are going to be easier some of them are going to be way more complex uh and we need to know that we're respecting the democratic infrastructure when we do it

45:21

well i'd like to know what i'm i'm unfamiliar with the statutes kate are you familiar with the

45:28

statutes do you know where the statutes fall short on the accessibility so essentially my

45:34

take on it i know spectator state's office is going to have another take but systemically we

45:39

as a state have allowed towns to have the power to make the decision to go against federal and

45:49

state civil rights and and an article of our state constitution about who does and who does not have

45:54

the right to vote who does and who does not have the right to be hold running and holding an office

45:59

so if you look at our state constitution and what is outlined there for the basic rights for people

46:05

to have be able to partake in um local government like the way that structurally things are set up

46:12

at the statewide at the legislative level uh makes it so that towns have the ability to discriminate

46:19

essentially so it is a structural it is a structural systemic issue and we should we

46:25

should isolate on that in the report it should definitely be there if that exists what she's

46:31

saying sure i i agree i i don't necessarily think that is part of the accessibility guide that we're

46:37

producing but i think that is an integral part of many of these other questions that we'll be

46:43

addressing in the report yeah as it's it's a foundational one right if it's not there it's

46:49

it's you know what else are we going to be able to do with it basically is in the same category and

46:58

slightly off topic but i something that i forgot to mention before you know we have our task list here we do have a catchall at the bottom of the list study other topics as determined by the group

47:08

that could improve participation and access um to local public meetings so um if if there are if

47:16

there are topics that we find to be relevant all the way up to important and foundational that we

47:22

think are not in this um you know queue that that we're tasked with addressing we can we can add in

47:28

and and and put we we we can we can bring things topics to the table but that that's only a slight

47:35

that's a slight tangent off to the side there because i think that this is already addressed in here or rather it is an obligation that we should be addressing what we just what we were

47:43

just discussing in this report right completely related right so if you like the calls and the

47:51

emails that we get from people who are not having access to all levels of local government it is a

47:56

higher proportion so of those hund and some odd towns right it's a much higher proportion that

48:02

people are having access issues in those towns and part of is attitudinal so if you have um you know

48:11

in-person meetings and that is the focus and that is all that you are doing is in-person voting and

48:17

inerson meetings people will say "well yeah we'd love for you to be part of our community but you have to come in person for that." so no we're not going to do a town website no we're not going to

48:26

give you zoom meeting access no you're not you know this is we are we are norman rockwell right like you come here you speak in person and that is what we do and that is what we call engagement and

48:37

so it because of the structural design it creates an attitudinal barrier as well that is much much

48:44

harder people disabilities to to encounter to overcome um so it there there is another piece to

48:52

that like even if we took out the voting and the um you know the voting part of it everything else

48:58

flows from that and so those are going to be the same towns that don't have zoom links those are the same towns that are not going to have um any sort of like websites right so so on and so forth

49:15

yes what i was excited about about the training at the rutland regional planning commission was the two slides that you're cleaning up is there something in the legislative

49:26

there was a slide that popped up that says that the intent of the last amendment was

49:32

that the state do hybrids because they had all the technology to do it and that the

49:38

municipalities were a bell curve of different circumstances and that but the minimum was that

49:46

was put in there was that the select boards had to do in-person meeting with a recorder

49:52

and proposed recording at a minimum and that the planning commissions would have to do the

49:59

same based on this decisionmaking criteria and then otherwise there was the um exemption undue

50:08

hardship which apparently a lot of people have claimed for various reasons to get out of jail

50:15

uh and been successful because they make up their own reasoning for getting in you know who knows if

50:21

it would pass muster it in the future but they've decided to to take the exemption so they so that's

50:27

that was explained in and everybody in the room heard that hearing of the uh as lauren explained

50:35

it so i don't want to revisit that that right here because i don't think that that is part of

50:41

this particular conversation um i we were talking about is open meeting law and the open meeting law

50:46

contains quite a few protections uh in the context of meeting of public bodies but what we're trying

50:55

to get at here is i think goes quite a bit beyond that you know the open meeting law has has its

51:03

set of requirements but this i think accessibility goes far beyond what the open meeting law requires

51:09

and certainly you know the open meeting law only governs the public meetings themselves not the

51:14

actual location necessarily until you go outside the open meeting law to public accommodations law

51:22

um and and polling places aren't covered there at all so this is this is this conversation is

51:28

swiss cheese well it's much it's just much faster than looking at the open meeting law and saying "here's what the open meeting law requires." right but kate brought up the

51:38

accessibility from a digital perspective in this context and and i was saying that the reason one

51:48

of the things cuz she was saying they're not doing hybrid they're not doing a video they can do it but right now apparently that's not the intent of the legislative body right now the open

51:58

meeting law does not require municipalities to to have to offer hybrid meetings right

52:08

right now the open meeting law requires state public bodies to do hybrid correct and the open

52:15

meeting law requires municipal public bodies to have the in-person stacked physical location

52:24

and hybrid is optional though recommended and they have to record and post on the internet

52:31

the recording after the minutes have been the recording requirement i believe is in place only for public bodies that are not considered advisory is that right i might not have that

52:43

right i want to check that don't quote me on that advisory thing i i read the striking so i i think

52:48

i think we're moving i think we're moving away from from the conversation we're trying to have though here this this the accessibility guide i hear what you're saying that municipalities right

52:57

now we don't have the full range of obligations for municipalities under the open meeting law

53:04

that's a legislative decision perhaps we want to recommend something different than what they have done in order to make meetings more fully acceptable in that way um and and that that could

53:16

be part of our report if that's where we want to go frank apparently there's accessibility needs

53:24

from a physical perspective which is people getting to into the big into an in-person meeting

53:31

and that if that's not fixed uh and it should be fixed with some sort of if it's not covered in

53:37

statute it's got to be covered in statute i would imagine and people are just ignoring it then then there has to be enforcement what's the enforcement going to be because yeah whenever you come up with

53:46

ideas what are you going to do to enforce it all right they they don't qualify for any more grants until they fix the problem right i'm going to stop you because i think we're producing a guide the

53:58

guide itself is going to be educational material i think education doesn't get you all the way there

54:04

to enforcement but education often is your first stop that's where you want that's where you want to go to try to get folks on board with what is most helpful and enforcement is the next step

54:15

down the road right so i i mean we can talk about we can talk about that as as as other topics but

54:20

i don't think a guide for accessibility is going to really move into the enforcement realm at all

54:28

a question for sue kate and cynthia primarily uh of the cases that you've seen that that are

54:39

of of different types um how many of them were a matter of that potentially the there's something

54:49

a statute addressing it uh that was simply uh not enforced that where the person was agrieved

54:59

when the law was actually on their side all of them so it was a matter of enforcement then

55:09

is that what you're saying yeah but we could talk about enforcement all day but it's not a pretty process and it's expensive and if you want that

55:17

right to vote it's going to take you four years and 20 years off your life

55:23

so the statutes are fine except for just a few repairs to the statutes is what you're saying in different places that get rid of this little catch22 that

55:32

we explained before # disability life yes all right then we just

55:38

deal on that because that's the only thing that's that's needs to be fixed

55:46

because otherwise it's enforcement so i want to say from a disability perspective

55:54

where things have become more accessible to disabled folks is when it becomes universal

56:00

when non-disabled people get access to the things that disabled people have in fact been screaming for for years or decades then it becomes somehow accessible because i don't know

56:10

ableism and discrimination right um and then all of a sudden systems don't say oh we're just

56:16

doing this for this one person and that's that right they start saying "oh we're doing this for everyone and everyone likes this." people like having plain language materials for town

56:24

meeting like people really like knowing what they're voting for right like that is a thing um but if a disable a lot of us are nodding kate just so you know when you just said that there's

56:33

a lot of nodding going on so um about to get in the car so it might get loud um but so so

56:42

that's why it's so powerful to do universal design right because it it takes the bias out

56:49

of it and it just becomes like everyone likes universal design no one doesn't like it right

56:54

um so yeah that that part i guess what i had what i had shared with other people

57:02

um last week but i didn't share more globally is i realized when i came into the meeting that i was coming into this meeting with a lot of different assumptions i had thought

57:11

that there was more of a groundwork laid about like how this came to be right and why is it

57:18

um this was a requirement from the legislature what were people saying at the legislature that had this be enacted right um and so i didn't realize that a lot of that was not known or shared

57:29

um previous to this and i'm just i really appreciate this conversation and what people

57:34

are sharing in the room just thank you so much and i and i and i know that this probably feels like taking a big step back um in terms of the agenda but i i don't know that we could go forward

57:44

without going back so i just really appreciate it thank you cynthia i see your hand is up

57:52

yeah um would it be offensive kate to um to categorize

58:01

uh the things that need to be dealt with with sensory or like i'm even thinking of

58:09

icons i'm going to the guide because that's what the agenda said um vision hearing

58:17

uh sensations uh mobility if there were icons that could precede the list of things that would

58:25

assist to to make it universal design would that be a bad thing or would that be helpful

58:36

um i'm not sure um but i can imagine like things like for example having a microphone like in a meeting like everyone loves people like loves when

58:45

people have microphones right like even if you're not harder hearing i i don't know people like that's one of those universal design things so i think i love that

58:54

this is a guide designing universally for everyone and you're right i think thinking about like it

59:00

might be helpful as we design it to think about different categories of access um i'm just i need to think on uh the design piece of an icon and i'm sure other people have really good ideas about it

59:18

so just to to add on um to what kate is saying and i and i do really agree with you

59:24

um about um coming at it as a we coming at it as universal design um this is good for everybody and

59:33

it's definitely been proven you know over time that that what you know when we do things like

59:38

make things handicap accessible all of a sudden we find out oh these are good also for you know parents with strollers and the these are you know good for all of these accessibility things

59:47

actually serve all of us um and that's a really great way to go into it um i do think that we need

59:52

to be aware that like something like microphones it sounds like a no-brainer um and yet there is

1:00:00

good data to show that when we require uh in a in a public meeting room someone to use a microphone

1:00:06

we get fewer people talking because one of the things that human beings are is also shy and and

1:00:15

uh don't like to stand in line in front of a microphone and um so it actually depresses um

1:00:21

the public engagement that you're holding the meeting to have um and so we can bring

1:00:26

that knowledge to our solutions and not have a simplicity solution of just like put a microphone at the front of the room and have everybody line up and actually say "hey best practice is to

1:00:36

um bring children into the process and have them carry microphones to people who in their chairs

1:00:42

if you've got a you know largest largeish public meeting so that people can remain um if they want

1:00:47

to they can remain in their in their seat express their opinion but not in a way that feels quite as

1:00:52

uh intimidating um as some of the other microphone um possibilities um so there there are there are

1:00:59

ways that we can um take a you know we don't want to be too simplistic in our in our you know in

1:01:06

our answers because because humans are involved and humans are unfortunately really complicated

1:01:17

so with that i think since we changed the agenda around i'm going to propose we're at

1:01:24

just a little bit after 11 i'm going to propose we take that frank how do you legislate universal

1:01:32

design how do you put that into statute that's beyond me at this point in time

1:01:39

is because you when you're dealing at different comm committees potentially doing this at

1:01:44

the same time so our task is to recommend best practices for use of universal design

1:01:54

i would necessarily say that it isn't it it goes so far as to recommend legislation however you

1:02:02

know i think that's an open the best practices period um is an advisory piece yes yes although

1:02:11

we can certainly take up what we want to in terms of offering potential legislative solutions as

1:02:18

well as other ones so it's a planning document not a statutory document so basically what we can do

1:02:23

is we can put on down the we can we can we can put in um the ultimate design and throw that at them

1:02:35

and that's the least we can do is to do the best we can do so i'm going to propose that here we um

1:02:43

set aside we have another entire meeting to talk about um the accessibility guide if i'm correct

1:02:49

about that yes our next meeting is entirely um talking about our accessibility guide so i'm going

1:02:54

to suggest that we set that aside for now and move back to um continuing the conversation from last

1:03:01

week which was what municipalities need in terms of technical assistance and training and equipment

1:03:10

um in order to be able to fully implement best practices moving towards full accessibility

1:03:20

um and greater participation so and i think i'm eye on the clock i'm going to aim to wind

1:03:27

this meeting up by noon instead of 12:30 um given the f folks we have in the room and

1:03:35

um the folks that i would like to get in the room for some of these conversations as well um so with

1:03:40

that in mind i would like to talk about i'm going to take this backwards because our our obligation

1:03:49

is to make recommendations about what technical assistance equipment and training municipalities

1:03:55

are going to need um and we didn't really i don't think get to the training piece at all and you can

1:04:02

correct me if i'm wrong um and i haven't gone back and reviewed last week's or last meeting

1:04:07

um since we ended it but i want to talk about the training piece because we have two two separate

1:04:16

requirements in our report talking about training um and one of them is oh did we lose somebody we

1:04:22

did i think she's coming back in okay thank you sure this is megan gotcha oh hi there's megan yeah

1:04:36

um so megan we just we had flipped the schedule to try to accommodate schedules of books in the

1:04:43

room and we just wrapped up our first conversation about um the polling location accessibility and

1:04:50

public meeting location accessibility and we were just moving into um revisiting what we discussed

1:04:58

last meeting which is the technical assistance equipment training piece um what what towns need

1:05:06

what municipalities require to be able to um fully move towards the best practices that we

1:05:14

hope to recommend um for accessibility so we have two places in our report where we're doing res

1:05:22

training um one is here one is um what training towns need and not just towns municipalities to to

1:05:31

run accessible remote and hybrid meetings and then also in our best practice guide we are going to be

1:05:38

recommending best practices for training public meetings for compliance with the open meeting law and so those two are somewhat intertwined obviously somewhat different um because the

1:05:50

open meeting law is one law that governs how you operate public meetings around operate open

1:05:56

meetings but there there there's much more outside the open meeting law that comes into play um so in

1:06:05

order to recommend like what what trainings folks need i mean again we're we're back at the there's

1:06:12

the substantive piece right what substance do people need trained on but then there's also how do we deliver how do those trainings what kinds of trainings would be the most effective at getting

1:06:23

um folks who are already involved with their local government um up to speed and comfortable but also

1:06:32

getting more folks able to participate as deciders in their local government as well so the trainings

1:06:42

i mean so we we've done a few trainings obviously the secretary of state's office

1:06:47

um on some of these topics i don't necessarily think are i think there's a lot of room for

1:06:53

improvement in terms of our delivery mechanisms and so i would just like to talk about the um the training piece and what people think would be most helpful here and what we'd like to recommend

1:07:08

i know it's tough because right like it can't be specific to the implementation right there will be

1:07:16

owls there will be there will be zoom and teams and meetup and whatnot um and so i think it has to

1:07:24

be much more on the conducting uh piece of this on on like do you designate someone to to be respons

1:07:37

responsible for including people not present in the room in the flow of the meeting how do you how

1:07:44

do you implement the stages of the meeting in a way that provides maximum access to non physically

1:07:52

present attendees um so train training the meeting facilitator yeah and as as well as right like i

1:08:01

think every meeting space needs a quick set startup guide so that when the town manager

1:08:08

is not available or the chair is not at a meeting someone's got a really nice set of steps to start

1:08:15

the meeting running and recording um but there are a lot of boards that don't have great chairs

1:08:22

um people who could certainly use any kind of meeting management trainings that might exist

1:08:30

and i think that's doubly so when you when you get beyond people that you can see and that can

1:08:37

uh demand your attention more immediately then you got redundancy needs somebody can't make it

1:08:45

who's knows that knows the electronics and how to everything up we had a planning commission

1:08:50

where the chairperson who was also on the cud led the cud she would be a great person to plug

1:08:57

in there she's still that because there cuds are still operating they haven't shut them down the

1:09:02

um for the fibroid girl out um is that she had all this stuff up on screen and we were going

1:09:11

down through the documents and as a group planning commission editing the the unified bylaws and also

1:09:19

the town plan uh as live in the meeting going down through line by line by line by line going

1:09:26

down through the document and uh that was very productive because it was also public and it was

1:09:31

people in the room watching this uh and uh but the thing is is when she wasn't there there was

1:09:39

no one there to do it so the meeting fell flat on its face so you when so you need to have the

1:09:47

redundancy in the training not just one person like they have now where the seboard has to take

1:09:53

the training on the open meeting law i believe is the only one that's required but you have to need

1:09:58

to have the vice chair or other people have to have two people even though it's not the sector

1:10:03

board because in our meetings the the clerk runs the electronic part of the meeting the hybrid the

1:10:10

se the chair of the seboard doesn't do anything so broadening the audience right you want to

1:10:16

make sure that if absolutely yeah for sure cynthia you have your hand up yeah um i suggested to our

1:10:25

group that shadowing would be a good idea because our select board and uh is of a certain age where

1:10:33

if we lose them we lose a lot of um knowledge of what's gone before and that having some kind of a

1:10:43

um wannabe select board shadows who are paired to the current ones would be would

1:10:52

be helpful to do that and um secondarily i think the training should be available to

1:10:58

anybody who is running a meeting not just to town legislation i mean there's no marketing

1:11:03

for just the general public encouragement to use it i'm trying to do the the 250th

1:11:10

anniversary stuff and i threw myself in the deep end of the pool um trying to get town people to

1:11:17

um to do something and i find i'm running these meetings and i have no clue and it's actually very helpful to watch you do this because i'm like "oh i could do it that way." um so whether

1:11:27

you have 25 people or seven people it's it changes things up so training for everybody

1:11:34

training for everybody include everybody in the training piece as well and um yeah thank you

1:11:43

that shadowing sort of mentoring idea as a component of providing trainings is not a

1:11:50

piece that i had um even contemplated so thank you that's i think that's a that's a a great a great idea to include in the gamut of of of options here

1:12:02

we've started implementing a very wellreceived cyber security uh training at work this is

1:12:10

totally i'm not meaning for cyber security that is a a very different thing um but it's like these threeinut vignettes right of like here's something that happened and here is like the uh

1:12:21

devil on one shoulder and the angel on the other and it gets right at like one instance and how you

1:12:29

might address it and it's it's super quick we do them once a month they're very wellreceived and i

1:12:36

think that if you pick little pieces um you might have more engagement than if you're like "okay now

1:12:44

we're going to uh conduct a excellent two-hour sledgeboard meeting following best practices."

1:12:50

um are they video sound bites is that yeah it's it's a little video piece because we purchased

1:12:57

these there's like a one question quiz afterwards that's related but not exactly the same but yeah

1:13:03

anyway the the brevity is the uh key to engagement on this mhm people go into severe ptsd when they

1:13:14

have to cross into learning something new digital in a lot of cases and uh so there it's not like

1:13:21

come it doesn't come in a spray can you know and and training doesn't necessarily settle in and

1:13:27

like i coached athletics at a very high level um and you you you just don't tell somebody

1:13:36

to do something and it that gets done it's a longer process to get them so it's intuitive

1:13:51

hi this is kate raising hand for when that is appropriate sure it's perfect um so yeah

1:13:58

and i think part of it too is like the um with the training some of the things that

1:14:03

i suspect people will share is how much more um enjoyable the process is for them right because

1:14:10

they've had access to universal design so for example um things like showing examples of like

1:14:16

okay you're running a hybrid meeting so here is a checklist of things you can do like when you are

1:14:23

um if you're doing phone only there's no way to rate no way to raise hand do comment stacking right like okay we're going to hear from kate and then we're going to hear from steve and then we're

1:14:31

going to hear from john okay and then you know you do that every so often so that people are aware of where they are in the process um so that people have access to be able to put their comments in

1:14:41

the chat for the reason that i believe it was susan shared right there is there are reasons

1:14:47

just in general and there are disability related reasons why people are not going to stand up and speak um or go to the microphone speak even if the microphone's brought to them so reading

1:14:56

out the chat so that everybody has a voice um repeating back the question when somebody says

1:15:01

something repeating back the question um making sure that everyone is understanding where we are

1:15:07

in the meeting as it's being done so well here right so here's where we are in the agenda just want to reiterate the goals here's what we're going to do here's what's coming up next here

1:15:14

are the materials that we're using um so a lot of it really is just fundamentals of good meeting

1:15:20

facilitation because good meeting facilitation means inclusion and accessibility uh-huh uhuh

1:15:29

and go

1:15:40

how are i don't think we can overcome somebody's fear of of public speaking uh without hiring

1:15:48

psychiatrists to figure that one out because they just simply are going to get up and say something

1:15:54

or they're they're so afraid to get up in public they're what what are you going to do have have a

1:16:00

proxy maybe or a written submission uh what what's the alternative because susan was bringing that

1:16:08

up that people are afraid to to talk in front of a microphone and how do you rectify that well i

1:16:15

think that was susan mentioned one option right is to not make people stand up in front of the entire

1:16:20

group in a long line waiting for their turn and instead bringing the microphone to folks there's

1:16:26

i think there's plenty of small steps you can you can take to make spaces feel more comfortable for

1:16:32

people we we we do we do that routinely in our town meetings and select board meetings susan well

1:16:39

i was just going to say that um i think that um what we we need to think about and towns need to

1:16:46

think about public engagement throughout the year we need to think about um a that each each meeting

1:16:52

is an event but public engagement is a um an effort um and so if you think about the whole year

1:16:59

um you have to have lots of different ways to engage with the same topic if you're if you're

1:17:05

redoing the town plan um have have a change up the way um the the information is gathered include

1:17:12

uh anonymous surveys also include um meetings where people can have small conversations not big

1:17:18

ones where they have to give speeches um include you know facilitated um you know large and group

1:17:24

and small group process that that are hybrid there there are lots of different techniques and um to me that's what when we try to fix every single event to be perfect for every single person

1:17:36

um i mean it's a goal for sure but um i think a a better way um to to think about it is yes

1:17:43

we want that and let's think about participation throughout the year so that um a person can feel

1:17:48

like this is my town and they want me and they they they are offering me all different ways

1:17:53

you know field trips whatever it is um to to bring in my you know different learning styles um different engagement styles different different family structures um uh that that that can engage

1:18:03

them and with that long-term engagement comes trust which is the piece that allows you to

1:18:09

feel like you are um allowed to say something and that you will not be ostracized for your opinion

1:18:27

is there anything specific just to backtrack to the to the open meeting i think all of these

1:18:35

things apply to both pieces of our training recommendations is there anything specific to

1:18:41

best practices for training public bodies for open meeting law compliance that would be additional

1:18:47

to what we've just discussed that anyone can think of right now oops i see megan's got a hand yeah hi um jenny it would be helpful thank you all for your patience um coming late sorry

1:18:59

to miss the first topic which i understood was accessibility of polling places right

1:19:05

right and also public meetings like both okay so locations so i'm just i'm trying to get a grip i

1:19:14

feel like my life is just trying to get a grip um oh yeah so we so we flipped the agenda so we

1:19:21

um yeah so we flipped the agenda and we jumped in on the the the second half that was starting

1:19:26

at 11:15 the polling location accessibility and accessibility for public meeting locations and we

1:19:32

are just just when you came on we were just moving back to the first half of the agenda which was the trainings for municipalities this is training like the secretary go ahead i'm sorry

1:19:44

yeah thank you could we could you be more specific so is this we are making recommendations to who

1:19:54

and around and are these three are these two separate one is on open meeting law compliance

1:20:00

and one is on running remote hybrid meetings yes so in our report there are two different places

1:20:10

where we are making essentially recommendations or identifying needs um and the one is the is is

1:20:18

the is wrapping up from what we talked started talking about last week is part of our task to

1:20:25

identify what municipalities need to run effective and inclusive hybrid and remote

1:20:32

meetings in terms of tech assistance equipment and training so what training would they need

1:20:39

to be able to to do these any remote or hybrid public meeting and then additionally as a se in

1:20:47

a separate place in our task we are to recommend best practices for all sorts of things but among

1:20:55

them best practices for training public bodies in compliant for compliance with the open meeting law

1:21:03

so it's there's some overlap there but we do have a specific obligation to address

1:21:10

um open meeting law trainings specifically public bodies which would be local and state right um and

1:21:19

then and we didn't really wrap up i mean we didn't really wrap up the technical i mean oh no we have

1:21:27

okay because because i think that the small group that met once and then susan and i met sort of

1:21:35

began to sketch out some options for hybrid remote we didn't really talk about archiving options so

1:21:46

i'm not sure like can we talk about training i mean i've heard besides of course hearing good

1:21:54

things so far do we need to finish sketching out those two pieces of the options yeah so my thought

1:22:03

was i was taking it in reverse order only because last time we took it in the the or the statutory

1:22:10

order and i felt like we didn't get to training at all and so i wanted to make sure we made some space for that here um but yes i think i started with training and then we i think for the rest

1:22:22

of the meeting moving on to talking more about the equipment piece and the technical assistance piece is that's the remainder of our meeting and i don't know if you heard that but we're gonna i

1:22:32

think we're going to end at 12 today instead of 12:30 so we have half an hour to work on that

1:22:37

thank you that's helpful appreciate that oh sure this is raising hand for to answer the question

1:22:43

you had asked when you're ready yes um in terms of what uh things could be shared specifically

1:22:49

like concretely um for technical assistance i think that a lot of towns are un certain like

1:22:55

they don't know the resources that exist that are absolutely no cost so for example i heard from my town that they could not share meeting minutes electronically because there they had no website

1:23:04

and they had no money for website so literally it took me 10 minutes i made a google site um and now

1:23:09

all the minutes that they send me are listed on the website it like takes no time completely free

1:23:15

right so even something simple like yeah there are free ways to host um not even just google sites but google docs a lot of people don't know about that like putting pdfs on a google doc voila there

1:23:24

you can share something ahead of the meeting um the other thing is like with zoom a lot of people don't realize that zoom has auto captions so auto captions is amazing everyone um can click on and

1:23:35

turn on their auto captions to have that and most people really really enjoy that disability or none

1:23:40

um another thing is get the accessibility options of zoom and so when you go into the

1:23:46

settings really getting familiar with all of the different settings you can change the font size

1:23:51

you can change the color contrast um there's a lot of different settings so i think all of the free

1:23:56

resources and getting to know the tools through via training and technical assistance quite useful

1:24:08

so on the training piece i think the things we've really highlighted here is um trainings on good

1:24:17

meeting facilitation in general are essential are even more essential when you're managing more than

1:24:22

one space right and then um the second piece and getting to know the tools and getting to know what

1:24:28

resources are out there and delivery mechanisms the idea being to maximize variety right how many

1:24:36

different ways can you deliver information so that everybody has options that work for them and also

1:24:43

the sound bite short ones being part of that menu okay and also some infotainment because people

1:24:51

uh are repelled by the idea of training of any sort and so to call it training

1:24:57

um might put them off so maybe a little investment in creative hype without going overboard would be

1:25:04

great yeah yeah one of our select we we went rland county had a training event at the pl

1:25:14

regional planning commission offices um hybrid and we had a large number of people from our town go

1:25:22

because of confusion around opening law and the guy sat next to me he was tom collard he runs

1:25:28

big companies so he's on a select board and he was looking for the promised slides from

1:25:37

the meeting in order to review because he wasn't taking notes he was going to use the playback of

1:25:43

the meeting and the stuff to re to to address things at the following select board meeting when the topics came up that but he didn't have that so when they went to a lawyer and

1:25:53

got a lawyer opinion who may not have all the information he couldn't respond because the

1:25:59

promised materials were not delivered at all they still haven't been delivered and so we

1:26:06

have a problem relative to complying still when after the training we should have been totally

1:26:14

clear and that's totally fell didn't happen so why did the meeting happen in the first place

1:26:21

training if the if the full promises of the of the training we're going to be here's this here's

1:26:28

the slide deck here's the i'm going to stop you here because we revisit this offline if if we if

1:26:35

we need to issue so our office is tasked with delivering trainings to municipal officials on

1:26:44

the open meeting law and we are in the process we also do a lot of other open meeting law training

1:26:52

u beyond that statutory requirement which is new we are in the process of updating all of our materials um to with the new legislation that was just passed into law and is effective july 1

1:27:04

so that is something we are working on which are we have we have a handbook we have powerpoints

1:27:11

um we have in-person trainings we do and we're trying to get more website information in more of

1:27:16

the soundbite format like faq format up on the web so that is something that we are working on now that we hope to have publicly available what we're not doing is sending out our old stuff that isn't

1:27:26

fully updated at this point yeah so i'm going to move on from that i'm going to move on from that conversation frank i'm going to move on from that conversation we'll be talk about it another time

1:27:33

this we're not going to visit that in this meeting because we only have about 27 more minutes to go

1:27:39

um may i offer a technical thing sure is that i i spoke with the fellow who does the homeland

1:27:45

security uh handicap access with electronic stuff and he travels around like three states

1:27:53

or something and he says that most of the handicap have their cell phones capable with speech to text

1:28:01

with all their aids they need because they need them on a minute for other things other than open

1:28:07

meeting going to meetings and so that that that that if there's a there if there's a a hybrid

1:28:15

meeting going on with a audio uh that their phones can pick up the speech convert it to text and they

1:28:23

can follow along with the meeting with the cell phone devices that that they have now now i've

1:28:28

never experienced that but he was saying "yeah that's a that's what's what's going on out there."

1:28:34

uh so i'm wondering about that so i think to level set here i think our group's goal is not to put

1:28:46

the obligation back on the individual to figure out how to get themselves involved and supply what

1:28:55

they need i think our our goal is to figure out how to make spaces welcoming to everyone

1:29:09

by incentivizing and educating and helping the folks who are creating those spaces and operating

1:29:15

those spaces um so so i i don't want to be in the place of saying our like oh folks have what

1:29:25

they need they should be bringing it to that they should be bringing it in i don't think i don't think it's necessarily true that everyone has what they need there either um i mean there

1:29:34

people that don't have cell phones there because they don't have cell phone access you know it's it

1:29:40

i i wouldn't i wouldn't make the assumption that every person already has access to all the tools

1:29:45

they need to be able to to join and participate in in meetings and and government generally his

1:29:53

experience is is the disabled are using these devices to live these days and that most have

1:29:59

them that's one of the considerations i just want to say from a guy who does it on a daily basis and

1:30:04

and as his job that's what he told me yesterday as a matter of fact and it sounds like it's one

1:30:10

person's experience yeah but that'd be a good thing to know how how prolific is it out there

1:30:15

uh where the people come to the meetings already have the tools so they just have to engage with our tools and boom it's done otherwise we provide a few tools that can be engaged with because you

1:30:29

can on a screen like this screen here if i'm in the back of the room i can't read the text

1:30:34

when it's speech to text they're going to have to have something in front of them or on their phone to follow along with the text sure but we're not dealing with specifics right now in

1:30:46

this forum we're we're talking about the scope of training not particular accessibility tools

1:30:53

and platforms but the person even attending the training meeting is going to be the same this is

1:31:00

an open meeting is going to be the same handicap person who we're not excluding to attend who's

1:31:06

going to be attending the training meeting everybody's included in inclusion 100% at all

1:31:12

that there are a lot of people have a lot of expertise because they've had to deal with situations based on where they're coming from and you don't you want to make sure the people with

1:31:20

the expertise are in the room and you're making decisions certainly and you're it's anywhere

1:31:27

between one in three people to one in five people who have a disability one or more disabilities so

1:31:32

i just want to make sure we're not talking about a disabled person it's like a large amount of your

1:31:38

town between one in three to one in five people have a disability and accessibility isn't just

1:31:45

about folks with disabilities either right i mean there's a there's i mean even even on our

1:31:50

list here we're investigating whether increase of resources for participants such as child care

1:31:55

translators transportation food i mean there's there's a lot of things getting in the way from people being able to fully participate that isn't limited to disability right

1:32:07

language child care transportation the ada has cases now where anybody in the autism spectrum

1:32:15

is now generally included as protected under the americans with disability act

1:32:23

boom so that's one now why don't we move to the um the the continuation of that equipment and

1:32:35

technical assistance um conversation moving away from the training piece and and getting back into

1:32:44

the necessary equipment and technical assistance i think we've been kind of moving that way a little bit here anyway for our last 20 minutes or so and megan did you have a place that you wanted

1:32:55

us to start or questions that were just that had been top of mind from where we left off um

1:33:08

no i'm not trying to seem that a piece that you were interested in and and um i know we had we

1:33:15

certainly hadn't and i don't think we're going to finish the topic today i just i'm clear about that i think we're going to we're going to we're going to maul over it some more we're going to put more

1:33:23

information out there and then hopefully um we'll revisit it as we continue through the rest of the

1:33:29

topics i guess what i would like to see happen if um if i can follow up on what you're asking me is

1:33:37

um some more some more clarity i i'd like to and i haven't done this yet is is be more specific about

1:33:47

um those tiers of technical options and overlay them with some of the goals and

1:33:56

um you know how how they do or don't meet accessibility measures where they may fall

1:34:03

short and where they may uh reach so that people can be thinking aspirationally and

1:34:08

i would like to make sure that our price points tied to those different technical options are clear um and i i mean i just haven't dug into it since we last met and so sure sure

1:34:25

okay yes frank i'd like to hear from megan what what's your view what do you think should be the

1:34:32

scope of the archiving issue because that's something you brought up on several occasions

1:34:38

what do you think that 170 towns and stuff should be doing for archiving relative to hybrid or what

1:34:45

levels because we're already have the minutes for the meeting the written minutes of the meeting official record this meeting or is that on a different agenda item i just didn't

1:34:53

want to get off track if that was she had brought it up that's what i was wondering so well i think

1:34:58

it's a separate i think i think it would be useful for if similarly the small group or a small group

1:35:05

met to come up with some frame around archiving um because i think it doesn't make sense for any

1:35:17

one person to make a a recommendation blanket without listening first to find out what are

1:35:26

people doing what are some different technical options out there what has um what has worked

1:35:36

and what hasn't worked and certainly the vermont access network has some things to offer i think

1:35:43

the vermont historic records project would have some information to offer around archiving so

1:35:51

i mean i think that's what we were trying to do with the hybrid remote meeting is sort of

1:35:57

listen into the ethos of what people are doing use that research and um expertise to

1:36:08

put forth some options that people could do and then again to put a price point on it so

1:36:21

i i i it would be useful to have a smaller group meet around archiving and maybe that

1:36:26

includes somebody from the records project um

1:36:36

is that related to the vermont digital archives project well there's a i mean so many people are

1:36:42

doing oh the digital archives i don't know i don't know if that's there's statutes around

1:36:47

archives i don't find a uh a homepage for the records program the vermont just a

1:36:53

youtube channel the vermont the vh it's a it's a it's the division of the secretary of state's

1:37:00

office so jenny may know what i'm referring to tanya tanya um and and that's about all

1:37:07

i know about it but yes it's out of the it's out of varata the vermont state archives and records administration okay yep and so they they have and and i will also say that um

1:37:22

yeah so they're i mean it's basically like i mean i again without leading with this

1:37:31

solutions it's just what are people doing around the state around archiving of municipal meetings

1:37:41

what's working well what needs more support and i understand that there's the current statute which

1:37:49

which is 30 days i you know again i think that's completely that that's fine it's the statute it's

1:37:59

the law i think we could recommend um practices that allow folks to hold on to meetings for longer

1:38:08

there could be an argument for not holding on to meetings but i i cannot i wouldn't wouldn't go down that i'm not interested in going down that route i would like yeah

1:38:22

so i think that piece of things falls under our best practice recommendations that long list the

1:38:34

best practices for running effective inclusive meetings best practices for universal design best practice for open meeting law training and then best practice for recording minute

1:38:44

meetings of municipal public bodies and the means and timeline for posting those recordings so i think all these things are so wrapped up in each other right but i think that

1:38:54

one's going to fall within our best practices guide which i think is something we're talking

1:39:00

about literally every single meeting because what we think on all of those topics informs

1:39:06

every other obligation we have under this under this statute but i so i'm just looking to see

1:39:14

this is if i so i guess that would it could it does fall within this though right because if to if if we're saying to run effective and inclusive meetings we need to have a means

1:39:27

of making those recordings of meetings available and accessible and usable and findable and all of

1:39:34

those things for for people at least in the short term and arguably in the long long term depending

1:39:43

um then then that is that is a piece of this what equipment might you need what technical

1:39:48

assistance might you need right so i i think there is a place for that in this in this item that was i i just thought that out out loud so thank you for listening to it

1:40:02

um so so i think it is fine if folks want to meet together non-quums offline

1:40:10

my hesitancy to try to organize subgroups is that if folks are talking about things

1:40:19

nonquorum offline we are not within the open meeting law if we are directing and tasking

1:40:27

um committees to do work then we're bringing those groups in under the open meeting law and i

1:40:36

i don't want to be personally trying to um

1:40:45

make be following up with umbrella or parent child i'm trying to figure out the word is

1:40:54

um with smaller groups we're we're not set up to be following through with all the opening law obligations for for committee groups so if people want to have offline gatherings

1:41:05

to discuss stuff and work on things i think that's great um and bringing it back to the larger group but that is not something like if i'm not going to be participating in the meeting

1:41:12

myself i'm not going to be able to making sure we get we're meeting all the obligations for the open meeting law for those groups so that's why that's why you're not hearing me jump in and say

1:41:20

i'm assigning committees and subgroups to do to do this work and and to bring it back yes frank

1:41:26

i think megan will agree and susan possibly and andy that initially there was a proposal megan i

1:41:35

think you came out with a skip or susan came out with a pretty four meetings and we had quite a

1:41:41

chunk of time for those meetings to be set up and that conflicted with andy's schedule and a little

1:41:47

bit with mine but i was open to jump things around so finally we got four of us together and then we

1:41:54

had a spreadsheet we worked on and then there was another meeting that andy couldn't make and

1:41:59

then i had a last minute changes in my scheduling so i couldn't make it and so and it was two times

1:42:06

sometime it was either 11 or 2:00 one or the other and so then it became a a a problem um and it and

1:42:15

i would like to been there but i couldn't and andy i think would like to been there and couldn't and

1:42:21

so then you worked on the text document which was pretty much a large part of the last meeting um

1:42:28

and and that was the first time i'd seen it you know from that perspective so it's difficult to

1:42:35

get all the ducks in a row and hurting chickens and all that metaphors but uh for these smaller

1:42:42

meetings to where you're respecting quorums and you're respecting certain number of participants

1:42:48

in a meeting to be there to to get the openness of the meat of the meeting itself presented out to

1:42:57

other viewpoints so yeah i think you're correct on that so we have so we kelly included that document

1:43:06

in the agenda so everyone now has a hand on that um and i think i think we're all just building on

1:43:11

each other's work i think that's that's going to be something that that we reference when we're drafting up um the very rough draft that i'm hoping to to come up with um as a starting place

1:43:23

as a secondary starting place for us to work on so you know i think yes yes go ahead megan yeah

1:43:30

could i have um ask another question process-wise so you're talking about uh best practices guides

1:43:39

from the secretary of state's office is that what we're going to present to the legislature as our

1:43:46

report or are those two different things well so our report has eight components seven substantive

1:43:58

and an eight eight is a catch-all study other topics y one of those components is for our group

1:44:04

to recommend best practices for a list of things so got it effective inclusive meetings universal

1:44:11

design open meeting law training recording meetings those four so in our report the floor

1:44:18

is we must recommend best practices for all those things lauren's idea and i think it's a good one

1:44:25

is to try to transform that into if we have the time and the ability this group a best practices

1:44:32

guide so that in the report we could say here's our guide this is what we're recommending and hit

1:44:38

that and therefore we have a usable document that's not just you know bullet points in a

1:44:44

report that folks don't necessarily read instead we have it never gets turned into anything useful right instead we have a document that we can share out into the universe and i think that

1:44:53

would be a that's a goal whether we'll get there i don't know you know but at at minimum we'll be

1:44:58

providing to the legislature recommendations for best practices that we could then transform into

1:45:04

an actual guide if we don't get there by november one and so one part of our go ahead yeah i know

1:45:11

well my followup question there is so we have you know for example best practices for are our

1:45:19

best practices limited to the current statute or are we also going to make recommendations

1:45:27

for expansion or changes to the current statute so if we're making recommendations

1:45:34

around hybrid remote meetings and we say it's a good idea for everybody to

1:45:41

do hybrid remote meetings i think we need to acknowledge what statute and

1:45:46

what's not statute it's a good idea to archive your meetings in this way

1:45:55

but the statute only says 30 days and if it's only 30 days i mean if somebody came to me and was like

1:46:02

i need to save my meetings for 30 days what's the best way to do that i would say put them on a hard drive back them up here and then delete them every 3 months right it's a very different thing

1:46:16

right so you're saying best practices to comply with existing statute is very different if we

1:46:22

they're saying best practices in a perfect world where we had the statutes written the way we think

1:46:27

would actually maximize accessibility or right so and maybe there's a spot between here and a

1:46:35

perfect world right right of course with each county having the financial resources of the

1:46:41

state well so so right so i think i mean that is a good question i think how i would think about

1:46:48

addressing it would be having a best practices guide for statute as is but being very clear in

1:46:56

that you know or at least it's in the context of the report right if especially if we're doing a

1:47:02

guide that goes out into the universe we would want to then put our caveats in the report if

1:47:07

we're saying that this is how you would do it if this is the universe we're operating within

1:47:13

however we think it would be a better universe to operate within been if we could change the law to say xyz or to address this problem in which case these these these best practices wouldn't

1:47:23

our practices would change accordingly right as i mean that's how i would i would think i would

1:47:28

address it that that there would be text within if we have a guide that's going to be out in the universe guide it would be current law and then we would have wraparound text in the recommendations

1:47:38

to the legislature saying we don't think the law goes far enough in these areas and we would adapt

1:47:45

accordingly if if if you would the current law wasn't on board go ahead i'm sorry oh that was me

1:47:57

megan wasn't on board when you clarified that the tiers the state is a hybrid in the municipalities

1:48:04

a different requirement as far as the hybrid needs right the recommendations are different

1:48:12

that's confusing in this in the statute itself but megan yeah right right right is it it the

1:48:19

municipalities aren't required to do hybrid now under i think yeah i think i think megan i think

1:48:26

megan's on board with that too yeah yeah hey susan did you have your hand up yeah i i i um i think

1:48:33

that the best practices piece will be um you know a interesting and and good process i think once we

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start getting into what do we recommend that the legislature change um that's when the rubber hits

1:48:45

the road and all of a sudden we find out that um that's why this committee was um created the

1:48:51

way it was is because some of these issues are things that the legislature has tried to address and found um that there's not agreement um some of these things are really gnarly some of them

1:49:00

are common sense and some of them are like wait a second is this a mandate or is this a um and you

1:49:05

know andy's talked about tiers like you know maybe these are uh recommendations for you know towns

1:49:11

or whatever committees with resources and with a smaller audience you know and it goes on up um so

1:49:18

i think that is is a a very charged um uh and it's just so weird that we have so many um interests

1:49:27

that aren't haven't even been uh represented in these conversations um and so it's it's not going

1:49:33

to it's not going to be i just want to set that aside it's not that's it's not going to be as simple as it as it sounds i think i think perhaps um but best practice i think we should be able i

1:49:44

don't think any of it sounds simple for the record i think i think every single one of these these tasks is is huge in and of itself and i agree we need we need more folks in the room and we're

1:49:54

going to that's partly why i want to try to get something down as a the roughest of rough drafts

1:49:59

so we have something to be like if you can't come take to sit here in the room with us can you at least look at this and tell me like where the giant gaps are and where i'm flat out wrong and

1:50:09

where you know where we can take it further you know so that's my hope which is why i wanted to

1:50:15

which is why i asked to convene folks that have a distinct interest so that we have and meat to work

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on um but i think um and i'm i'm happy to do that again i recog you know with an acknowledgement to

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frank that of course it's going to be um difficult to schedule us um but i think if we share back our

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findings it's it's actually more accountable um than just coming with our own specific interests

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and megan i can try if it's helpful to figure out who specifically at visara

1:51:00

might be a useful person to um participate in in that kind of conversation i'm not sure who

1:51:07

it would be right now but i i i'm sure i can find that out fairly quickly so i will do that

1:51:14

which organization was that oh from from the vermont state archives folks for the um historical records project yeah like i know that they stood up a video archive at one point

1:51:27

um and then there there's beginnings of of creating a a kind of statewide archive you

1:51:34

know i think there their work there's work that they're doing it may not be where it's at but i

1:51:39

think tying it together and i think regardless of whether we think we're going to get funding

1:51:46

out of the legislature to support municipalities taking up hybrid meetings as an example i think we

1:51:58

have to come up with a i think we have to present them with a picture of where we're at as well as

1:52:07

best practices i think without presenting them a picture of where we're at currently in the

1:52:14

state who is supporting this work who's already doing the training that the secretary of state's

1:52:21

may or may not have to pick up on its own who's already assisting with archiving and access where

1:52:31

those funds are coming from unless we have that picture who's already supporting you know doing

1:52:39

uh disability rights is doing already regular surveys of towns around um accessibility issues

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to lead with best practices would be fine but i think we have to match it with a mirror that

1:52:58

we hold up to the state about where we're at i don't imagine that information exists

1:53:04

megan what information a survey of of current practices no disability rights vermont um was

1:53:14

saying that they currently do a survey around polls if i remember correctly the last we had

1:53:20

is 2018 um okay and that's just for places no i know i exactly but that would be a mirror so

1:53:29

that would say up until 2018 disability rights vermont was doing surveys of polling places i

1:53:35

think that the town clerks could theoretically be in a good position to uh fill in some of

1:53:42

that yeah but do do am i not making sense andy in terms i get it yeah no i you're it's a good thing

1:53:52

and i think you know in in in the tasks that were given us here they the legislature did include

1:53:59

something like that for the voting end of things in so far as we are to analyze voter turnout and

1:54:07

the voting methods currently used throughout the state that's a specific task that's on here that's something that we're hoping our elections team wow okay isn't that nice i know you can do

1:54:16

that jenny we'll sign up i well i think that we are hoping you know our election sean and our elections folks can take the lead on that piece um but but that that's that's something that they

1:54:26

that they recognized i think in this task that if we're doing all these things we should be talking

1:54:31

about what voter turnout look like right now what are methods are we using right now and there isn't something like that specifically stated in here for the public meeting side of things but i think

1:54:40

it's i i think it's an absolutely good point um to the degree we can compile what exists it's

1:54:48

out there and look at that and also reference that right we're we're not we're not operating in

1:54:55

a void right community nurses go ahead community nurses are a great resource for small towns to

1:55:06

be able to do an informal survey of what's needed because they're out and about we have

1:55:13

uh and also food shelves and things like that as a certain population they are aware of

1:55:20

uh the the preventions of people coming and participating more than most people would be

1:55:30

and i think we can take that up too with one of our other topics which is um looking at whether increased use of resources for participants and they list out a whole host of

1:55:41

sort of child care translators transportation food um including hybrid meetings and also um other

1:55:49

other accommodations that you might you might think of are directly related what looking looking at those and saying whether increasing investment in those resources would have down effect um and

1:56:00

i think that's that's going to be part of that conversation as well i think on the investment side i had a conversation with an office staff in our town clerk's office and i had a change

1:56:12

that needed to be updated to the website we have a contractor handling it and any little change has

1:56:19

a bill that's associated with it so they were discouraging changes to the website because of

1:56:25

cost factors having to do with their budget of updating the website so all this stuff costs

1:56:32

money and it's payroll money is the worst kind of money because tech you can buy and it's in there

1:56:38

but and if the state wants to pay for it all and house it all at the state level then all the towns

1:56:44

have no cost it's all here at the state and then you got it done the state doesn't want to do that

1:56:52

well that's the only way it's ever going to get done because otherwise you have no enforcement we just talk about enforcement megan we talked about enforcement that there isn't any on existing

1:57:01

handicap access rules just a simple polling sites cynthia your hand is up did you have a

1:57:07

did you have a a comment or question or something you wanted to add no sorry i no sorry that's okay

1:57:15

forgot to no no it's fine no i just want to i i'm not always the best at getting the hands and so

1:57:21

i'm i'm trying very very hard to to recognize them when they're up so i think i think this

1:57:28

is we're at a a place to end here for now frank i'm gonna i'm gonna i'm gonna yes um so we are

1:57:34

um it's right afternoon um our next meeting is july 10th and that is devoted to talking

1:57:44

about this accessibility guide um i am hoping i don't know if everyone i Megan i'm going to

1:57:50

hope to have something down um that's draft like for what we've what we've done so far and when i

1:57:57

say draft i mean very rough outline but at least a working working point from where we're going

1:58:02

to be filling in the gaps we're also going to try to get more people at the table um who are on our stakeholder list that haven't been here um but that's july 10th at 10:00 i have down

1:58:14

in person right i think we had discussed folks were hoping to do a hopefully in-person meeting

1:58:20

obviously we're going to run it as a hybrid meeting for those if you going to run it as a hybrid meeting um but i think if folks can get here for that that was that was the hope of

1:58:30

the group um and that would be here at secretary of state's office in montillier so with that does

1:58:37

anyone have anything else they want to add to the whole group before we adjourn for now

1:58:44

thank you all i know these are not easy conversations i know they're incredibly complicated they're incredibly thorny and it's it's it's a lot of deep thinking that we're having

1:58:52

to do here so i appreciate everyone putting in the time yeah i actually do have a comment sorry

1:58:58

i know you were doing such a good job wrapping us up um i we we did uh have a note that said

1:59:05

in person i think we talked about that last time but in fact um i believe it was going to be the

1:59:11

the 24th which because that one was going to be talking about town meeting and that was sort of

1:59:17

okay so here's what i'll do i will look into that we'll make sure we get some information

1:59:23

about it or if we if we need to take a group poll and see who can do what again or i will

1:59:28

follow up on that piece and figure out okay what we're doing and what the hope is
yeah

1:59:35

i think a good hybrid meeting where's the town meeting that makes sense okay so
we're looking

1:59:40

at i'll put a question mark for that one and i will sort that and follow up with folks by
email

1:59:47

at some point soon okay thank you absolutely all right well thank you all much
appreciated byebye