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Act 133 Working Group Meeting Transcript – February 19, 2026

0:02

2 seconds

and jump jump in. So this is our as I understand it this is the penultimate meeting of the um of the act 133 group

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staying with our um time frame we last laid out. This is the uh the meeting to

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to discuss the best practices pro promising practices sheet and and guide

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uh and we were going to take the feedback that's that we get in this in

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36 seconds

this meeting and send out um an updated best practices guide March 12th. We had

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built in space for then a final meeting of the of the working group for for

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March 19th and then to finalize the best practices guide and um and submit it to

1:00

1 minute

the legislature the the fourth week of of March. Um, having said that, if we get through pieces today and feel that

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we're uh close enough and feel good about where we are with the best practices after we submit them, can take

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the feedback and could decide by by email. We don't necessarily need to meet on on March 19th, but that's something

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we can decide at the end of of this meeting uh how how far we get in this meeting and how we all feel about the the best practices guide.

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Having said that, so as far as the actual steps for for going

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through um the guide and the and the resources,

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do anybody does anybody want to weigh in? Do we have thoughts of just kind of

proceeding from from the start of the

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1 minute, 57 seconds

guide? Um and uh and going from from that if anybody

2:14

2 minutes, 14 seconds

The resources correct? Yes.

2:17

2 minutes, 17 seconds

The resources are just a compilation of every that was discussed, mentioned, put in

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2 minutes, 24 seconds

the chat um during our meetings. So this is what this was. So this was the complete

universe of what we're aware of the do of the resources that are out

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2 minutes, 32 seconds

there that may be relevant to this guide. So that's what we were working from whenever

we started plugging them into the the draft. So and I thought

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2 minutes, 41 seconds

that a good point of reference for everyone to have in case there's one you sort of

remember having talked about but you're not sure about. Um they're on here and

they're linked where we have found them online.

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2 minutes, 51 seconds

Yes. So since we're working on the best practices and this document to to submit to the

legislature going through that is

3:00

3 minutes

the place of feedback. I don't think we need to go through the whole set of resources,

but as Jenny says, it is a it is a great reference and if anyone sees

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3 minutes, 8 seconds

any pieces in there that we want to pull into the guide or uh you deliver in a different way, that certainly I think can be the focal point of the

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conversation. But I think focusing the the agenda on going through the guide since that's our task at hand. Um yeah,

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made made sense. Uh the only thing missing in the resources that was mentioned briefly in the report

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was open- source resources which were not investigated is what essentially what the report stipulates and so I was wondering if the resources

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could add an intro to open-source type of information with as a mild education as the direction that's going since it's

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huge in the world uh from uh government operations industry. Um, every single Android

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3 minutes, 56 seconds

phone, it's the number one operating system is Linux. Every single Android phone is running Linux and uh, Apple is

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4 minutes, 3 seconds

a minor player. Uh, every single major Google, every Amazon, every major player

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4 minutes, 10 seconds

server-wise is is running Linux. Um, and they're doing it because it's better and they're doing it because it doesn't cost

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4 minutes, 19 seconds

them on a per server license or per user license. Uh, so they can scale out without the Microsoft bill coming or something like this.

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4 minutes, 27 seconds

Right. Yeah. I hear what you're saying, Frank, for the open source piece and component.

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4 minutes, 32 seconds

But I think looking back at the structures we have of best practices and promising practices and the the sections

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4 minutes, 40 seconds

um around again with the focus being on effective and and inclusive meetings. So really with the best practices related

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4 minutes, 49 seconds

to to that component that we have those uh categories right now the the guiding guiding principles the you know meeting

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meeting preparation the meeting structure facilitation and community standards the the hybrid meetings education and training

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5 minutes, 7 seconds

community engagement and civics and then additional resources community partners just to clarify what you're saying with the open source

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Were you seeing that as falling into additional resources somehow or I additional resources basically

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5 minutes, 23 seconds

education educational resources I think because when you look at the number of them it's you have a lot of reading and education to do on some of it right

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would you say business so I I just

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our legislative charge is not necessarily related to the full breadth of everything that is in our report.

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5 minutes, 47 seconds

Um the best best practices portion is one is part of one of the of the eight or is all of one of the eight

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charges we have. And so the best practices are to relate to running effective and inclusive meetings, maximizing particular

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accessibility, right? use of universal design um training public bodies for open meeting law compliance and recording

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meetings of public bodies um and posting those recordings. So those are the pieces which the legislature envisioned

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us recommending best practices for which is definitely not the full universe of everything that we've addressed in the

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report and talked about in this group if that makes sense. And I I guess I'm I'm not totally clear on where what you're suggesting would fit within

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Well, there's there's several factors which came up for discussion and if we had more time and more involvement with the technical side, we could have gotten

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into it that number one, the chat side of things is

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confusing for public meetings because even if you were doing ASL, how is the person who is doing the ASL translation

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7 minutes, 1 second

handling the regular meeting and also being able to stay along with the chat?

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7 minutes, 4 seconds

chat at the same time and so then the chairperson really is in control of the meeting. So should it should be you

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7 minutes, 12 seconds

should be able to disable the chat and as a best practice for not have chat operating uh period and with the open

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source model like JY for example because it's open source and you can customize it is you could totally remove chat from that that product as a hybrid product.

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7 minutes, 30 seconds

Okay. You could also totally remove AI from the product as whereas Microsoft and Zoom and all these are diving over

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7 minutes, 38 seconds

themselves to include AI and more of it as we move along uh headlong into it on a comp they're

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7 minutes, 45 seconds

like competitive to see if they can be ahead of the other people. It's a big marketing position for them when really it has nothing to do with running a government meeting. Yeah.

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7 minutes, 54 seconds

Uh thanks Frank on that. I just see I see Laura having a hands up. Is that in regards to this discussion and point on this.

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8 minutes, 5 seconds

Yeah. Yes, it is. Yeah.

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8 minutes, 8 seconds

Okay. Laura, was yours or is yours a separate point, Laura? Um,

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maybe separate.

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It's the same topic about the AI captioning thing. I just wanted to give you like a heads up. It's it's been on my radar for the past few weeks and I'm

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in collaboration with the agency of digital services to um create some sort

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of standard protocol to make sure that anyone who AI captured on whatever

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platform they're using, however they're using it, whether it's an accommodation for themselves or for the community,

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it's more of there's a lot of issues around where people are concerned about the lack of security, the lack of

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8 minutes, 54 seconds

accuracy or concern about misuse and even right now the agency of

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9 minutes, 2 seconds

services had basically asked me to be part of their guinea pig to use co-pilot which is basically AI.

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So it's a hot topic right now and not just at the state level but like everywhere really like even my husband

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and his workplace basically sending 250 people to go to a conference in Las Vegas that focus just on AI and

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healthcare even healthcare using AI it's all over and Laura see I apologize I should have

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9 minutes, 40 seconds

said Laura Laura Seagull and Laura Kushman both had the hands up But on that from Laura Seagull with given that

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9 minutes, 47 seconds

with did you have a thought Laura on where in the best practice guide or how that should be framed or or inserted?

9:56

9 minutes, 56 seconds

Um my comment wasn't about AI or the use of um interpretive technology or um

10:06

10 minutes, 6 seconds

so no that's not what I was commenting about.

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10 minutes, 10 seconds

Okay. All right. I'll loop back to you, Laura Kushman, on that. Laura Laura Seagull, did you did you have a suggestion of where to make that point

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10 minutes, 18 seconds

in the best practices guide or unfortunately I am not permitted to

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comment because I haven't been given the authoration approver to stay at this point. It's in the works.

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All right, that makes understood. And we'll loop back to you in a second,

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10 minutes, 46 seconds

Laura Kushman, but I know Muhammad, you had said you had a feedback on this point too, Muhammad.

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10 minutes, 52 seconds

Yes, I do. Uh just uh try to reiterate maybe something and to stay on the clear

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10 minutes, 59 seconds
side, um whenever I hear universal design for learning, I get concerned. Um
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11 minutes, 6 seconds
why? because there is uh it's a deep um framework. So
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11 minutes, 13 seconds
I my point is let's not just name a framework and not detail
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11 minutes, 21 seconds
how that is utilized or used um in terms of universal or UDL per se. uh universal
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11 minutes, 31 seconds
design has changed and the newest version is out there if I remember correctly it came
out 2020 and within
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that it has multiple checkpoints and each check each of the checkpoint is a whole guide
uh
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11 minutes, 48 seconds
I mean train of guidance. So I just want to make sure when we use certain term that it is
explicit to folks and overall
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11 minutes, 56 seconds
I can sum it up as when we use UDL in this conversation it is nothing else but
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12 minutes, 3 seconds
promote more accessibility in whatsoever it is and where does accessibility fit
12:10
12 minutes, 10 seconds
within UDL. So that's what I invite us all to make sure we understand it. That's all. Thank
you.
12:18
12 minutes, 18 seconds
Thank you. Thank you, Mark. And Laura,
12:21
12 minutes, 21 seconds
Laura Kush, you're So, I was just going to say um uh that
12:29
12 minutes, 29 seconds
uh thank you uh that I appreciate the version that was sent to us all by Kelly on the 13th.
Uh a much much more fleshed
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12 minutes, 39 seconds

out version um than the original that we received. And I may have been a little confused about what the hope and expectation was um with that first one.

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12 minutes, 49 seconds

I was a little befuddled I think um in conversation with uh Big

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um and Sarah from VCIL um and Big from Human Rights Commission.

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Uh we were all just um not sure what to do with that first one

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because it didn't contain any of the information that the second version has got in it. And so I just wanted to say

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the second version uh clearly um presents a lot more of what we have

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discussed. I think um I think maybe there could be more

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best practices included in terms of um making sure that

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um maybe the best practices need to contain some instruction about

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uh reasonable accommodation requests.

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um when when all the other best practices are in place and still there are people who who need um additional

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14 minutes, 5 seconds

accommodations and what our best practices might be for suggesting how the towns deal with um those in a more

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14 minutes, 14 seconds

standardized and universal way. Um, but again, uh, thank you. Thank you for this additional version because it's much

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14 minutes, 23 seconds

better. And now we can't see you again in, um, the Secretary of State's office, so it's hard to know who's talking.

14:32

14 minutes, 32 seconds

There you go. There you are. Oh, no. Yes. No. Yes. No. You're not there.

14:39

14 minutes, 39 seconds

There you are. We are here. even if you don't see us.

14:43

14 minutes, 43 seconds

But if you don't see us, let us know because we don't see that happening in the room.

It's hard for us to notice that that's happening. So, I apologize.

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14 minutes, 51 seconds

Um I think Laura, your comment is really well taken on reasonable accommodations and we would like your

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15 minutes

help. Um because what we don't want to do is undercut what is already legally required around reasonable accommodations by putting anything

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related to it in the best practice guide. But there's clearly best practices attached as well.

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So if you could help us with navigating that, I think that would be really helpful. And I know my voice should.

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15 minutes, 26 seconds

So you know the difference between what's legally required and then best practices around it because what I don't

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want to imply is that following the law is a best practice because it's not.

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It's it's required by the law. Um and that's just been a tricky line for us all along.

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So we would like your help on that. And yes, I think you know having um reasonable accommodations uh discussed

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in public forum like let's try and encourage that not to happen. Um is it allowable? I don't I don't even know.

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16 minutes, 2 seconds

But I know that we don't want it to be happening. So, um, let's let's make sure to bake some of that into the, um, best

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16 minutes, 10 seconds

practices. And I'm going to start talking. Thank you.

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16 minutes, 15 seconds

And yes, you got our our draft. What you saw is we're trying to bring you along in our drafting process. Um, and so that was first draft and second draft.

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16 minutes, 29 seconds

Laura Seagull.

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16 minutes, 31 seconds

Yes. Yeah. Please, please do. I wanted to piggy back to what you said Lauren.

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16 minutes, 36 seconds

So in the past whenever a town reaches out to me I always feel like they're asking me for legal advice

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in addition to respect practices for accommodation and I'm always like my lawyer

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go back I always tell people go back to your town figure out what you have in terms of a budget. what do you have

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17 minutes, 1 second

available to provide the accommodation because I realized not every town had the same budget

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and so in order for me to share respect practices it feels like I'm I'm in the wrong position to give any sort of best

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practice advice especially when I have no idea no grasp of what kind of a budget that specific town has and what

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they can offer in terms of accommodation you know what I mean so I think It would be really nice if you could just lay out

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17 minutes, 32 seconds
or map out examples of what is not beyond reasonable accommodation.
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17 minutes, 42 seconds
That's my two I guess to clarify and maybe this is for Laura Kushman too where you're thinking
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17 minutes, 49 seconds
with laying out or adding to this best practice guide about reasonable accommodations.
Was it more about what I hear Laura Seal saying about kind of substance of what accommodations are?
18:01
18 minutes, 1 second
But maybe I misunderstood Laura Kushman.
18:04
18 minutes, 4 seconds
I think what you were saying was more about the process of how someone goes about requesting a reasonable accommodation
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18 minutes, 11 seconds
and how those and the process by which those reasonable accommodations are are assessed and determined. what can be
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18 minutes, 18 seconds
reasonable without changing the program and services for the rest of the people in town and on on undue burden and all those other pieces. Was that what you
18:26
18 minutes, 26 seconds
were saying Laura Kushman about kind of laying that out into the guide?
18:29
18 minutes, 29 seconds
Yeah, I mean I think I was talking about best practices in the process, right? Not necessarily in the decision- making.
18:37
18 minutes, 37 seconds
Um so yeah um for for uh towns who uh receive reasonable
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18 minutes, 46 seconds
accommodation requests best practices and also for people who are making reasonable accommodation requests best
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18 minutes, 54 seconds
practices and for those do we feel that the other
19:04
19 minutes, 4 seconds

resource or will you help us pull kind of which resources to list to or site. I I know the

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19 minutes, 13 seconds

um I know the DRV guide has a a page I believe on you know

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unreasonable accommodations and making those which I think would serve as the guidance for the latter of what you said for somebody looking to to make those um

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19 minutes, 30 seconds

those requests. But if there's any other resources that we should point to or reference here as the links that would be be very helpful to have.

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19 minutes, 40 seconds

Sure. Yeah. We we have a tendency to direct people who call us and and say that they've have a voting issue and

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19 minutes, 48 seconds

they you know have approached their town or whatever about a reasonable accommodation. the the complaints that

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19 minutes, 56 seconds

we get are are, you know, about the varied types of responses that people get when they try to make a reasonable

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accommodation request or get access to whatever meetings or voting. And um and

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so right I think that the best practices would be more um

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about standardizing um the responses of the towns uh than

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about the actual you know the requestor you know making a request. Um because

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because the responses from towns are so varied and so um whatever advice we are

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giving to people who call us with these complaints, it it may not be met with the same response by every town. And so having a standardized best practice for,

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you know, how towns deal with a reasonable accommodation request once it's received um or where they post

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their processes about how one might all those things and and yeah, I'm happy to help to

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whatever capacity I have. I am being scaled back and redirected more towards caseworking clients and less towards

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projects. Um but is in as much as I can help uh you know um provide information and sus

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out some best practices. I'm happy to do that.

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21 minutes, 36 seconds

Great. Thank you Laura. for everyone else on the call. Is there anyone else with thoughts on on that piece about the best practices around standardizing that

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21 minutes, 45 seconds

process for towns receiving um reasonable accommodation requests?

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Any any guess concerns with adding that section or or other thoughts or

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guidances? Sounds like a good I'm seeing seems like seems like good good consensus. Andy's thumbs up too.

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22 minutes, 5 seconds

Certainly think would be helpful. Yep. Okay.

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Uh, so you're also talking about undue hardship.

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Is that still going to go? Is that going away with this thing or is this still No, no. I mean, the process and the law for the ADA is still what the law is. I think

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on the ADA side. So that's where we're at at the ADA as opposed to the state thing.

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Right. I would think what Laura Kushman's saying is it's just when people bring those requests for the reasonable accommodation before it even

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gets to the, you know, the law, the assessment or what can the accommodation be made. It's just the way people are received and how they're treated and the

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process they're put through for making and hearing their uh what their what their needs are. Um

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22 minutes, 50 seconds

yeah, I think even before it's really more their needs like what are their needs that need to be met so they can participate um in the is there a body and a phone number and stuff that will be available for this?

23:01

23 minutes, 1 second

No, I mean these are done at the town town level town level. So I think really what I heard and Laura Kushman others can can

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23 minutes, 9 seconds

correct me. What I heard Laura saying was really if we can uh either point to a document or we can lay out in some bullets. I think what Laura will help us

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with is kind of enumerate here is what a best practices a town that does X Y and Z when someone comes to them to express

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23 minutes, 25 seconds

their need. This is this is what we think would be best practice if it was adopt adopted by all towns if all towns did a process like like this.

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23 minutes, 35 seconds

So the idea is to narrow that scope so it becomes standardized. Is it is it one thing that well sorry I think it's good to remember

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23 minutes, 44 seconds

the scope of this working group and the scope of this document which is the scope of this working group is to provide the best practices document now

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23 minutes, 51 seconds

that we've written the report and but we don't have you know authority over what

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23 minutes, 58 seconds

a municipality does um that's just far outside of the scope of this working group.

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24 minutes, 3 seconds

Yeah. Um, so what we're doing is providing recommendations to individual municipalities who are all unique

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24 minutes, 11 seconds

and their own entities on how to handle in this case um a reasonable accommodation. And of

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course they need to follow the law, but there's also best practices for them in how they receive um a reasonable

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accommodation and how they address a reasonable accommodation.

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So, they're going to be offered options and then be able to discern amongst the options what fits in best. But that may

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not be entirely correct because I've run into where lawyers situations where I've been in meetings where essentially they pass open meeting

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24 minutes, 48 seconds

law isn't clearly violated. I didn't say a damn thing. I could have run a complaint at least a half a dozen times.

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24 minutes, 56 seconds

And uh and the problem is is everybody going along in the meeting thought it was just a-ok okay and it was you know

25:04

25 minutes, 4 seconds

part of education process part of an advisory process and part of not having a lane defined

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25 minutes, 12 seconds

with clear signs signage and reading is to this is an exit ramp. This is where you stay on the highway. Uh and

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unfortunately if you do too much along those lines, it could in some cases be

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overwhelming and confusing. And some of the towns don't have the staffs to even u they're not techies, you know. Um um

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25 minutes, 38 seconds

um that's just something I've observed like and I've actually gone around towns in this county, dropped in and talked to people working in the town offices and

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25 minutes, 47 seconds

and getting an earful. So, I don't know if anybody else has done that, but it is it's something where I'm hearing different things at different places,

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and it shouldn't be that way. It should be, yeah, it's pretty clear it's this way,

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26 minutes

you know, it's like getting to New Hampshire from here, you know, oh yeah,

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you know, old farmer getting asked for directions, you know,

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26 minutes, 7 seconds

and uh but it shouldn't be as confusing as that. It should be a distinct road map.

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26 minutes, 13 seconds

Yeah. I think to I mean to Frank's point with the road map and I think back to where Jenny was laying it out and I apologize too Megan I missed your your

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26 minutes, 21 seconds

comment in the chat I just saw it um above no it's out of the chat on there saying you missed the meeting and the the open up for the start so I'll just

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reiterate on on that point of where where we are today was was coming back uh being at February 19th we're having

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this working group meeting to go over the the best practices is promising practices for effective and inclusive meetings document that was was shared

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26 minutes, 48 seconds

out that we got feedback from the group with our goal being to deliver this to the legislature which will be the end of

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of this working group. That was all our charge was to come up with with the report the eight components as Jenny

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27 minutes, 2 seconds

referenced all of which covered in the report. We had this one additional piece for the best practices um guide and we

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built out in our last sessions of our plan being um working backwards from that late March delivery if we need a

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session on March 19th we'll we'll have it but really with the goal of this meeting today being seeing what feedback

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people have what needs to be added what specific changes we can have to this best practices guide at the end of this

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meeting can then we'll we'll aim to be sending out another um another draft by by March 12th and if a meeting is

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needed, we'll have it on on March March 19th. So given again that kind of specific piece, I think to Frank's

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27 minutes, 48 seconds

point, we're not going to be the be all and an end all. I think there needs to be ongoing work there. There needs to be

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27 minutes, 55 seconds

all the advocacy uh groups, all the membership groups that are continuing to do work with their groups, continuing to put out resources. I think that's part

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28 minutes, 3 seconds

of why we we led with the the quote we we led referencing um JFK's inaugural address and really this being a an

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ongoing um you know long long way kind of continual process of continual improvement that we're all working on

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but hoping that at least the best the practices promising practices we put here will help point people in those

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directions maybe to stay with Frank's analogy maybe we don't have a an I89 built that somebody can just get on and,

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28 minutes, 36 seconds

you know, get right to to New Hampshire without making any turns. Um, but maybe it's a compass. So we can point them we can point them east and we can give a

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28 minutes, 43 seconds

few of these markers along the way and some resources of who to ask who to talk to um so that people taking these guides

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28 minutes, 50 seconds

the legislature taking taking this resources other people who who use this resource after it's submitted who want to build upon it um can have access to

29:00

29 minutes

all the great work your organizations other organizations are are doing um and can can can go to those links find the

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29 minutes, 8 seconds

organizations find these resources is find what each of your organizations have built a year from now, two years

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from now, things that aren't on. You know, we can't put on the guide right now because they aren't aren't developed here. But that I think was the intent of

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29 minutes, 23 seconds

what we were envisioning or hoped we could build to make this uh guide be something useful.

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29 minutes, 29 seconds

The uh because Kelly has a large number of experience in various levels of government as a clerk and then

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29 minutes, 36 seconds

legislature and blah blah blah. We're dealing with technology when we're in a hybrid thing, which is is the holy grail. And if technology fails during a

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29 minutes, 44 seconds

course of a meeting, even if you were going to go into an executive session during that meeting, you before that goes, the question is, is the validity

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29 minutes, 53 seconds

of the meeting still exist? Is there a way to make build an exception on a technology failure where at the very

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30 minutes

least there's be some points on an agenda such as approval of warrants,

30:06

30 minutes, 6 seconds

payroll warrants, all different types of financial things which are missioncritical needs to be built in. If

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30 minutes, 13 seconds

there is a technology failure where the meeting can be going along fine but it doesn't really need the public

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30 minutes, 21 seconds

participation on mechanics like paying do approving a warrant for payroll for

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30 minutes, 28 seconds

example which technically if you can't continue the meeting because you're not applying to the law all of a sudden and

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30 minutes, 36 seconds

people who are coming in from remotely are not there there should be some fallback

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30 minutes, 44 seconds

minimum skeletal duties that the body is able to conduct even if suddenly offline

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30 minutes, 52 seconds

and including uh entering into an executive session uh

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where the executive sessions do not apply in a lot of these cases because they're entirely private.

31:07

31 minutes, 7 seconds

You can't take notes, you can't take minutes. There shouldn't even be cell phones in cuz some of the cell phones even if you turn them off are still listening. Right.

31:13

31 minutes, 13 seconds

Right. Uh so there should be all these technical that should be in there that any executive session should have no electronic devices in it including cell

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31 minutes, 21 seconds

phones for example. So are you suggesting for the so building for hybrid and piece in the are you talking about flushing out or adding additional

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31 minutes, 30 seconds

carving out session is an exception executive session. So are you saying having a a resource related to executive session under that hybrid meeting

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31 minutes, 38 seconds

section on page in this best practices thing you have an exception where is it because I think in the law they stipulated exception se session in the

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31 minutes, 47 seconds

open eagle law there was some language in about executive session but under best practices executive session how do you run executive session in this new

31:56

31 minutes, 56 seconds

world of ADA and all this other stuff well you basically you know it it should be in person uh because you have

32:04

32 minutes, 4 seconds

man-in-the-middle issues with Microsoft Teams with Google I think the question with the with that

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32 minutes, 11 seconds

being with the technology I hear you're frank there there could be a whole separate if if there was a working group or task force on technology certainly AI

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32 minutes, 21 seconds

everything that the only way to guarantee an executive session 100% right now is to have all the persons in the room who are

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I don't think this group would want to recommend that because that would exclude people from serving on a body.

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So I think I think that may be a topic for a future working group because if somebody um can only participate in a meeting virtually that and they are a

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32 minutes, 43 seconds

member of the the body, they can't participate in an executive session if it's in person. So I I think that we um

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32 minutes, 52 seconds

just need to be really careful that we don't expand this conversation bigger than what is our current task which is

33:01

33 minutes, 1 second

you know there's a lot of entities that provide advice on open meetings and how to hold open meetings. But I think right now we're just talking about best

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33 minutes, 9 seconds

practices related to at this moment I think the process of requesting and receiving reasonable accommodation. So I

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33 minutes, 17 seconds

just want to I want to keep it as constrained as we can so and and as orderly as we can so we can get through this document. um because I think that's

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33 minutes, 26 seconds

I go back to 2018 when I was proposing um remote access and if you have telephone number if you have a telephone number as an address on the internet you

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33 minutes, 34 seconds

don't have address really uh it's it so if somebody's calling in executive session and they're on a phone or

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33 minutes, 42 seconds

participating then they have a number and an identity uh which is one of the problems we have with voting and all the

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33 minutes, 50 seconds

stuff on the internet because spoofing and AI doing Rick, I'm gonna I'm gonna cut you off here only because I'm worried that we're not going to get through the whole document. And I do

33:58

33 minutes, 58 seconds

think what you're proposing goes beyond the scope of what our charge is here. Um, 34:04

34 minutes, 4 seconds

but somebody's going to have to say and the legislature is going to have to know to say to towns that executive sessions are a

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34 minutes, 11 seconds

rare animal different than the open meeting law.

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34 minutes, 15 seconds

Executive sessions are are a separate are part of the open meeting law, right, with different rules that apply,

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34 minutes, 20 seconds

right? Um and we do recommend in our document um we do say um we talk about

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34 minutes, 28 seconds

practicing technology in advance for example like so making sure that you know how to use the technology that you're intending to use so that everybody who is planning to be at the

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34 minutes, 37 seconds

meeting can fully participate. Um so I think that that's part of it. I think the line about what is appropriate for technology within or without executive

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34 minutes, 45 seconds

session while in there is not a question for the best practice guide. That's a question about whether you think the law should be should be changed to be to to

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34 minutes, 53 seconds

eliminate that possibility because the law has long allowed members of the public body to call in from a replication that's that predates CO

35:01

35 minutes, 1 second

that's decades old. Um it's not a hybrid meeting. Yeah.

35:06

35 minutes, 6 seconds

So no that's not a hybrid meeting. So I'm going to I think we should move on from there. Is that is that all right? And Megan Megan you had a a point.

35:17

35 minutes, 17 seconds

You're on mute. Yeah.

35:20

35 minutes, 20 seconds

Thank you. I'm coughing. I just want to point out that that Frank, especially if you're just talking with, you know,

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35 minutes, 27 seconds

giving other folks a chance, you guys in the room can any anyhow can kind of take over the conversation. Not to diminish

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35 minutes, 35 seconds

the importance. I think putting notes about, you know, recording technology needs to be off or out of the room makes

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35 minutes, 44 seconds

sense for executive session best practices. Um, I sent Kelly a couple of questions.

35:53

35 minutes, 53 seconds

I wonder is now the time to bring this up? Is are are we taking this in order?

36:03

36 minutes, 3 seconds

Yeah, I think I think we're trying to take the take the guide in um in order if we could to get get through that if

36:11

36 minutes, 11 seconds

that um if that works for folks. with those questions to a particular section or no not I forwarded the email to

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36 minutes, 20 seconds

okay all of you but um we can certainly your your questions were sort of overarching I think right

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36 minutes, 27 seconds

I think overarching is a good place to yes but yeah why don't you jump jump into those

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36 minutes, 33 seconds

there's Mohamad okay oh no

36:43

36 minutes, 43 seconds

Yeah. So, Megan, if you want to I think addressing I think addressing the overarching questions you raised are is a good good time.

36:51

36 minutes, 51 seconds

Oh, okay. Um I um as VAN as a statewide organization we do not have a single

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37 minutes

best practice guide and it doesn't make sense to you know share various um

37:08

37 minutes, 8 seconds

workflows and procedures from various VAN uh folks. So, one, and I think you were starting to address this a little bit, was once this is submitted,

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37 minutes, 19 seconds

do we see this document living somewhere that it can be updated?

37:24

37 minutes, 24 seconds

I think you're starting to do that, ask that. So, that's one question.

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37 minutes, 28 seconds

I think y can answer right off. I think we aren't char No, I mean, we meaning we
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37 minutes, 35 seconds
collectively, the 133 group isn't charged with that. We were charged with meeting doing
this report and and disbanding. So our understanding is once

37:44
37 minutes, 44 seconds
the report including this addendum best practice guide is is submitted that's the end of
this working group. So it

37:53
37 minutes, 53 seconds
wouldn't be updated or anything in that capacity. Certainly all of the member groups
would continue to do their work

38:02
38 minutes, 2 seconds
and if somebody wanted to build upon the best practice guide or other entities or
legislature you know there certainly would be opportunities but the short

38:11
38 minutes, 11 seconds
answer being no we don't see it being updated by this group is this group won't exist.
Okay.

38:16
38 minutes, 16 seconds
And where does it where is it going to live?

38:18
38 minutes, 18 seconds
Andy sorry excuse me. Um, well, we imagine it would be once it's submitted to the
legislature to live on the

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38 minutes, 25 seconds
legislative legislator's website. We would link to it from there in our work.

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38 minutes, 30 seconds
We assume all of the other organizations could link to it in that location as well as we do
with with other legislative reports.

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38 minutes, 39 seconds
Um, and Megan, your other Yeah, I'm trying to mind my um not just

38:47
38 minutes, 47 seconds
blurting. Um, I see Andy shaking his hands like this.

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38 minutes, 54 seconds
Figure out how to interpret that. Um the um so then I think it would be important

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39 minutes, 1 second
to somehow find a place to mention connecting with your local access center in this
39:09
39 minutes, 9 seconds
because those are folks that are going to be able to provide you more immediate um
assistance
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39 minutes, 18 seconds
and given that we are in probably 70% of communities around the state if not more it
would be um useful. So I'm not sure
39:27
39 minutes, 27 seconds
where to insert that. I can give that some more specific thought.
39:32
39 minutes, 32 seconds
Do you think in that final section of the additional resources community partners? It
seems like the man the access network that are a tremendous um
39:41
39 minutes, 41 seconds
resource in all all communities having an annotated link in there. Yeah, I think both in
the hybrid like mentioned specifically,
39:51
39 minutes, 51 seconds
you know, in the list of um resources for hybrid meetings and then
39:58
39 minutes, 58 seconds
in the annotated access. So, if you want me to write that those language, I could do
that. It would be useful.
40:05
40 minutes, 5 seconds
Yeah, that'd be great if you could write that. Thank you, Nick. And Andy, you you had
your hand up before as well, Andy.
40:12
40 minutes, 12 seconds
Oh, no, I didn't. Okay.
40:16
40 minutes, 16 seconds
um or other. So, thank you, Megan. That that was good. Those high um high level
points. Are there other highle structure
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40 minutes, 25 seconds
points? I do want to make sure we we get through this and we were diving into some of
the um the specific
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sections and certainly we've talked about the hybrid but um yeah Susan

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um yeah I think maybe you touched on this at the very beginning but I just wanted to be clear on what the relationship is between the best practice guide and the resource list

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because I see that the best practice guide has a few resource services sort of selected resources embedded and then

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the resource guide has way more is that just random at this point or or

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41 minutes, 5 seconds

absolutely I said it but I probably didn't do a great job giving the overview so Jenny will do better so this the best practice guide is the document we're working with the

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last thing we were doing before we circulated this was trying to plug in the resources that would be useful within each section of this we only got

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very we did not get fully through that when we circulated it to you all. So what you have listed as resources is

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probably the least baked portion of the of the draft. Um it's certainly not a complete I was really really hoping actually we get lots of feedback from

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people about resources that they know of that are great that might fit within these categories that we could put in there. Um and certainly if they're on this list and you see that let us know.

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But also, if there's anything else that you're aware of that is useful that that that would be conflated here, that'd be great because we didn't we didn't envision this by any means, the resource

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41 minutes, 53 seconds

list in here is complete. And the very end, um, Megan, especially, I put the community partners words in in response to your email very quickly before we put

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42 minutes, 2 seconds

it out, but I did not go through and think through who all the community partners might be that should be on there. So, we definitely have that is definitely not inclusive either.

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42 minutes, 11 seconds

So, so this additional resources paper or this resource paper, this is literally just notes that we took and compiled as we were going along. This is

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everything we're aware of that is has been discussed in our group that could possibly be useful. Um, it's just for internal use. It's not something that we intend to submit anywhere.

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That was the the working group's internal document. And we know we've heard and had a lot of conversation of the best best practice guide. Heard a

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lot of feedback. folks want it to be short, want it to be concise, so it's usable in that sense. At the same time,

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we want to make sure there's a good robust set of of links and resources um in the in the guide which will be submitted to the legislature. So, I

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think that internal working document is a good checkpoint for everyone to look through and make sure we're being deliberate about what's being pulled

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from there into what will actually be uh submitted. And as as Jenny was saying,

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43 minutes, 4 seconds

we really want the group to to flesh that out. And I think focusing initial work for this meeting of making sure

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that we have these you know these buckets these these sections and subsections right will be helpful and

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then really as we move towards that final next meeting and the final submissions we you know we can really f

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f you know laser in on which resources um would be most helpful to add to each each bucket. So in terms of just as a

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followup in terms of the how we interact with these two documents, what's most useful to you? Should we be adding uh or

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suggesting edits just to the to if we have a new resource say um do we add it

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43 minutes, 48 seconds

to the um best practice or do we add it to the resource list or do we suggest where it would go? What what's your what

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43 minutes, 56 seconds

I think the best practice list is where I mean the best best practice is where we want to put them. I mean this this this is just for me to share with you one of our internal documents. This isn't something that we're maintaining or updating.

44:05

44 minutes, 5 seconds

I think I think what would be good is if there's something that's on the resource guide, the resource list, our internal

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document that you think really should be in the best practices guide. The best practices guide is what will be published. The resources list right now

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is just our document keeping track of everything that we've been sent. So, if you send us something and you want it to be in the best practice guide, just say

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this should be on the best practice guide and um and we'll look at it,

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assume that we'll probably put it there and figure out the best place to put it.

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Um but the the resources guide was just for us to track. I mean, there was a lot of emails as you guys know, so just for

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us to keep track of everything that we've received so we didn't miss anything. Um, and if by all means if we have missed something, please please tell us and we can put it in the best.

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And I also say just I think a lot of the the items on the resource list as I was going through and trying to figure out what makes sense to put in the guide, I

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45 minutes, 6 seconds

was really thinking a lot of these are very substantive.

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They're not they're about about understanding the law, not necessarily about the how to proceed in the face of

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the law. And I think the ones that and there are some and there there ones I included in the in the draft. There are

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quite a few that that that really address the practice of how how you're going to act in the face of the law versus the ones that are here is a

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summary of what the ADA says. That might be helpful that it's helpful within our group to talk about to know that those resources are out there, but it might

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not be as useful as like what Laura was talking about, Laura Kushman, here's how you implement the ADA in a in a gold standard banner as opposed to, you know,

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just the baseline what the law allows. Does that make sense? Yeah.

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Okay. So, I was thinking So, so I don't think everything that's in this resources list is going to make it by far into the into the best practices guide. not because they're not good

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resources, but because they're not necessarily about how to how to practice, right?

They're not they're they're not practical. They're they're substantive.

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And you had a clarifier on that, Susan, before we go to Laura Christians.

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I just wonder if there wants to be I mean, if if if we've done this work,



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we've collected these resources. Um, and yeah, you don't want to confuse people with a whole bunch of stuff, but um, I just wonder if it makes sense at the end

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to say, you know, for further reading or um, you know, a deeper dive or something like that so that you put the super practical here's what I should do on

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Tuesday stuff um, you know, within the resources guide, but then allow um,

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people access to the to the wisdom that this group has uh, generated. Um, uh,

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that I just wonder if that might be useful.

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Yeah, certainly we can. Yeah, we I think we could if there's a resource if I mean I guess ask if other does anyone feel

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strongly for against that thought of having something that's not best practice focus more substance

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47 minutes, 9 seconds

but for for a deeper deeper dive. Um I think if um yeah I mean if I don't know if you have a clearest thought on it

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47 minutes, 17 seconds

Susan if you'd want to take a list of the resources or do you think that

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largely like the F133 resources document the not best practice guide as it's constructed is generally what you were

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seeing would be helpful as just an additional appendix.

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I mean that would an easy way to do it would just be to have the resource guide as an additional appendix. Um or I should say a simple way. Um I I would assume that the people who have

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particular expertise in any any of these could point to whether the documents that they've suggested are, you know,

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yeah, I'd really like to see this, you know, right as a bullet point below uh something in the resource guide because this is going to tell me exactly what to

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do or here's a deeper background thing and um you know, b basically they they can um differentiate between the the

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purpose of of of any of the resources that they've provided.

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I I mean I I don't know every single resource that's in the resource guide. I know the ones that I suggested so I can you know and so I'm assuming that each of us could maybe offer guidance in that way.

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48 minutes, 26 seconds

Yeah, I think we can look at that. I think my only concern really when we say resource guide and it's not really a resource guide right now. It's kind of a

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list and a mish mash of links. It's like a it's really an it was it was an internal kind of going through the

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48 minutes, 41 seconds

process of all the meetings everything that's been raised kind of what do we it was kind of that in between step between we take all of all the notes from all

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the meetings and we know we're going to be going toward a best practice guide and so it's kind of that sloppy kind of

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catch catchall so I I think from that standpoint um you know it's so I say I would hesitate to circulate

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this as is only because these are things that were mentioned. I don't know that not every single thing on here has has has been read by everyone in here, of course, but I'm not sure that every

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single thing on here has been read by somebody on here or or is backed by somebody. These things sometimes people throwing out ideas like, "Oh, doesn't doesn't this group have a have a guide

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on this? Maybe we should look into that." And we took those notes down so we would have them all in one place. And those are in here, too. So, I I wouldn't

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I personally would would would be hesitant to just put this out into the universe as like our our recommended resource list.

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Yeah. So, here's my here's my recommendation. I think if it works,

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I think what would be helpful is look at the resource guide, our internal documents, look at the best practices.

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If there's something that could be under a section at the end of best practices guide that's like for deeper reading on

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the ADA or on open meeting or on a topic but it's not about how to implement that

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how to how to do that in a better way then let's put it in that deeper dive reading section um and not let's not

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call it resources that we use let's just say like for further for further education or knowledge like a deeper dive

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That's the only word I can think of at this second. But and then so if you have a document that's like that that maybe is not on the resources guide,

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that internal document right now, let us know. And then um but then really I think we want to make sure that we have

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the right documents in the best practices guide, the ones that are going to actually be really useful to the people out in the world. So, who aren't

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looking for an overview of open meeting or aren't looking for how to comply with the legal requirements of the ADA, but

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how do I do that in a good way? How do I facilitate a hybrid meeting? Those sorts of things. I I really would like us to

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51 minutes

be able to focus the guide on those really practical resources because otherwise we're just going to be

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reurgitating work that other people have already done. um you know in terms of like I

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don't like there's a lot of good work on what is open meeting law. We don't have to re like we don't have to have everything I guess is what I'm saying I

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want to make this high value high impact and as soon as we start adding everything then it starts to dilute um in my opinion

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that's just my opinion I mean I think it's good to differentiate and then and then make sure that we're providing

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quality over quantity. Yeah. And I think to the point too of the structure Oh, sorry, Laura, you're on you're on mute.

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51 minutes, 46 seconds

Sorry. Everything is not valuable. So everything should not be included in the best practices guide. I mean, let's call it what it is. There are plenty of resources out there that are garbage.

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51 minutes, 56 seconds

And so let's make sure that we're not including those in the best practices guide, but they might be valuable information for some folks to read, to

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have contrary arguments, to look at things from all sides. And so we could provide those in an additional if you

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want to read this stuff you can read it um list but I agree it should not go in the best practices guide.

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Just don't want to add a lot of noise and if it is garbage I don't want to amplify it. Um, so I don't disagree with you, Laura, about like everyone should

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read everything, but I just want to make sure that if we say there's a deeper dive, I think we want to make sure that we like what is the deeper dive, that we

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agree with the deeper dive, whether or not we agree with every piece in it or is a different thing, but you know, we

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as a group, we are co-signing whatever is in this guide to an extent. And I think to the point there too of the

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structure, I think as Jenny said before really when we got down and lay out these buckets and the reason there was the question mark, right, the additional resources question mark, community

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partners question mark was those sections weren't fully baked up. But what I've what I'm hearing from the last 5 minutes or so of the conversation here

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is that we probably want two distinct sections there. a community partner section where we're including those groups, you know, like like Van and the

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other partners we can point to that are out there in the communities. And then whether we call it additional resources or whether we call it a deeper dive,

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it's something that is more on this substantive side. It's things we're pulling out from that the rough internal document and pulling in things that, you

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know, that that that were missed in these conversations that folks feel are very high quality that we want to sign on to. But I think those are two

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distinct buckets which hopefully will will cover both the the substantive side that Susan was speaking to but allowing it to be in

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the one document and not having to to uh filter everything on the other. Go ahead.

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Yeah, Laur a different completely and entirely different point about the best practices

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guide. Um, one thing that I have been thinking about might need to be included if we're ready to move on.

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Yes. Yes.

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We've been focused a lot in our meetings about remote access, hybrid access, and um, and we haven't talked a lot about

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actual physical accessibility of spaces where meetings are held.

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And and I know that in not not in every place uh polling places differ from um

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from meeting places. They're not always the same, but in some places they are the same place.

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And um and so I wanted to address physical accessibility of those places,

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polling places specifically that are also used for meetings. Um because it we

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do it is mentioned in the um executive report um about the fact that there are

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these physical accessibility surveys that are conducted by disability



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rights Vermont. Um, and that those physical accessibility surveys, um, uh,
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55 minutes, 26 seconds
point out where that location,
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55 minutes, 31 seconds
uh, be it a town hall or a school, um, where they are failing to
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55 minutes, 39 seconds
meet ADA requirements for physical accessibility. and we and we indicate to um them
and provide them with a report
55:48
55 minutes, 48 seconds
of what we've discovered. So, if their ramps are too steep or if they don't have railings
on their ramps or their thresholds are too high or they don't
55:57
55 minutes, 57 seconds
have um handicap accessible parking spaces or any number of uh ADA accessibility,
physical accessibility um
56:07
56 minutes, 7 seconds
regulations are are are not being followed. We let them know, but there is no
enforcement and there's no followup
56:15
56 minutes, 15 seconds
and there's no obligation or duty for any of the polling places to then take the
information that they've been given
56:22
56 minutes, 22 seconds
by Disability Rights Vermont to actually fix their thresholds or their ramps or their
parking places, right? And we also
56:30
56 minutes, 30 seconds
do not have any authority to go back and double check on them and say, "Hey, did you
do what we told you you should do?"
56:38
56 minutes, 38 seconds
And so although town halls or or polling places may be getting um some
56:47
56 minutes, 47 seconds
information that could help them become more compliant if they chose to do so.
56:53
56 minutes, 53 seconds

um there's absolutely no authority um or enforcement to make them make sure

57:00

57 minutes

that they're meeting places or their polling places specifically um but meeting places as it applies to

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57 minutes, 9 seconds

the work we're doing um are actually um responding and fixing and doing those

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57 minutes, 16 seconds

things. And so we focused a lot of our attention in these meetings on all the other ways in which people might have

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57 minutes, 24 seconds

access to these meetings, but we haven't really talked about actual physical accessibility to these meeting spaces.

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57 minutes, 32 seconds

And um and it's obviously, you know,

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57 minutes, 36 seconds

maybe we feel like we have um we're past that we're dealing with a new modern world.

Um but we really aren't. and um

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57 minutes, 46 seconds

and there really are still physical physical accessibility issues and um uh barriers for people. And so I just

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57 minutes, 54 seconds

wanted to put that out that maybe we need to include in our guide some best practice that has to do with

58:03

58 minutes, 3 seconds

um enforcement of um ADA

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accessibility standards in in public places.

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That's all question. Is that something the secretary of state's office elections division can follow up on the accessibility of polling locations? No,

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58 minutes, 24 seconds

we don't have any enforcement authority.

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58 minutes, 26 seconds

We certainly can do trainings and we do communications on it, but we don't have the enforcement. And I think that was going to be my same question, maybe

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58 minutes, 34 seconds

Jenny was going to go there too of kind of how we frame this since it was in the guide, right, as far as law, but this

58:42

58 minutes, 42 seconds

particular component being best practice. So the question is how we kind of frame that compliance.

58:46

58 minutes, 46 seconds

I have an idea Laura. Tell me if this sounds right in the meeting preparation section. So it's the first item after

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58 minutes, 53 seconds

the guiding principles. The very first thing we put there in bold is we have the like

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59 minutes, 3 seconds

something about the making sure your your space is not only compliant and we have a oneliner further

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59 minutes, 11 seconds

on down. maybe bump that out out of the plan for inclusivity and make it its own topic right there and and and in there recommend making sure if you haven't

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59 minutes, 20 seconds

done it already that you do one of these audits and that you have done these audits go back and check it and do a refresh and figure out where you're at

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59 minutes, 27 seconds

that I mean and I'm being very wordy but making it much less wordy but having that as the first item of business here after meeting preparation is let's

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59 minutes, 34 seconds

figure out make sure your space that you're going to have a meeting in is a good space to be having a meeting in.

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59 minutes, 39 seconds

Mind you, our ours are polling place audits, right? So, the audits that we do are shifting place. Okay.

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59 minutes, 48 seconds

Polling place audits. They are not meeting place audits if those meeting places are not also polling places.

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59 minutes, 55 seconds

So, we could make a meeting place polling place piece here and then make it clear in there that that you are a resource for

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1 hour, 3 seconds

the polling places and mention ADA as We have we have already s and I we I I'm now we're referring them to audits. They are not audits.

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They are surveys. And and no no town is obligated to do them. And we have but we

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have only had one town ever refuse to do one. And we have done all but I don't

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1 hour, 29 seconds

know maybe 10 20 10 15 towns. So, they have already been through an audit

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with very few exceptions. All of our towns have already been through this survey. Okay.

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1 hour, 43 seconds

Um and and what they did with that information after they got it from us,

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who knows, right? Only a select few ever wrote back to us and said, "Hey, thank

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1 hour, 58 seconds

you for letting us know that our threshold was too high. Here's a picture of our new threshold.

1:01:04

1 hour, 1 minute, 4 seconds

Very rare when that happens.

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from an education perspective, if I might interrupt, this is a perfect thing for the

Secretary of State's office is from an education perspective is to have

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that access to this survey, this list and be able to reach out and ping those communities who may not know that they

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are really uh not doing the best job they can. Yeah, I think in our our work I mean we are doing work with the voter

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accessibility task force the secretary launched for the 2026 primary and general election specifically and they

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have pieces we're working on but we're I think in getting that getting that information so we do have some followup there on this I want to keep us focused

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1 hour, 1 minute, 49 seconds

on the the best practice um guide though and I think to the point Jenny raised and framing I think if that I think

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framing that as meeting/polling place preparation I I think makes makes a lot of sense. And I think if we work in that in that wording to get at the points

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that that Laura um spoke about that that framing I think seems like a good way to good way to highlight it.

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Did you have another Thank you. Right.

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um as a formality beat a dead horse but basically I see this as a document that people are just going to be going

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through and not this as much as this is that that's that's off the table now yeah we're just looking at the best

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practice guide we we decided I think and didn't hear any alternative proposals but that we're going to divide that last section into community partners and

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additional resources slashdeeper dive so if there's things that are deeper dive more substantive. We can pull those

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either from that other resource internal draft or from other resources people have. We can pull them into this best practice guide in that additional

1:03:02

1 hour, 3 minutes, 2 seconds

resource section. But we're just looking at this one document. It should be its own section unless it can be another subsection to mention executive sessions

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being unique and a digital perspective due to the privacy of those and to bring that

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forward. So that that's a in thought of this and any resources that can be listed for that would be then added to

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because that's part of the meeting. you got regular meetings but yeah and then you had that point Frank

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for the rest of the group does other does others on the group feel have have a thought I guess as far as a whether

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1 hour, 3 minutes, 41 seconds

executive session should be called out uh more so than it is and b if so kind of where and how to to call it out I

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1 hour, 3 minutes, 50 seconds

think we we've heard heard your point Frank just trying to get a sense of as we're talking to the group here as does as others in the group have

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1 hour, 3 minutes, 56 seconds

um go ahead Andy I I I hear Frank's largely technical concerns

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and I don't think that um many or any uh local governments have

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the ability to to implement uh the controls that are well beyond what huge uh private entities are currently doing.

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Um I I don't I don't think we need

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specifics on on executive session in here.

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1 hour, 4 minutes, 36 seconds

Great. Thanks. Thanks, Andy. Did anyone else on the call have thoughts on on that one way or the other?

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My concern is this Andy is in response is that some things during executive

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session are so private such as discussing with stuff with attorneys and all this other stuff that that it really

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needs to be carved out that it has special attention is no is not in the uh

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general inclusive concept of the rest of the document. Executive sessions are by law supposed to be separated out.

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No, I Frank, I think everyone gets your concerns. I I am just saying that I don't think that anyone has the capacity

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to to implement this in the way you're suggesting.

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Well, you do it every day in our board meetings and stuff. They go they go into a special way to go in issue by issue into the into into executive session and

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everybody's booted out of the room and all these things which is if anyone public or anything. It's it should be

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just how about this just a simple statement for executive sessions require special attention due to the private nature of executive sessions and that and and leave it leave it as that. Yes,

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I think that sentence could be added in um that sentence could be added on page two under practice technology and use of physical space beforehand. How's your parking, seating, lighting, acoustics,

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have a plan in place for technology moderation, glitches, and electronic recording and captioning. Period. And then maybe a new sentence, they pay

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special attention to executive sessions to ensure privacy. Great. Yeah. Thank you. That sounds great.

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1 hour, 6 minutes, 21 seconds

Yeah. So we'll we'll incorporate that into the next draft when we send it around and folks want to thank you. Thank you both.

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So going and going back um back through on

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on that side. So I think where we were with that we have with that meeting structure and facilitation

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community standards. So, we've taken I think we've gone through that meeting polling place preparation. We've we've worked in the points that Laura Kushman

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had on that. I wanted to make sure there was no other feedback on that section specifically.

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If if not, we'll go to this meeting structure, facilitation, community standards, and the the point that was just made here.

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And if any other feedback on those um looking to the hybrid hybrid meeting

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section uh

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from a hybrid perspective, just throwing this out there, is there any way that a hybrid meeting doesn't have to be

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advertised on the internet are sent out broadly so the entire world could get access to the hybrid meeting when they're not citizens of the town where

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there's a where there's a a a distinct list of people in the town that would be

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 advised this to be legal for advice and then you don't have somebody in some kid in
 some place out in the Midwest or
 1:08:06
 1 hour, 8 minutes, 6 seconds
 something coming in and doing a intrusion to the public meeting that the whole wild
 1:08:14
 1 hour, 8 minutes, 14 seconds
 Wild West world of the internet could basically come in on on the meeting when they
 have really no citizenship
 1:08:22
 1 hour, 8 minutes, 22 seconds
 participation in in in that particular meeting is as citizens of the town which basically the
 meeting open inclusiveness
 1:08:31
 1 hour, 8 minutes, 31 seconds
 is for the people of the town right that's up to the person running the meeting I think I
 don't think that's
 1:08:40
 1 hour, 8 minutes, 40 seconds
 part of that's also not what the con the committee law envisions Open meeting law is
 any person in the university.
 1:08:46
 1 hour, 8 minutes, 46 seconds
 It's very different than town meeting meetings of the voters which has special rules for
 who can participate based on whether or not you're a voter of the town.
 1:08:54
 1 hour, 8 minutes, 54 seconds
 It's on school boards, right?
 1:08:56
 1 hour, 8 minutes, 56 seconds
 Well, school board school education law is its own its own universe.
 1:09:02
 1 hour, 9 minutes, 2 seconds
 School boards can isolate it, but town suck boards can't.
 1:09:08
 1 hour, 9 minutes, 8 seconds
 School boards and education law have an additional provision of law that is read in
 tandem with the open meeting law
 1:09:16
 1 hour, 9 minutes, 16 seconds
 addressing public participation that creates some heightened privileges for residents of
 the school district.
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 1 hour, 9 minutes, 24 seconds

Open meeting is accessible to anybody in the entire world at any time.

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Couldn't select board meetings etc be uh brought into something like that maybe in the future? Um,

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that would be a question for the legislature if you wanted to. I mean,

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this this is a guide that's intended to increase accessibility, not reduce it, right?

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You know, so I don't think we're going to get into trying to figure out how to exclude people from meetings in Well, they had a problem with the

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1 hour, 9 minutes, 48 seconds

legislature with the intrusion of un unwanted images showing. I think Andy's point that's right.

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That's up to the moderator facilitator of meeting to use tools at their disposal. But also it's talking about

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get were these people made from anywhere the open meeting law was amended to allow for um removal of a of unings

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images from the recordings but in terms of controlling it happening it can happen and then as Andy said the

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moderator has to moderate and certainly there are ways in hybrid meetings to limit who's participating. I

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mean uh passwords right everybody can be given a password or everybody's

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own per cell phone number can be used as their password and so all of those cell phone numbers would be recognized as

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1 hour, 10 minutes, 43 seconds

pass do you see what I'm saying like there are ways to limit if it's a meeting that's only supposed to have certain attendees

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um you can limit who can enter into a hybrid meeting so I I I understand that there's a concern that but but also I

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1 hour, 11 minutes

know that there are ways to prevent people who aren't supposed to be in meetings from being in them the way that it's most usually

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restricted because open meeting I mean it's one thing if you have a closed universe of people who are supposed to be at the meeting to have those passwords most open meetings are

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supposed to be open to anyone who wants to walk in at any moment at any time but the way that that has been restricted um

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most frequently is to prohibit sharing um unless you're an authorized person who shares. That's what the legislature

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has moved to. Used to be if you joined you could share, but now you have to be like an official sharer, presenter. Presenter. Yeah,

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there's tools out there in the AI world which disrupt this potential paradigm as I've sent you some emails on just a

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narrow part of people just in the scope of this office uh where the AI is able to gain agency in other words appear to

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1 hour, 12 minutes

be somebody. So you this is now it is since November is we entered

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the criminal element came out of China and uh this is very concerning uh but I don't think we're going to be able

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to figure that out in this guide Frank I think I think that AI and is it's just



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going to be like we're just at the beginning stages of understanding the parameters of it and the impact of it the good, the bad, and the ugly. Yes.

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1 hour, 12 minutes, 32 seconds

So, I I just want to again make sure that we talk about every piece of this guide and that we use this time as productively as possible. Make sure that

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we get to everybody's um and Megan on that. Megan, did you have a point or suggestion on the hybrid meeting section or

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or what was you're on mute again? Sorry.

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No, I just I think I removed myself from mute. Um I'm going to share what Frank is talking about. I think can be

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addressed in another way which is best practices for how to respond to disruptions in meetings and we have um

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shared this from the anti-defamation league how what the parameters are that folks can respond to people who are

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disrupting a meeting with um either objectionable content or

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um sometimes non um non- germanine. We always call it, you know, if it's somebody throwing a porn image on the

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screen, it's non-Germanine unless they're discussing porn regulations in the community.

So, I'll share this. I don't mean to stir up a hornets's nest,

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but um I think what Frank is talking about makes sense is to give people

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some, you know, be prepared for how to um handle

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recognizing members of the public. So the city of Burlington for example recognizes
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um residents first then non-residents and they are prepared to respond
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1 hour, 14 minutes, 13 seconds
especially when it is um hot button issues um to the um
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1 hour, 14 minutes, 21 seconds
to those potential disruptions but careful not to call again something I disagree with a
disruption.
1:14:31
1 hour, 14 minutes, 31 seconds
And Megan, I think that fits nicely in the facilitate strategically section in here. Okay.
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1 hour, 14 minutes, 36 seconds
Um to add that almost exactly verbat on what you said, be prepared for how to handle
1:14:44
1 hour, 14 minutes, 44 seconds
as part of facilitating, right, is is making sure that everybody gets the ability to speak
when they want to. And so that does sometimes mean limiting some people's speech
and also making sure that the speech is, as you said,
1:14:54
1 hour, 14 minutes, 54 seconds
that's a voice.
1:15:00
1 hour, 15 minutes
Um, are there others specific suggestions for the hybrid meetings section?
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1 hour, 15 minutes, 9 seconds
Not going to education and training on the case 4.
1:15:16
1 hour, 15 minutes, 16 seconds
Are there suggestions for additional additions or um, we only have the one resource
listed there. So certainly
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other suggestions for resources to add to that education and training section would be
would be helpful.
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1 hour, 15 minutes, 32 seconds
Um there was some criteria that under training there should be certain
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1 hour, 15 minutes, 39 seconds

people that have training like select board chairs etc. Well, if you don't have certain people present in a meeting

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that haven't had training or as staff or the staff that can a clerk or somebody who can actually run the hybrid meeting,

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uh you do need redundancy and in the case of redundancy, they have to be trained. So, it just can't be one

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1 hour, 16 minutes, 3 seconds
person. There should be a number uh and maybe an alternate of people that are

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should be trained uh on all aspects of this so that if one person's on vacation or gets sick then the meeting can be

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1 hour, 16 minutes, 17 seconds
conducted by somebody who has the training and education.

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1 hour, 16 minutes, 22 seconds
I think that fits nicely in the staff for hybrid section.

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1 hour, 16 minutes, 27 seconds
Yeah. Yeah, that's a good good suggestion. Yeah, Susan, you had that.

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1 hour, 16 minutes, 32 seconds
Um, yeah, I just um I I can definitely add some more resources here. Um, and I'm pretty sure I I think I need to

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circle back um with VCT because I know that they threw in um I think Ted um threw in a bunch of the resources that

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1 hour, 16 minutes, 48 seconds
they have, but they have a lot. And um so um I just need to make sure that I know that there that there's more I can

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add. And I just I'll just say Oh, sorry. the the issue we have with some of the LCTs um is that they're behind a firewall. So,

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the ones that we need, like if we're going to put them here, they need to be on the other the public side of the wall. Yep. Yep. Yeah.

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I did speak with Abby at VLCT about this a little bit. Um and I said, well, I said there would be two ways it could go. One would be put that them make

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certain ones public. the alternate would be to include it in the list without a link with some sort of footnote that says that these are materials that are available only to member municipalities

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or something. Um, she asked for us specifically to tell her what documents that they have that we would like to include, which I had added a couple in

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here, a couple of their toolkits with which I'm familiar. I know they have a myriad of other documents that I and I'm not up to speed on what they put out.

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So, if anybody knows of VCAT documents that you are interested in having in here, please tell us by name and we will add that to the list to share with Abby

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to ask if they could def firewall it or at minimum just have us be okay with us listing it and and referring folks to them who can access those documents.

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1 hour, 18 minutes, 4 seconds

Yes. Yeah, that's a conversation place. I'm sorry. Susan, you had go ahead.

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Thanks. Yeah, I will. Um, I'll I'll circle back with them because I don't I don't think it's fair for VLCT to say,

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"Tell us what you want." I feel like it's like, "Come on, BLCT, tell us what you have." Um, because they are familiar with their own resources. So, I'll I'll

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I'll work on that. Um, and every single Vermont municipality, I think, is a BLCT member. And so, um, it means that any

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municipal official who's accessing this content could access those. So, that's I mean, that's that's the good news. Um, and I just a followup question is, um,

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some of these resources, at least some of the ones that I'm I've suggested, are pretty comprehensive. They're pretty big. And, um, there's a section in them

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that's super relevant to one, um, of these topics, and then there's another section in the same resource that's relevant to another topic. Is it do do we have a thought on including um,

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resources twice on any of these?

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I think okay to include them twice if they're if they're across sections applicable across sections. Let's

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include them twice. And I just want to say that while municipalities may have access to the documents at VLCT, um I

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think it is far better if everyone has the same access to the information that we put into the best practices guide. So I will continue and Jenny's been

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advocating for this. I just want to continue to say there are resources that VLCT absolutely should have behind the firewall for their members, but if it's

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in the best practices guide, my strong preference is that everyone have access to it because the public feels better

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when they know what municipalities are following. It's just a it's a transparency thing for for me um and I

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think for the public. I mean, we hear that all the time that people don't understand what their towns are doing.

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Um, and if and we're all looking at the same guide book, it's easier.



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And I'll also say, you know, all towns and cities or most all are are members, but school boards are not, right?

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Because school districts are not members, so they don't have access to these resources. And there are other more specialty types of municipalities that some of which are or have limited

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they're you know so so there are some folks and I'm particularly thinking of school boards here where they just don't that aren't able to access um even if they're in municipal government are able to access those resources.

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Yeah. And it may be vice versa. I don't know if BSBA has Vermont schoolboards association has has content that only schoolboard members can access. I don't know.

That's an

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they put a lot of their stuff behind a firewall as well fairly recently. they don't have as much material because they're a much smaller organization. Um,

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but I haven't been able to get at some of those that I used to use. So, yeah.

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And your first point, Susan, for as as Lauren said, I think find things are relevant to multiple places to be listed multiple times. But I think it's the way

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1 hour, 20 minutes, 57 seconds

you framed it. If it's one section or say a chapter one referring to one and chapter 3 refers to another, we can spell that right out in the annotation too, to show the distinction. Well,

1:21:08

1 hour, 21 minutes, 8 seconds

Laura Kushman, you had a question.

1:21:11

1 hour, 21 minutes, 11 seconds

Uh yeah. Um, I guess with regards to education and training, I was I know that we made the recommendation a couple

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1 hour, 21 minutes, 20 seconds

of times that there be an ADA um identified person, you know, either



1:21:28
1 hour, 21 minutes, 28 seconds
an official or staff member of the towns um having, you know, someone who is identified
as their ADA person,
1:21:40
1 hour, 21 minutes, 40 seconds
coordinator or um uh but who has received specific ADA training and I
1:21:46
1 hour, 21 minutes, 46 seconds
realize that we make this very broad you know provide training in all of these
1:21:54
1 hour, 21 minutes, 54 seconds
areas but you know is there a reason why we're avoiding because this is about
accessibility
1:22:02
1 hour, 22 minutes, 2 seconds
is there a reason why we're avoiding saying very specifically ADA training
1:22:08
1 hour, 22 minutes, 8 seconds
no would that be calling out like that is required. What if you have 50 employees in your
municipality? So that would be the law and best practices or
1:22:16
1 hour, 22 minutes, 16 seconds
are we talking hire the coordinator is the is the 50 plus, right?
1:22:21
1 hour, 22 minutes, 21 seconds
Sorry, but what you're saying more like best best practice would be to have a
coordinator regardless and laws.
1:22:28
1 hour, 22 minutes, 28 seconds
I I think we could put that in there. I think another one of those places where we were
like we didn't we went we were trying to be very careful not to conflate
1:22:35
1 hour, 22 minutes, 35 seconds
like what we what what is a wish list versus what is actually required because there are
plenty of municipalities that must
1:22:43
1 hour, 22 minutes, 43 seconds
and state must and this is for state as well. So right there we can say that explicitly that
it's where there are
1:22:52
1 hour, 22 minutes, 52 seconds
well I guess where it's not already required where not already required it's advisable to
do it anyway please
1:22:58

1 hour, 22 minutes, 58 seconds
and also you know I in line with what will be best practice recommendations
1:23:06
1 hour, 23 minutes, 6 seconds
around reasonable accommodation requests the one of the best practices
recommendations would be for where
1:23:14
1 hour, 23 minutes, 14 seconds
reasonable accommodation requests are concerned is that there be an identified ADA
trained person who receives those um
1:23:24
1 hour, 23 minutes, 24 seconds
reasonable accommodation requests. So when we circle back to talking about best
practices around reasonable accommodations
1:23:32
1 hour, 23 minutes, 32 seconds
um it would make sense um also in the training section just to say like there it's best
practice to
1:23:41
1 hour, 23 minutes, 41 seconds
have someone on your staff who's specifically trained in the ADA.
1:23:47
1 hour, 23 minutes, 47 seconds
Yeah, that's a great suggestion. Thanks a lot. Well, we have um in the if you go back to
the meeting preparation section where it says provide meaningful
1:23:54
1 hour, 23 minutes, 54 seconds
advanced public notice, it's kind of buried in there, but it does says a specific contact for
accommodations requests. Should we put ADA accommodations request? Is that
better?
1:24:04
1 hour, 24 minutes, 4 seconds
I mean I I would say a specific person with ADA training identified training.
1:24:12
1 hour, 24 minutes, 12 seconds
Yeah. Yeah.
1:24:15
1 hour, 24 minutes, 15 seconds
Thank you, Laura. maybe town clerk and all the persons who are going to be running
the hybrid meeting because that applies to the entire meeting
1:24:24
1 hour, 24 minutes, 24 seconds
essentially when you're you know whoever is running a meeting
1:24:30
1 hour, 24 minutes, 30 seconds

whether it's vice chair chair and clerk whoever you would say you would have that and that would be built into their

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1 hour, 24 minutes, 39 seconds

education requirement you see the ADA section of the training Well, again, we don't have

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1 hour, 24 minutes, 46 seconds

the authority to say these people must take ADA training, but what we can say is that it is best practices for

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1 hour, 24 minutes, 55 seconds

everybody to have someone who is trained in the ADA and who that is.

1:25:02

1 hour, 25 minutes, 2 seconds

But if they're not around when you're have the question come up, that's why you need alternates.

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1 hour, 25 minutes, 9 seconds

Yeah. But I mean,

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1 hour, 25 minutes, 13 seconds

all right. Thank you. Great. Um, should we move to the community engagement and

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1 hour, 25 minutes, 19 seconds

civics section? Does do folks have also just kind of we're have four minutes left technically, but

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1 hour, 25 minutes, 27 seconds

Okay. Yeah. Yeah, that's a good good flag. So, we have four minutes. I think this is the last kind of hashed out section here. We agreed for to split

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1 hour, 25 minutes, 36 seconds

then the community partners and the additional resources. Maybe for those two sections if people want to email in their suggestions for helping build out

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1 hour, 25 minutes, 45 seconds

the community partners and the additional resources slashdeeper dive we can add those to the last version we we

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1 hour, 25 minutes, 53 seconds

circulate around. We certainly could do the same with with community engagement and civics. I want to respect everyone's time and and saw that. But if if anyone

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1 hour, 26 minutes, 2 seconds

has anything burning to add to that community engagement in civics, happy to take it now. Also happy to take it by email.

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1 hour, 26 minutes, 13 seconds

Not seeing any hands right off of want to say kind of what I'm I think hearing good. We got mostly through this. I

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1 hour, 26 minutes, 21 seconds

think we got good discussion. when I heard we are in good shape around the broad buckets and got good feedback of

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1 hour, 26 minutes, 28 seconds

how to a lot of additional points to to incorporate a couple pieces to break out and call attention to. Um

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1 hour, 26 minutes, 37 seconds

feel I should turn to Kelly and our team. We feel like certainly having another version to send out by by March 12th is

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1 hour, 26 minutes, 45 seconds

I think that's doable on this side.

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1 hour, 26 minutes, 46 seconds

Doable definitely. Um, so we will send that and then I think for for this team

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1 hour, 26 minutes, 54 seconds

given what we've seen and the level of what the suggestions have been, would folks feel most comfortable putting a

1:27:00

1 hour, 27 minutes

meeting for March 19th on the on the calendar to discuss the next version that that went out? If folks feel good

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1 hour, 27 minutes, 8 seconds

about the version on the 12th when they when they see it and like it, we can always cancel the um the meeting. Um,

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1 hour, 27 minutes, 15 seconds

but if if um better to have it on the calendar than not. So, we'll we'll work on on scheduling that for the 19th and

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we'll look at the the feedback that folks want to want to add to incorporate. Any other points I guess from that one addition?

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1 hour, 27 minutes, 32 seconds

No. Yeah.

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1 hour, 27 minutes, 40 seconds

As well, but um make a motion to journe if that's the case. Yeah, we can second it. Right. Okay.

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1 hour, 27 minutes, 51 seconds

Next. Next one.

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1 hour, 27 minutes, 55 seconds

Do you have a final word, Andy? Looks like you're about to talk. It's all good.

1:28:00

1 hour, 28 minutes

All right. Thank Thank you all. Thank you all. Really appreciate it.