

Future of **vahc**

May 2023

Timeline and Steps

- Two meetings for member feedback this week
- Steering committee to make recommendation to membership next week
- Membership electronic vote (one vote per organization)
- Steering committee vote
- Hire ED of either merged or standalone organization – summer of 2023

History

- Founded in 1985 by CAP agencies and Vermont Legal Aid
 - Grounded in anti-poverty work, representing the interests of low-income Vermonters and housing and homeless services providers at the local, state and national levels
- Erhard Mahnke began working for VAHC in the mid-nineties as a contractor
 - Also provided pro-bono legislative advocacy for VCEH
- David Martins director from 2021-2022
- Anne Sosin interim director for 2022-2023 legislative session

Current Members

- 59 Housing and services organizations
 - 6 Housing authorities
 - 13 Housing nonprofits
 - 21 Services organizations
 - 18 Other organizations
- 17 Individual members

Role and Value

Mission Statement:

VAHC is a dynamic statewide partnership dedicated to uniting Vermonters in a movement for safe, accessible, quality, and perpetually affordable housing. We accomplish this through advocacy, education, and outreach.

Role and Value

- Advocacy:
 - Central role in creation of the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board
 - Developing state housing policy
 - Vermont's Affordable Housing Tax Credit
 - Funding for homeless shelters and services
 - Legislation enabling resident owned housing co-ops
 - Vermont's pioneering Mobile Home Law

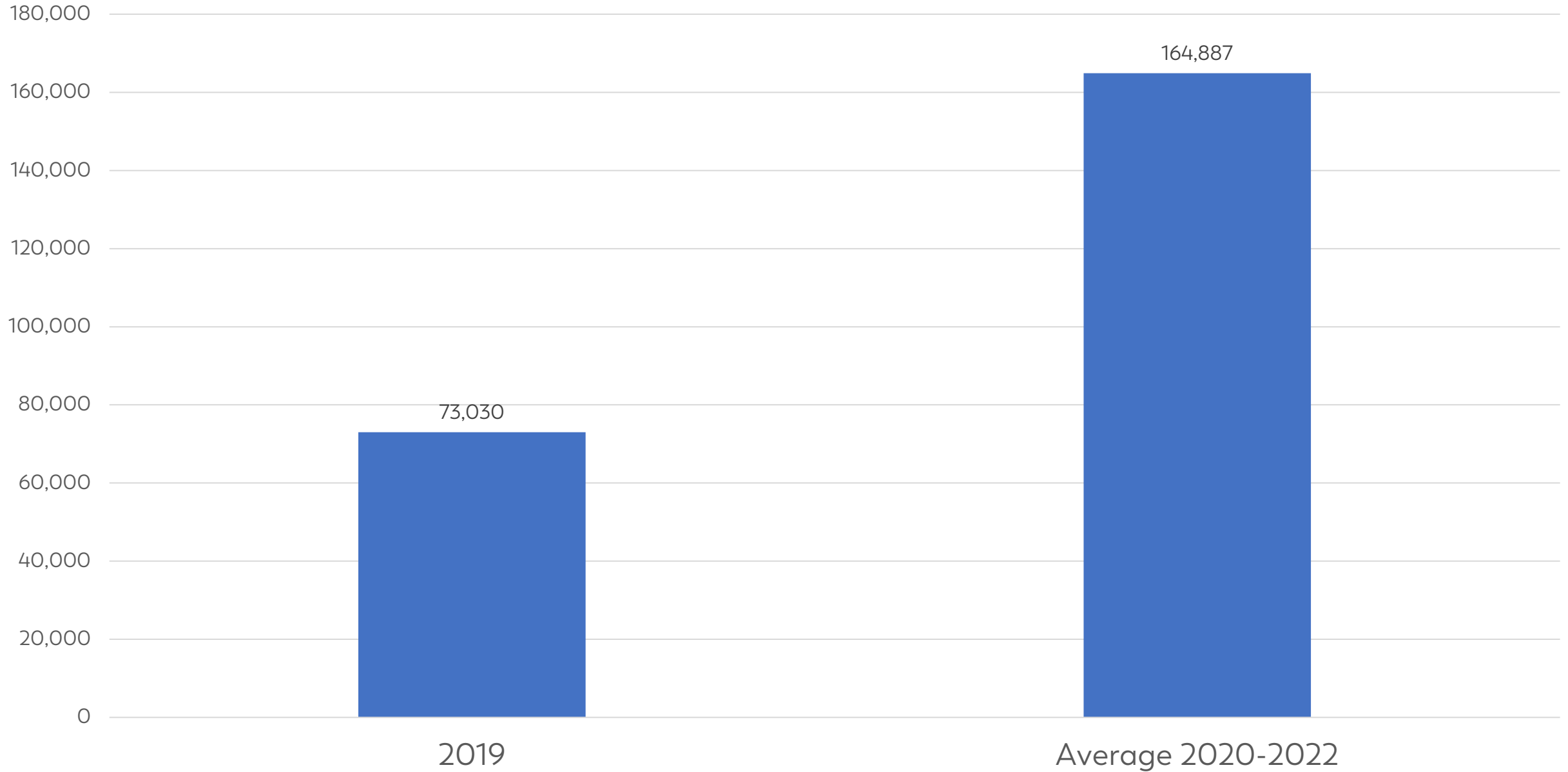
Role and Value

- Education:
 - Housing 101 education sessions at statewide housing conference
- Outreach:
 - In the House video series
 - Regional town halls

Challenges: Financial

- Erhard Mahnke charged \$27,000/year for services as a contractor
- Through donations from VHCB, VHFA, Evernorth, and VSHA in 2021 and an increase in dues, VAHC created a cushion for the initial transition
- 2023 budget: \$70,000 for ED salary
 - Approximately \$40,000 operating deficit

VAHC Expenses



Challenges: Communications

- The current methods of communication need to be improved and strengthened
- Member organizations are seeking direct outreach from and 1:1 engagement with VAHC director Legislature looking for synthesis of information and coordinated messaging on housing and homelessness issues

Challenges: Staffing

- VISTAs have provided support to director in the past
- 2022 only able to fill one of two VISTA positions
 - VISTA positions are not meant to be used for general operations support
- Executive director needs more support for communications, fundraising, etc.
- Steering committee chair and vice-chair handle majority of operations in absence of a director

Future Options for VAHC

- Remain incorporated as a 501(c)3
 - Fundraise additional \$40,000/year at minimum, more to increase staffing capacity and/or increase \$70,000 ED salary
- Dissolve
 - Each member organization pursues its own advocacy
- Merge with VCEH
 - Details later in presentation

Merger: Why Consider Now?

- Leadership transition at VAHC
 - Anne Sosin last day May 12th
- Martin Hahn leaving VCEH fall of 2023
- Window of opportunity to consider whether merging would better serve members and low- to moderate-income Vermonters
- Timeline: June decision to merge, recruit for new director, or dissolve

Future Options for VAHC: Continue As-Is with Increased Fundraising

Pros

- Advocacy remains focused on the spectrum of perpetually affordable housing and related services

Cons

- Increased dues
- Missing opportunity to create efficiencies and coordinate messaging
- Potentially missing grant funding opportunities

Future Options for VAHC: Disincorporate

Pros

- Each agency can seek out their own tailored solutions to advocacy and education efforts, or combine efforts in smaller groups with narrower focus

Cons

- Resources will not be pooled and shared
- Potential loss of efficacy in state house
- Lack of coordinated messaging and action

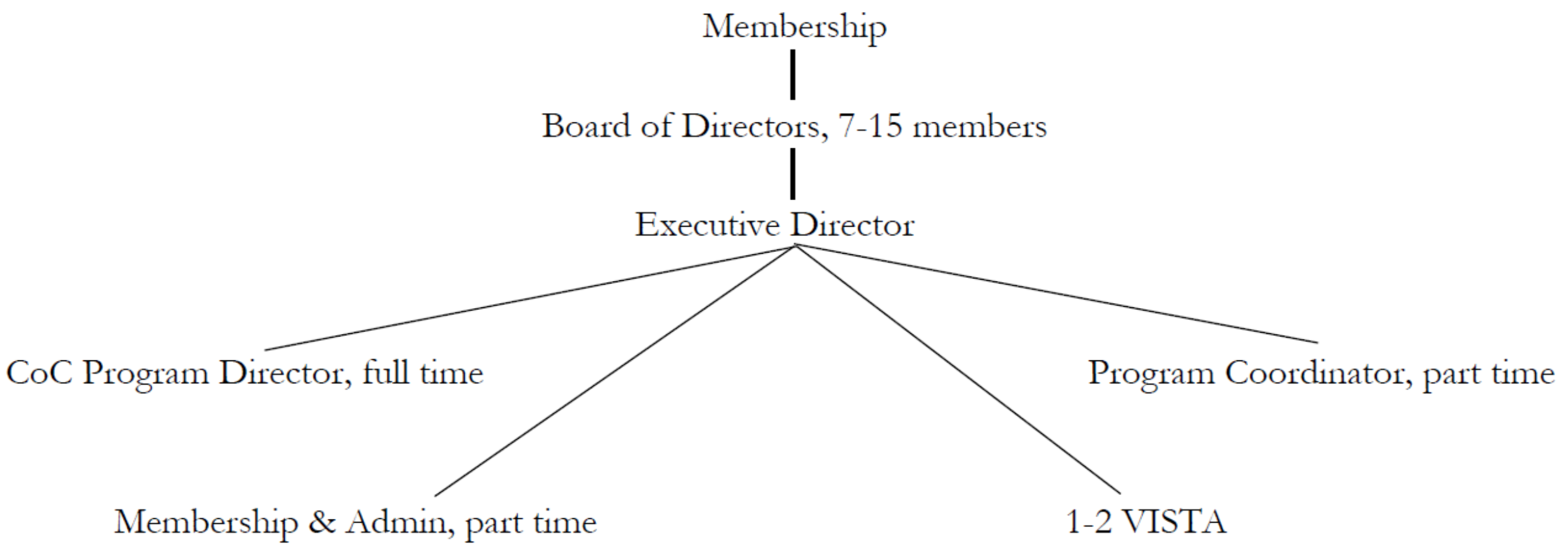
Future Options for VAHC: Merge with VCEH

Pros

- Funding base is more sustainable
- Possible increased potential for grant funding
- Ability to synthesize information and tell a cohesive story of housing and homelessness
- One place for legislators to go for information; unified voice

Cons

- Increased dues
- Potential for focus to be too broad
- Potential conflicts of interest within organization and members
- No initial significant increase in capacity



Board Committees

- Policy and legislative
- Executive
- Finance

Responsibilities:

Executive Director

Primary: education and advocacy
Membership and board meetings
Fundraising
Supervision
Financial management
Strategic vision

CoC Program Director

Primary: manage collaborative applicant responsibilities
Primary: other staff support for the BoS CoC
Other, in support of the ED

Program Coordinator, part-time

Marketing, website
Participate in BoS and local housing coalition activities
Support PIT, HAD, other events
Coordinate training and education

Membership & Admin, part-time

Meeting scheduling, minutes
Coordinate dues outreach and collection
Quickbooks?

VISTA(s) (Likely vacant in 2024)

Special projects

**Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition
Vermont Coalition to End Homeless**

Proposed Merged budget, FY24
July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024

Revenue	Budget
Dues	80,000
Donations, Indvid. & Corp	20,000
Private grants	20,000
OEO Capacity Building Grant	75,000
CoC Planning Grant 2021	145,000
Total revenue	340,000

Expenses

Salary, fringe & benefits	277,882
Bookkeeping	6,760
NOFO TA	20,000
Board Stipends	4,500
Fees & Dues	2,000
Computer/Equipment	1,000
Insurance (general & D&O)	3,900
Office Rent & Internet	3,000
Printing & Office supplies	500
Conference & Training	2,000
Meeting/events	2,000
Consultants/Necrason	24,000
Legal	500
Training materials	3,000
Mileage	800
Misc.	2,000
Total expenses	353,842
 Revenue less expenses	 (13,842)

Communication Plan and Timeline for VAHC or Merged Organization

- Relationships are key to the success of this plan; members can expect support from ED and will also be expected to provide support to ED
- New ED will reach out to current members for 1:1 meetings within first four months
- July-August: Invitation to participate in Legislative Workgroup to draft priorities
- September: Invitation to Annual Meeting to provide input on draft of priorities
- October: Legislative priorities sent out via email for last round of feedback

During Legislative Session

- Weekly email updates on legislative activity
- Call to action emails
- Director available to answer questions, coordinate testimony, etc.

Procedure for Proposing Legislation

- Proposal will be circulated within the Legislative Workgroup via email with as much lead time as possible
 - There may be times when short notice is unavoidable
- All members encouraged to participate in Legislative Workgroup
- Steering Committee will assess recommendations and feedback from Legislative Workgroup and vote to accept, reject, or table proposal for more input from members

Monthly Communications

- Monthly Newsletter using input from membership to include:
 - Legislative updates
 - Calendar of events
 - Housing in the news
 - Job opportunities
 - Volunteer opportunities
 - Other relevant information