

Meeting Minutes for Green Mountain Self-Advocates

I. Meeting Details

Meeting Leader: Lisa Rudiakov, Board President

Date: September 25, 2023 Time: 10:00 AM EST Location: on Zoom

Background Information: GMSA Officers and GMSA staff met virtually on September 22, 2023, for 60 minutes to prepare the agenda and meeting slides.

As an accommodation for board members with disabilities, notes are recorded live by Max Barrows and Karen Topper and displayed on a shared screen by GMSA Staff. Staff monitor the chat and read comments from board members who type to communicate.

II. Members Present

We had a Quorum with the following 13 members in attendance:

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|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Chad Cleverly, Treasurer | 8. Lisa Rudiakov, President |
| 2. Christopher Dubeau | 9. Marjorie Burns |
| 3. Erik Johnson | 10. Ocean Streater |
| 4. Gary VyhnaK | 11. Taylor Terry |
| 5. Heather Raymond | 12. Tesha Thibodeau |
| 6. Jennifer Rainville | 13. Whitley Draper |
| 7. Levi Gardner, Vice-President | |

III. ABSENCES.

- Skye Peebles (excused);
- Lehana Guyette (excused);
- Nicole Villemaire (excused).

IV. Call to Order

President Lisa Rudiakov started the meeting at 10:00 AM EST. Everyone introduced themselves and provided an update on local group activities.

The meeting agenda was shared on screen and read by Lisa R. Click here to see the agenda on slide #1 of the GMSA Board Meeting 9.25.23 slide document. The board members approved the agenda without any changes.

V. OLD BUSINESS.

- **VT Leadership Series** requires 10 self-advocates and 10 parents. GMSA recruited enough self-advocates, but Vermont Family Network was not able to recruit parents to attend. This means Leadership is canceled.
- In November 2022, the federal government state (DSDD) ordered the state to develop a **New Case Management System**. The current DDS system violates Medicaid Conflict of Interest regulations. GMSA held 1 virtual and 5 in-person focus groups with 79 members from August 30th through September 14th.
[Click here to read the GMSA feedback submitted to the state on 9/15/2023.](#)
- **GMSA Gala** - The Montpelier hotel we contracted with to hold our Gala was flooded. Other similar event places are farther away and too expensive. **The board discussed and unanimously agreed for GMSA staff to organize a "less formal" event like a pizza dance party held in a high school or college gym.**

VI. NEW BUSINESS.

- **Hiring a Person's Parent to Be Their Support Worker** - During COVID the state (DSDD) started paying a person's parents to be their support staff. Before COVID paying parents was not an option. Now the state is considering making the option of paying parents permanent.
DDS Director Jennifer Garabedian asked to meet with self-advocates talk to about this topic. Jennifer works for the state. She is in charge of developmental services.
Lisa Rudiakov made a motion for GMSA to organize a meeting with Director Jennifer Garabedian on Thursday, October 5th on Zoom from 4:00 to 5:30.

Levi Gardner seconded the motion. The motion passed 12 in favor and 1 person abstained.

The board discussed the topic. Comments shared by board members are included on slides #7 through #11 of the GMSA Board Meeting 9.25.23 slide document.

- **Vermont was awarded a Pathways 2 Partnership Grant. It is a 5 Year Project working with High Schools students with disabilities.** The goal is to ensure all students have a pathway to college or a career. GMSA will work with other partners to improve transition services for students with disabilities. The board reviewed and discussed the proposed budget. GMSA staff provided examples of our role in the project. Details are included on slides #12 through #15 of the GMSA Board Meeting 9.25.23 slide document.

The Board discussed the selection of board members to serve on a **Pathways 2 Partnership** committee. Lisa Rudiakov, Chad Cleverley, Taylor Terry and Levi Gardner will serve on the committee during 2024 (when the project begins).

- Board members reviewed financial reports for August. Officers answered questions about what types of expenses are in the different expense categories. GMSA staff shared invoices to show the type of expenses. Details are included on slides #16 through #18 of the GMSA Board Meeting 9.25.23 slide document. **Financial statements were approved and submitted unanimously.**

VII. Meeting Ends.

President Lisa Rudiakov adjourned the meeting at noon EST.