

State of Vermont
Artificial Intelligence Task Force
Established Pursuant to Act 137 (H.378) of the 2017-2018 Legislative Session
Meeting No. 10
Friday August 23rd, 2019 1:16 – 3:46 p.m.
Montpelier Conference Room, basement level
Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development
1 National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620

Members present: John Cohn; Donna Rizzo; Joe Segale; Mark Combs; Honorable John Dooley; Brian Cina; Jill Charbonneau; and Eugene Santos, Jr.

Witnesses: Sue Zeller; Catherine Benham

Others: Evan Hinchliffe; Dennis Labounty

Members Missing: Michael Schirling; Milo Cress; Trey Dobson, MD; Christopher Herrick; Brian Breslend; and James Lyall

Staff Present: Ryan Flanagan

(1:16-1:19) Welcome, review of agenda

- ❖ The meeting was called to order by John Dooley, who substituted for Brian Bresland as chair. The Taskforce reviewed the agenda. John Dooley described the reason Sue Zeller was addressing the Taskforce.

(1:19-1:19) Public comment

- ❖ No member of the public was present to comment so the meeting moved forward to next agenda item.

(1:20-1:53) Review of requirements of the report

- ❖ John Dooley called attention to the memorandum that he has written that was posted in Slack and urged members to look at the specific requirements in the document. Printed copies were provided for the members for viewing purposes.

The memo noted that the Taskforce had assigned subcommittees for the five specific elements of the report in order to drafts of each element. It also noted that the legislation creating the taskforce, Act 137 of 2018, appeared to have other requirements for the report, including providing recommendations on use of artificial intelligence by state government.

- The Taskforce decided by consensus that recommendations of use by state government should be included under the fourth required element of the report and the report

should address opportunities for economic opportunity in Vermont by state support of AI.

- After this, the Taskforce discussed the information available in drafting the report.
 - John Dooley emphasized the material posted on Slack, the cloud bases software, from the various witnesses and from Taskforce members, including the report template with the drafting to date. He noted that Slack was being used to provide public access to Taskforce activities, so it had to be used for posting taskforce materials and for communication between members.
 - Donna Rizzo noted that the report of the legislative research group at UVM, done at the request of Representative Cina by students, on AI activity around the country was very helpful and useful for the report.

Eugene recommended that we reach out to UVM to update this study, and Brian Cina agreed to do so.

(2:00-2:20) Review of Technology Committee progress

- ❖ Sue Zeller, Performance Officer for the Vermont Agency of Administration addressed the Taskforce on a recent meeting of the Sunset Advisory Commission, created by 3 V.S.A. § 268, that addressed the need for state boards and commissions related to technology. The meeting, as reported by VTDigger, had concluded that there was overlap in aspects of coverage by boards and commissions but that there was a need for a board or commission with more general oversight of the subject. The presentation was helpful to the Taskforce because it is required to report on whether there should be a permanent AI Commission. The discussion focused on whether AI could be combined with other technology subjects in a permanent commission and whether the Legislature was likely to fund staff for a study commission.

(2:20-3:00) Future Public Hearings and Meetings of the Taskforce

- ❖ Since the task force has been established, there have been two public hearings, with one in Burlington and one in Lyndon, VT.
- ❖ Both were well received and drew in people that were eager to participate in civic discourse.
- ❖ Knowing that these meetings were well-received, the task force looked to set dates and locations for future public hearings in September or October.
- ❖ After discussion, John Cohn moved that the Taskforce have a public hearing at the 2919 Vermont Tech Jam, to be held in October at the Essex Fairgrounds. Joe Segale seconded the motion. Presiding Chair John Dooley requested a roll call for the vote, all voted in favor and the motion passed. 8-0-0.
 - Aye: John Cohn; Donna Rizzo; Joe Segale; Mark Combs; Honorable John Dooley; Brian Cina; Jill Charbonneau; and Eugene Santos, Jr.
 - Nay: None
 - Abstain: None
- ❖ Jill Charbonneau moved that the Taskforce hold two public hearings in September and early October in the White River area and in Manchester. Brian Cina seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. It was agreed that Ryan Flanagan would work to communicate with possible venues for these hearings, then set up a Doodle Poll to pick times that best suit the members of the task force.
- ❖ The Taskforce then addressed when to hold its next meeting. After extensive discussion, the next meeting was scheduled for 9:00 am to noon on Monday September 23rd. The Taskforce agreed that

a special invitation should be made to Lindsay Kurrle, the new Secretary of the Agency of Commerce & Community Development, to attend the meeting.

(3:00-3:30) Mandate in the statute to address the Vermont fiscal impact of AI

- ❖ Catherine Benham, Associate Fiscal Officer/Chief Operating Officer, of Vermont Joint Fiscal Office, gave a presentation to the group on fiscal impact on the State of Vermont of AI. She handed out a summary of the conclusions of a brainstorming meeting of the joint fiscal office staff on the subject. The summary has been posted on Slack.
 - Her presentation focused on how AI would affect current changes that Vermont is experiencing, which include economic and demographic changes.
 - Her key points included that fiscal measurement is difficult, AI will impact both state revenues and state expenditures as well as the economy generally, and continued monitoring and proactive thinking is critical.
 - Her partial list of impacts highlighted direct impacts to State government, indirect impacts to the State government and Vermont economy, and potential impacts on key service sectors (ex. healthcare).
- ❖ After presenting, Catherine Benham opened up the group to discussion.
 - Catherine noted that AI will affect Vermont very differently from other states.
 - For example, autonomous cars might not roll out as fast in Vermont, as not all roads are paved.
 - She also noted that AI could indirectly help disadvantaged parts of the state
 - Mark Combs asked Catherine her thoughts on the future economy of Vermont with AI.
 - Catherine explained that Vermont is definitely an incubator and it could help to further Vermont's green markets.
 - Brian Cina said that her presentation was thorough in that it highlighted both positive and negative effects of this technology.

(3:30-3:46) Additional business

- ❖ John Cohn moved to accept meeting minutes from February 22, 2019. Joe Segale seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed. 8-0-0.
 - Aye: John Cohn; Donna Rizzo; Joe Segale; Mark Combs; Honorable John Dooley; Brian Cina; Jill Charbonneau; and Eugene Santos, Jr.
 - Nay: None
 - Abstain: None
- ❖ Jill Charbonneau moved to accept meeting minutes from June 14, 2019. Donna Rizzo seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed. 7-0-1.
 - Aye: John Cohn; Donna Rizzo; Joe Segale; Mark Combs; Honorable John Dooley; Brian Cina; Jill Charbonneau; and Eugene Santos, Jr.
 - Nay: None
 - Abstain: Joe Segale
- ❖ At 3:46, the meeting adjourned.
 - Those still present broke into their subcommittees to discuss development of the report.