

# **Community Safety Review Proposal**

## **Introduction/Context**

We are honored to submit this proposal for facilitating a community-driven process of examining community safety and policing in Brattleboro. As people involved in the drafting of the Request for Proposals, and who have been present in many of the conversations about the process, we feel that we have a substantial understanding of the goals and wide array of potential outcomes of this project.

We were motivated to contribute a proposal to ensure that you had at least one good option, and to make certain that the work could continue. We will be pleased if your decision is difficult, as we hope that means there are other qualified facilitators or facilitation teams at the ready to engage in this work. We are happy to be called to step into this work if it is the will of the community and the Selectboard, and will find ways to contribute to the process if not selected.

## **Facilitation Strategy**

Our facilitation strategy involves aiming for organization, collaboration, efficiency, safety, bravery, accountability, humanity, and equity in the work. We aim to create and hold space for inquiry and analysis that honors each person at the table and works to eradicate the presence of racism and oppression within the process. We hope you find evidence of these qualities throughout the proposal.

We are proposing a shared facilitation style that allows for flexibility during this unprecedented pandemic, transparency and demystification of the process wherever possible, collaboration across many organizations and projects throughout the community, and a flexible enough process to allow for co-creation, feedback, accountability, and shifting our methodologies as we learn.

We envision a process facilitated primarily by two Core Facilitators, with the support of specific, limited engagements with delegated facilitation as is most useful, and a committee that is ready to do quite a bit of guided work in a short time. We have also made space in our budget for accessibility supports such as translation, interpretation, childcare, and technological support to aid in broad participation from many people in our communities, as described in greater detail in the Budget Overview section.

All sessions will default to being held virtually, with attention paid to access needs, due to Covid 19. If a need arises for in-person work that cannot safely happen virtually, which we do not anticipate will occur, we will weigh the impacts of the pandemic seriously and practice masked, distanced, ventilated, limited encounters that comply with all relevant CDC and legal guidelines and reduce risk as much as possible. We have built flexibility into the facilitation structure, in part, to support the unpredictability that has arisen as a result of this pandemic.

## **About the Core Facilitators**

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### ***Emily Megas-Russell, LICSW***

Emily is a Brattleboro Vermont resident, a mother, a therapist, an activist, a dancer. Emily obtained her undergraduate bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice & Psychology from The George Washington University in Washington DC, and her Masters in Social Work from Columbia University of New York. She is a licensed clinical social worker and current operator of With Great Heart, PLC, a private psychotherapy and consulting practice (<http://www.wgreateheart.com/>), specializing in somatic-based trauma therapy and explorations of gender and sexuality. In her consulting work, Emily works with local non-profit organizations to provide CQI (continuous quality improvement) program design and implementation, training and staff development, clinical supervision, and crisis response support.

In all of her work, Emily takes an anti-oppression framework, encouraging individuals and systems clients to unpack and unburden from cultural and societal conditions that promote inequality, oppression, and harm (racism/white supremacy, misogyny/male supremacy, cissexism, ableism, etc). Emily understands and respects that each individual and each system is unique and working at its own pace and understanding of the intersections and impacts of these conditions on our collective collaboration and liberation. Emily is personally committed to unlearning racism and white supremacy and recognizes that this is a lifelong process. She acknowledges that as a cis-gender white person she has been privileged in protection from profiling and police brutality and other forms of racial oppression, and that a facilitator role such as this one comes with the power and potential to cause harm. You can view Emily's [Statement of Privilege & Harm](#) on her website.

Emily facilitated the Community Organizing Effort (COE) in Brattleboro in 2019, a collaborative effort to organize and uplift the voices of people living with homelessness and substance use in identifying and advocating for their strengths and needs. The group, now called Collaborative Neighbors, was instrumental in the installation and oversight of portable toilets downtown and the Awareness-Raising, Bread-Breaking, Noise-Making Forum in December 2019 with musical performances, a panel discussion and call to action from community members living with homelessness and substance use.

Emily has over 13 years of experience working in systems dedicated to serving the safety and wellness of individuals, families and communities with various populations in both urban and rural settings. Emily interned with the Springfield MA Police Department in community policing programs addressing gang violence and exploring progressive and collaborative approaches to embracing and managing graffiti art. Emily started her post-graduate career working with Latinx immigrants without documentation in the Boston area writing program proposals and grants. Emily also managed emergency food programs, case management and counseling services as well as a youth service-learning program for a community center in Cambridge MA. One of the programs that Emily oversaw in this community center was a Community Policing Initiative, a project that cultivated collaboration between the Cambridge Police and East End neighbors. Emily co-founded Hearty Meals for All, a free-meals program in Somerville MA that

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weaves farmers, activists, and community members together to bring monthly farm-to-table meals to community members experiencing food insecurity.

Upon moving to Vermont in 2010, Emily worked for Health Care and Rehabilitation Services (HCRS) until 2016, when she started her private therapy and consulting practice. At HCRS, Emily provided psychotherapy and program management for a residential program in Brattleboro supporting individuals with significant mental health needs. She then became the Residential Services Program Director, overseeing five residential programs across Windham and Windsor counties. At HCRS she also occupied the position of Manager of Quality Assurance, designing, implementing and overseeing quality assurance and improvement programs across the agency. Emily continues to work as a quality consultant with HCRS, providing guidance, facilitation, and training on quality projects and anti-racism initiatives. She currently consults with Groundworks Collaborative as a clinical supervisor and trainer and is contracted with the Springfield MA Department of Community Corrections for clinical & anti-racism training.

### ***Shea Witzberger***

Shea Witzberger is a resident of Dummerston Vermont, a graduate of Marlboro College, and an alum of Antioch College and the Nonstop Liberal Arts Institute. She also holds a Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management from Marlboro Graduate Center. She began working in social services 18 years ago, and began work to unlearn racism and begin the lifelong process of internally and externally resisting oppression 15 years ago. She acknowledges that these are lifelong processes.

In the last decade, her work has focused on reducing violence toward marginalized people, through teaching about consent, gender, accountability, and systems of oppression in schools and arts organizations, supporting people who are psychiatrically labeled and have experienced chronic homelessness, supporting survivors of sexual and domestic violence as a crisis worker, and doing disability support labor. She has worked with schools and organizations regionally to help them better respond to and prevent sexual violence and relationship abuse. This work aims to end sexism, transphobia, and homophobia in classrooms and communities, and to find better and safer ways to support people who come forward after having experienced violence and abuse and prevent further harm from occurring. She has knowledge about existing police and legal system responses to violence, and has trained the Brattleboro Police Department about gender diversity. She has also studied independently and with Just Practice Collaborative in transformative justice and community accountability facilitation. She acknowledges that restorative and transformative practices originated and are largely being developed and stewarded by BIPOC women, queers, and trans people, and will continue to cite and support work led by those communities to envision harm response and harm reduction.

In addition to receiving formal and community education about political theory and social justice, Shea's own experiences as a queer person from a family impacted by incarceration and, though minimally, the child welfare system, and her lived experiences as a survivor of sexual assault

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and intimate partner violence have exposed her to some of the ways that current systems of safety both promote and erode safety for people experiencing violence. As a white person, she acknowledges the profound ways in which whiteness has shielded her from the brunt of the harm these systems can enact on BIPOC bodies and communities.

Through history and connection to the people and projects of The Root Social Justice Center, Out in the Open, The Women's Freedom Center, Pathways, Families First, and many other organizations in the community, she is poised to help facilitate space for inquiry that centers and respects those most impacted by systemic injustice, and openly seeks truth and a reduction of harm in our community, without a fixed commitment to a specific outcome. Through her experience in crisis response, she is practiced in thinking about safety regarding gathering information and the protection of the valuable perspectives shared by participants. Through her experience as an educator and organizer around ending violence, she is experienced in facilitating difficult but reverent conversations about violence and is ready to bring these experiences and skills into thoughtful community conversations about policing, safety, and ways forward that increase the quality of life and safety for all members of our communities.

### **Facilitation Support**

We have included in our plan and budget the limited and specific engagement of Co-Facilitators to support the process. These Co-Facilitators would be compensated out of the facilitation budget, and be brought in for specific engagements where their lived expertise as members of impacted communities may assist in forums or spaces being safer and more efficient for the people participating and sharing their experiences with the team.

### **Facilitator Qualifications**

We are white people committed to anti-racism. To us, this looks like leaving space for those most impacted to co-construct the process, sharing power as much as possible, taking on nitty gritty/leg work and conversations that might expose a person to racism, developing accountability practices and measures within our committee work, and honoring and being accountable to BIPOC leadership in the community. We each have experiences in creating spaces where we are communicating about lived experiences with systemic and/or interpersonal violence, from large community collaborations to intimate support groups and beyond. We will facilitate agreement making and check-ins throughout the process to encourage safety, equity, and belonging in the culture of the committee. Through experiences in community organizing, healing space, documentary filmmaking, and art making, we have experience in research through community conversation, whether in interviews or larger community forums. We have experience studying and working with restorative, transformative, somatic, and trauma-informed ways of being in relationship and are constantly learning more about these ways of interacting and sharing accountability and responsibility. We are open to the ways these frameworks may inform the process and/or the outcomes. Through our work, respectively, as a therapist and as a former crisis worker, we are skilled in holding sensitive information with honor, care, confidentiality, and are committed to protecting people and their

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information to the greatest extent possible. As a dancer and a performing artist, we are open to the ways that creative expression and movement might influence or ground our work together, and may create usable and engaging deliverables to supplement more conventional written analysis and create access for more of our community. We both have experience in working with groups that have historically been marginalized by carceral systems, including low income people, psychiatrically labeled people, folks who use drugs and/or are in recovery, and BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ communities. We have lived and worked in and around this rural community for 10 years each, and have lived and worked rurally elsewhere as well.

### Scope of Study

This Community Safety Review Proposal seeks to understand the current state of the community safety systems in Brattleboro and their impact on community members' actual experiences of safety, danger or harm.

We are proposing a Community Safety Review Process that is collaborative, organized, efficient, creative, emergent, and dynamic, and that is attuned to issues of unsafety, danger, and threat that are inherent in discussions about people's experiences with the police and other community safety professionals.

*The key players in this proposal are:*

(1) **The Facilitation Team:** which includes two (2) Core Facilitators and some specific, limited work with identified Co-Facilitators who represent communities that are most impacted by police intervention. This structure honors the participation & leadership of BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and other marginalized people in our community.

(2) **The Committee:** which for the purposes of this document we are calling the **Community Safety Review Team (CSR Team)**, will include selected community members who applied to participate on the committee, including folks from communities most impacted by policing. These committee meetings will be open to the public and comply with Open Meeting Law.

(3) **The Community:** Significant attention will be paid by facilitators and the CSR Team to engage community members through a variety of formats and styles of information gathering. Input about experiences of safety, danger, and harm is desired from all community members, with particular effort focused on engaging individuals and groups that are most impacted by current systems.

(4) **Collaborative Organizations:** We have already begun outreach about potential collaboration with a number of organizations in the community that work to eliminate or reduce the impact of systemic and interpersonal violence and harm. We imagine that these community partners and collaborators will contribute perspective and that their relationships to their specific communities could aid the process in being safer and more inclusive for many people.

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It is a goal of this proposal that the Facilitators and CSR Team members will work collaboratively and reciprocally to define, refine, and implement the following project methodology. Building trust and tending to safety are also priorities for the project. Feedback on the review process will be sought regularly from community participants and the CSR Team members in order to assess collaborativeness & safety and adjustments will be made throughout the process.

If selected, one of the first activities of our project will be an information gathering meeting with facilitators, CSR Team members and the town manager and/or legal staff in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of legal structures that will inform and guide this process.

Considering that the make-up of the CSR Team is yet to be determined, we feel that it is important that our proposal allow for flexibility and adaptability to respond to the unique strengths, wisdom, availability & needs of the individuals serving on the committee, as well as our emerging understanding of Open Meeting Law and the Public Records Law, balanced with the need for trauma-informed facilitation and information gathering.

Some initial ideas for Roles/Responsibilities of CSR Team members:

- Gain understanding of legal structures that guide the committee process
- Gain shared understanding and agreements around anti-racism framework for project
- Establish safety agreements and responses within the committee to hold shared accountability and responsibility for process
- Refine project methodology for gathering public input on experiences with police, crisis response systems, emergency responders, and other community safety professionals.
- Develop specific questions to utilize in gathering community input
- Provide accountability to the facilitators in the design and implementation of the review process
- Implement study by gathering testimony/data through interviews, meetings, or other structures to be determined at the outset of the process
- Produce documentation and analysis of gathered information collaboratively with facilitators

### Methodology

In order to facilitate a comprehensive review in a relatively short time frame, we envision a multi-pronged methodology that values and honors the capacity and limitations of each person involved in the review, and allows for a variety of different styles of and opportunities for leadership and engagement. These dynamic engagement strategies fall into two general groupings, which we've titled A) *Community Engagement* and B) *Community Safety Systems Review*.

#### **A) *Community Engagement: Centering the Voices and Experiences of those Most Impacted by Police Intervention, Danger, & Harm***

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We will provide trauma-informed, engaging opportunities for connecting with community members who have experienced danger and harm in the community, including from community safety professionals, and we will work to understand the ways that governmental structures and systems contribute to safety or danger.

Sincere attention will be paid to creating space for people to share their experiences in the safest legal ways available, to de-identify information before it is synthesized or publicized, and to reduce and eradicate racist harm wherever it shows up. The *Community Engagement* arm of the process will rely on collaboration and mutual accountability between facilitators and committee members to gather information in a variety of ways, possibly including:

- 12 scheduled Community Safety Review Team meetings
- Public forums, TBD by the CSR Team
- Specific listening sessions
- Creative/expressive/body-based research
- Anonymous testimony collection, potentially through a virtual platform
- 1:1 interviews

In addition to the inherent value of understanding the truth of people's lived experiences in our community, the information that we gather in this process will aid the CSR Team in making recommendations to the Selectboard about what systems, programs, or processes our community sees as worth increasing or decreasing support for, will show us redundancy or gaps in safety, and will give us a much more accurate picture from which to determine next steps and possibilities.

***B) Community Safety Systems Review: A Comprehensive Quality Review of the Town's Professional Community Safety Programs (Brattleboro Police Department & Dispatch & Police Social Work Liaison program, and ancillary supports to emergency responders/rescue, mental health crisis intervention)***

This proposal includes a review of Brattleboro's community safety systems and available data associated with safety, use of force, and experiences of danger & harm. It is the facilitators' hope to perform as comprehensive of a review as is possible in this time frame proposed.

The central element of the community safety systems review will be a Brattleboro Police Department (BPD) Quality Review. The Brattleboro Police Department's budget accounts for 12.5% of the Town's FY 2020 budget. Combined with Dispatch, these community safety services amount to 15.5% of the overall budget. Additionally, in the FY 2020 budget the Town anticipates revenues of \$118,441 from the Police Department with approximately 40% of that coming from Rescue Inc Dispatch Fees.

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The Brattleboro Police Department, as an armed enforcement agency, has the potential to cause the most harm and danger to individuals in the community with law enforcement practices. In response to the national call for police accountability, a comprehensive review of Brattleboro's current policing system is a critical step in understanding how to ensure oversight & accountability, community democratic control, and effectiveness of our current investments in community safety.

This will include a review of documentation of the following Police structures and processes over the past two years:

- Grievances & Accountability practices
- Documentation of statistics relating to arrest, detainment, & use of force (racial identity, review/accountability, specific interventions, impact/outcomes)
- Documentation of staff oversight and development, including DEI trainings, crisis de-escalation, preventing use of force
- Documentation of CPCC meetings
- Budget (revenue and expenses) and use of resources

This review will also include:

- Meetings with leaders of the Department
- Listening sessions with current police officers (1-2)
- Meetings with other community safety programs & professionals, TBD by the CSR Team

### Deliverables:

From the information gathered by the team, we hope to create at least three main deliverables, including:

- A written report of the current model/systems of community safety that synthesizes data gathered from both arms of the process (as described above)
- A visual "map" of the larger ecosystem of harm and safety that exist within the community (Current Community Safety Systems Ecosystem Map)
- A list of preliminary (short-term) recommendations for the Selectboard to consider for the upcoming budget year, as well as potential next steps/longer-term recommendations.

We acknowledge that in many ways this is just the beginning of the work, and envision that the CSR Team's recommendations might include some next steps, budget recommendations, and potentially other asks for the Selectboard, including ways to continue aspects of the work that require further development or study. We understand that our engagement will end in December and have an impact on the town's process through March, and that any future work would be determined by the Selectboard and require a separate scope, proposal, etc.

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### Measures of Success:

We will measure success using the following metrics:

Metric	Measurement Tool
<p>Accessibility of the process to people most impacted by police intervention</p> <p>Broad range of participation &amp; experiences gathered from the impacted communities</p>	<p>Quantitative review of responses over a diverse group of ways people identify</p> <p>Presence or absence of interpretation &amp; translation services will be tracked</p> <p>Presence or absence of technological supports for participants will be tracked</p> <p>Use of childcare will be tracked</p> <p>Analysis of answers to optional participant brief feedback survey questions</p>
<p>Felt Sense of Collaborativeness in the Process (respect &amp; reciprocity between community participants, CSR Team members)</p>	<p>A CSR Team Survey will be administered at two (2) separate intervals- 1st week of November &amp; 3rd week of December</p> <p>Analysis of answers to optional participant brief feedback survey questions</p>
<p>Felt Sense of Safety in the Process (community participants, CSR Team members, facilitators)</p>	<p>A CSR Team Survey will be administered at two (2) separate intervals- 1st week of November &amp; 3rd week of December</p> <p>Presence or absence of trauma-informed, body-based, safety-focused information gathering methods will be tracked</p> <p>Analysis of answers to optional participant brief feedback survey questions</p> <p>Facilitators will report on qualitative data of sense of safety in the final report</p>
<p>Production of Deliverables</p>	<p>Creation/presence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current Community Safety Ecosystems Map</li> <li>• Report on the Community Safety Review, including data gathered from community experiences and community safety systems review</li> <li>• Recommendations to the Selectboard</li> </ul>

### Measurement Tools:

1. Information Gathering Tool: This tool will capture how community participants self identify, and their answers to the questions asked by facilitators/CSR Team members (to be further developed by the CSR Team).
2. Process Tracking Tool: This tool will capture data on availability & use of translators/interpreters, availability & use of technical supports, availability & use of child care, style of information gathering (verbal/story-sharing, creative/art-based, somatic/body-based, anonymous testimony, etc).

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3. CSR Team Survey: This tool will be administered twice as a process and outcome check for the CSR committee. This tool will ask CSR members about their felt sense of collaborativeness, their felt sense of safety, their met and unmet needs, and their recommendations and feedback about the process.
4. Optional Participant Survey: This tool will consist of 3 questions at the end of information gathering sessions that participants can choose to answer or not. (All questions asked to participants will be optional).

Brief Participant Survey - Optional					
Circle one number/response that corresponds to your experience Then, add a comment if you would like to! Thank you.					
How collaborative did this feel?	1 mostly not	2 somewhat not	3 neutral	4 somewhat yes	5 mostly yes
Comment?					
How safe did this feel?	1 mostly not	2 somewhat not	3 neutral	4 somewhat yes	5 mostly yes
Comment?					
Is there any way we could have better met your needs?	Yes		No		
Comment?					

### Potential Participants

We have already reached out to and received support from The Root Social Justice Center, The Susu Healing Collective, Out In the Open, The Hive Mutual Support Network, The Brattleboro Community Justice Center, and HCRS about possible collaboration and there are possibilities for collaboration with each. We also envision that we will be communicating with more of our community's social justice and social service organizations, such as Turning Point, Groundworks, Pathways, The Women's Freedom Center, Youth Services, and others who work to end or mitigate economic, structural, and interpersonal violence.

Additionally, the *Community Safety Systems Review* will involve communication with Brattleboro Police Department, including Chief Fitzgerald as well as others within the department. It will also

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include connections with those who work in proximity to or in collaboration with the department, such as dispatch, police social workers, mental health crisis response workers, and potentially others.

Lastly, the CSR Team members will help us identify and implement creative outreach, so that community members who want to share their individual experiences and visions have the opportunity to do so, and so that the process is as transparent and demystified as possible.

### What are the Risks?

There are several risks in this work. We want to acknowledge first and foremost that particularly in this political climate, any open process around policing and racial justice has the potential to expose BIPOC to explicit racism and harm. We further acknowledge that having white facilitators could contribute to this risk, particularly without explicit communication and practices that ground the work in antiracism and work to share power and accountability.

Our hope is to manage this risk in many ways, including stepping into the work, if called to do so by the Selectboard and community, as white accomplices in the work of ending white supremacy, ready to be humble, listen, and create space for authentic co-creation and power sharing. Another way we will address this risk is to co-create agreements together at the beginning of our work that define what we expect from one another regarding goals and behaviors within the committee, and ways that we can support one another in our work with the community. We will also be using trauma-informed and somatic practices to assist us in creating safer containers for sharing our experiences and contributing to the process.

The impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on the work could be framed as a significant risk. We are aiming to mitigate the risk of this process contributing to the pandemic or the pandemic hindering our wellness by holding as much of the work as possible virtually. We are currently planning to host all committee meetings and information gathering virtually, though we will finalize our accessibility and pandemic response plans with the CSR Team. We may need to expand our accessibility resources, such as lending technology to individuals who would otherwise not be able to participate. This will be determined in the early phase of the project, and is reflected in the budget.

To address this unprecedented time in pandemic and recognize the inherent need for humans to adapt to unknown and unforeseeable circumstances, the facilitators reserve the right to adapt the process at any time, including shifting co-facilitation responsibilities to CSR Team members or designated Co-Facilitators as needed and with consent.

Another risk is that the limited timeline will limit the comprehensiveness of the process. The expectation that large problems may be wrapped up in a tidy bow at the end of the process may hinder the usefulness of our examinations. We understand that one of the contradictions of anti-racist and anti-oppression work is to be quickly responsive while not getting tunnel vision due to an urgency mindset. We hope to address this risk by keeping the deliverables limited and

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leaving space for the CSR Team to address next steps and recommend a longer timeline, as necessary.

### Proposed Schedule:

We are using the following schedule to guide our understanding of the work. We expect there may be unforeseeable shifts in the schedule, and we may adapt the schedule at times to accommodate the needs of the community. We plan on wrapping up and submitting the deliverables by the due date reflected in the RFP.

Timeline	Tasks	Who?
<b>September</b>	<b><i>Introductions &amp; Project Initiation</i></b>	
<i>Week 3</i>	<b>Selectboard Meeting Decision</b>	<i>*Selectboard</i>
<i>Weeks 4 &amp; 5</i>	<b>Initial Community Safety Review (CSR) Team Meeting<sup>1</sup></b> to establish group norms & agreements and build connection & trust; establish decision-making processes; set initial goals & structure of the Committee collaboratively; assign tasks ( <i>open meeting</i> )	<i>*Core Facilitators *CSR Team</i>
	<b>Information Gathering Meeting: Legal &amp; Administrative</b> to obtain information on legal and administrative structures & rules that govern this project and to orient Facilitators & Committee Members to Town government and community safety systems.	<i>*Core Facilitators *CSR Team Rep(s) *Town Lawyer *Town Manager *Asst. Manager</i>
	<b>Connect with Potential Participants</b> to refine their role in the review process, including potential co-facilitators.	<i>*Core Facilitators</i>
<b>October</b>	<b><i>Information Gathering &amp; Adapting</i></b>	
<i>Week 1</i>	<b>CSR Team Meeting</b> to finalize plan & schedule for listening sessions, 1:1 contacts, & submission of anonymous testimony and to identify facilitation needs & responsibilities and design questions ( <i>open meeting</i> )	<i>*Core Facilitators *CSR Team</i>
	<b>Information Gathering Meeting: Police Department</b> to review the scope of the project and request materials needed for review.	<i>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s) *Town Manager *Police Chief</i>
<i>Week 2</i>	<b>CSR Team Meeting</b> to identify programs/individuals to connect with & schedule meetings; finalize questions for public engagement & feedback; begin collecting community experience data; and continue to build trust & strengthen trauma-informed strategies for gathering and documenting	<i>*Core Facilitators *CSR Team *Co-Facilitator(s)</i>

<sup>1</sup> Meetings & Tasks of the Community Safety Review Team are noted in Purple. Deliverables are noted in Green.

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<p><i>Week 3</i></p>	<p>information (<i>open meeting- data will be de-identified before meeting</i>).</p> <p><b>Create a Current Community Safety Ecosystems Visual Map</b> based on initial information gathered about Town structures and scope of practice.</p> <p><b>CSR Team Meeting</b> to organize data collection processes including de-identification; team building; process assessment &amp; adaptation; assign tasks (<i>open meeting- data will be de-identified before meeting</i>)</p> <p><b>Information Gathering: Listening Sessions, 1:1 Contacts, &amp; Anonymous Testimony</b></p> <p><b>Analyze &amp; De-Identify Community Experiences Data</b></p> <p><b>Begin Community Safety Systems Review</b> by obtaining &amp; reviewing requested information from BPD &amp; ancillary community safety programs.</p>	<p>*Core Facilitators *CSR Team Rep(s)</p> <p>*Core Facilitators *CSR Team</p> <p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s) *Co-Facilitator(s)</p> <p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s)</p> <p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s)</p>
<p><i>Week 4</i></p>	<p><b>CSR Team Meeting</b> to check-in on process &amp; progress; update plan &amp; schedule as needed; collect &amp; organize data for reporting; assign tasks (<i>open meeting- data will be de-identified before meeting</i>).</p> <p><b>Information Gathering: Listening Sessions, 1:1 Contacts, &amp; Anonymous Testimony</b></p> <p><b>Analyze &amp; De-Identify Community Experiences Data</b></p> <p><b>Schedule Police Officer Listening Sessions(s)</b> to obtain feedback from police officers.</p> <p><b>Continue Community Safety Systems Review</b> through qualitative &amp; quantitative data analysis</p>	<p>*Core Facilitators *CSR Team</p> <p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s) *Co-Facilitator(s)</p> <p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s)</p> <p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s)</p> <p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s)</p>
<p><b>November</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Information Gathering &amp; Analyzing</i></b></p> <p><b>Administer CSR Team Feedback Survey</b></p> <p><b>Weekly CSR Team Meetings (4)</b> to check-in on process &amp; progress; review &amp; discuss survey responses &amp; unmet needs; update plan &amp; schedule as needed; collect &amp; organize data</p>	<p>*Core Facilitators</p> <p>*Core Facilitators *CSR Team</p>

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	<p>for reporting; assign tasks (<i>open meeting- data will be de-identified before meeting</i>)</p> <p><b>Information Gathering: Listening Sessions, 1:1 Contacts, &amp; Anonymous Testimony</b></p> <p><b>Listening Sessions (1-2) w/ Police Officers</b></p> <p><b>Check-In with Town Selectboard</b></p> <p><b>Analyze &amp; De-Identify Community Experiences Data</b></p> <p><b>Continue Community Safety Systems Review</b> through qualitative &amp; quantitative data analysis.</p>	<p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s) *Co-Facilitator(s)</p> <p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s)</p> <p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s)</p> <p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s)</p> <p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s)</p>
<b>December</b>	<b><i>Finalize Recommendations</i></b>	
<i>Weeks 1 &amp; 2</i>	<p><b>CSR Team Meetings (2)</b> to check-in on process &amp; progress; update plan &amp; schedule as needed; collect &amp; organize data for reporting; assign tasks (<i>open meeting- data will be de-identified before meeting</i>)</p>	<p>*Core Facilitators *CSR Team</p>
<i>Week 3</i>	<p><b>Administer CSR Team Feedback Survey</b></p> <p><b>Wrap Up Information Gathering: Final Listening Sessions, 1:1 Contacts, &amp; Anonymous Testimony</b></p>	<p>*Core Facilitators</p> <p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s) *Co-Facilitator(s)</p>
	<p><b>Finish Analyzing &amp; De-Identifying Community Experiences Data</b></p> <p><b>Finalize Community Safety Systems Review</b> through qualitative &amp; quantitative data analysis.</p>	<p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s)</p> <p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s)</p>
<i>Week 4 (holiday week)</i>	<p><b>Begin Compiling Report to the Town</b></p>	<p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team Rep(s)</p>
<i>Week 5</i>	<p><b>Final CSR Team Meetings</b> to celebrate process &amp; progress and finalize report to Town (<i>open meeting- data will be de-identified before meeting</i>)</p>	<p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team</p>
<i>by Dec 31st</i>	<p><b>Submit Report with Outcomes &amp; Recommendations of the Community Safety Review to the Town Selectboard</b></p>	<p>*Core Facilitator(s) *CSR Team</p>

### Budget Overview:

## Community Safety Review Proposal

The following budget outlines the *anticipated costs* of the proposal outlined above. The facilitation team will track all hours spent on the project and will submit invoices to the Town to be paid monthly. If this proposal is selected, we will monitor time spent on the project closely and be sure not to invoice beyond the accepted budget. With Great Heart, PLC will serve as the fiscal agent for this project and will distribute all funds, **except stipends**, which we expect to be directly paid by the town to Committee members monthly.

The budget is broken into three parts. The first part covers the cost of facilitation labor, the second provides stipends for up to nine (9) committee members (as suggested in the RFP), and the third provides labor and materials to increase accessibility for the process.

The first two sections are fairly self-explanatory. The amount of committee members may vary, which means that we may come in under budget in the CSR Committee Stipends section.

The third piece of the budget represents the labor and materials that are required to ensure that this vital community process is accessible to the widest range of participants possible. Given that the Deaf/hard of hearing community can face specific risks regarding police and policing, the interpretation supports listed are vital. We are open to access requests from our community about further accessibility needs, and will accommodate them to the best of our ability. Further, interpretation between English and other languages is budgeted similarly. Depending on how often those supports are needed, we may come in under budget on interpretation services.

The childcare line item serves two main functions. The first is to ensure that for community members for whom childcare is a barrier to participation, that those people are able to participate. The second function is to make sure that for those people who have experienced violence, that they feel able to show up and speak openly about experiences that it would be developmentally inappropriate and harmful for children to witness or participate in. We envision that this could be spent at a rate of \$20/hr for specific listening sessions, only for community participants for whom lack of child care is a barrier to participation, to be spent as they see most appropriate for their families. This allows for people to make the safest choices possible for their own families during this pandemic, and will support domestic and sexual violence survivors and others in being able to freely share about their experiences without concern about their children being harmed by this process.

The tech support line item is designed to enable folks to share their experiences who don't have access to a device and WiFi, or who have limited income and limited phone minutes. Due to Covid-19, we anticipate conducting interviews, listening sessions, and gathering information virtually. This means that tech might be a barrier for some people's participation. We might spend this on prepaid phone cards, a cheap prepaid phone, or other tech support to enable people who would otherwise not be able to contribute to this review to share their wisdom and experiences.

The outreach line item is for printing flyers or running ads, as needed, about specific forums or opportunities for community participation, as decided by the CSR Team. We will also rely

## Community Safety Review Proposal

heavily on unpaid social media sharing, connection with local organizations and their networks, the Town's website, and other free modes of direct outreach.

The materials line item includes money for the production of a visual map of community safety systems, as well as materials that enable the creative, expressive modes of gathering information as described above. We hope that the ability for people to engage with these ideas and this process non-verbally or "extra-verbally" will increase access for all types of people, encompassing a wide range of learning and participation styles and supporting a range of abilities and disabilities. We believe that diversifying our modes of communication and information gathering will increase the depth and breadth of our connections and understandings.

The total budget for this review is equivalent to about 1.4% of the Brattleboro Police Department's FY 2020 budget.

### Proposed Budget: September - December 2020

Budgeted Item	Anticipated Cost
<p><i>Facilitation Team</i></p> <p>Incl. two (2) Core Facilitators (Emily Megas-Russell &amp; Shea Witzberger) &amp; limited, specific Co-Facilitation support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Facilitation Rate:</i> \$50/hr</li> <li>• <i>Expected # of Hours:</i> 20 hours/week</li> </ul>	\$15,000
<p><i>CSR Committee Stipends</i></p> <p>(9) Committee Members @ \$950/member</p>	\$8,550
<p><i>Outreach and Accessibility Supports</i></p> <p>Sign language interpreters: \$75/hour * 2 interpreters * up to 32 hours (if interpreters are needed at CSR Team meetings &amp; listening sessions) = \$4,800            Spoken language interpretation: ~ \$75/hr * up to 32 hours (if interpreters are needed at CSR Team meetings &amp; listening sessions) = \$2,400            Child Care: \$1,000            Tech Support: \$300 (prepaid phone cards, other tech supports)            Outreach: \$150 (printing &amp; advertising)            Materials: \$150 (production of deliverables, tools for facilitating creative expression)</p>	\$8,800
<b>TOTAL ANTICIPATED PROJECT BUDGET:</b>	
	\$32,350

### Closing:

We are grateful for The Selectboard's thoughtful consideration, and look forward to meeting with you all soon. Thanks for investing in this important and timely work!

# EMILY MEGAS-RUSSELL, LICSW

Brattleboro VT | wgreatheart@gmail.com

## SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Clinical Consultation, Supervision, and Training
- Strategic Visioning, Organizational Management, and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Consultation
- Individual and Couples Psychotherapy
- Ceremony Facilitation and Space-Holding

## RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

### WITH GREAT HEART, BRATTLEBORO VT

Owner/Psychotherapist/Consultant

JANUARY 2017-PRESENT

- Operate private psychotherapy practice for individuals and couples utilizing talk therapy, mindfulness and embodied movement. Areas of interest include anxiety, depression, trauma, relationship issues, sexuality, disembodiment & chronic pain, and spirituality & mental health.
- Competence in CBT, Trauma Integration, Somatics, Radical Acceptance, Authentic Movement, Mindfulness, Parts Work, and more.
- Manage practice billing through Medicaid and private insurance companies.
- Provide support developing, facilitating, and holding space for sacred ceremony honoring life cycle events.
- Current consultation relationships with: *Health Care & Rehabilitation Services, Groundworks Collaborative, Springfield MA Department of Community Corrections*
- Provide clinical consultation to human service organizations in the following areas: strategic visioning/organizational management; clinical training and supervision; CQI, and program development

### HEALTH CARE AND REHABILITATION SERVICES (HCRS), SOUTHERN VT

Quality Assurance Manager

Director of Residential Programs

Program Director

Social Worker

APRIL 2010 – FEBRUARY 2017

- Currently in a *consultation role*, providing clinical training & supervision and quality assurance support
- **QA Manager:** Developed and executed a CQI plan for a regional community mental health agency serving over 5,000 consumers. Managed internal quality audits and reviews and prepared the agency for external quality audits, including state agency, Medicaid, and JCAHO reviews. Provided support and guidance for program development. Supervised clinical interns and new clinicians towards licensure.
- **Director of Residential Services:** Oversaw administration and operations of 5 adult residential recovery programs across Windham and Windsor counties with a total of 38 beds and 100 employees across a level of care continuum that includes intensive residential, crisis stabilization, and semi-independent living. Provided administrative and clinical supervision a team of approx. 9 program managers/clinicians who provide direct management of programs and care to residents in the programs.

- **Program Director:** Managed a 6-bed staff-secure residential home for adults with significant mental health challenges who were transitioning out of long-term psychiatric hospital stays. Oversaw daily operations of the home, supervised staff, and provided clinical direction to the program.
- **Social Worker:** Provided direct psychotherapy and case management to 6 residents in a staff-secure residential home for adults with significant mental health challenges. Provided clinical consultation and guidance to residential staff.

## EDUCATION

**COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK, NEW YORK, NY**  
 MASTER'S DEGREE IN SOCIAL ENTERPRISE ADMINISTRATION/CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ISSUES (MSW) – 2007

**GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON, DC**  
 BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE (BA) – 2005  
 Magna Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society

## RELEVANT ACTIVITIES

### Professional Licensure

LICSW, Vermont. License #: 089.0073007 Effective Date: 11/22/2010 Expiration Date: 1/31/2022

### Highlights of Professional Trainings & Engagement

#### *Clinical/Administrative:*

- Developed & facilitated the following *training programs* for community mental health staff, 2014-2017:
  - *Enhancing Clinical Competency in Addressing Risk*
  - *Trauma-Informed Care*
  - *Living in the Grey: A Harm Reduction Approach to Substance Use*
  - *DSM V: What you Need to Know as a Clinician*
- Served as a Panel Speaker at VT DMH Conference “*A State of Mental Health: Challenges, Opportunities, and Future Directions of Vermont's Adult Mental Health System*”: September 2014
- Trauma and Recovery; Rebuilding Shattered Lives: September 2012
- Trauma and the Brain: What Brain Science can teach us about Trauma Therapy, June 2011.
- Certificate in ‘Leading Change in Complex Organizations’, MIT Sloane School of Management, 2009.
- Group Facilitation Methods, Institute of Cultural Affairs, December 2007.

#### *Somatics:*

- The Realization Process with Judith Blackstone, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020-2021
- Embryoflow: Exploring Embryonic Development w/ Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen & Christine Cole, June 2016.
- *Certified Yoga Instructor*, 200-Hour Shakti Flow Yoga Teacher Training Certification, 2012.
- 40-Hour Yoga Teacher Certificate in Trauma Sensitive Yoga: October 2012.

### Interests & Affiliations

- Lost River Racial Justice, affiliate of Standing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ)
- The Rabbit Whole Collective ritual performance theatre group
- Contact Improvisation

# Shea Witzberger

## Summary

- Conscientious, flexible, hard working, passionate, creative, appropriately humorous, articulate, and grounded in anti oppression principles and practices
- Skilled trainer, facilitator, educator, consultant, advocate, team leader, team member, language crafter, editor, and listener
- Experienced in community building and organizing, responding to systemic and interpersonal violence, and direct support with those who have experienced violence, homelessness, drug use and/or are in recovery, and those with received psychiatric diagnoses or who experience extreme states
- Fluent in social media, MS Office, Google Suite, and a quick tech learner
- Seeking opportunities to use my unique skills, experiences, and energy to facilitate processes that contribute to safety, eradicate oppression, and directly support those experiencing violence in my communities.

## Work Experience

### **Independent Facilitator/Educator/Consultant/Artist, (2013- present)**

- Worked with arts organizations, community organizations, and educators to create stronger responses to violence and violence prevention programs, to gain language and frameworks about intimate partner violence and response, and to create space for anti oppression frameworks within their work
- Crafted language, steered committee work, and created educational resources around consent, sexual and relationship violence, healthy hook ups and relationships, transformative and restorative justice, violence prevention, bystander intervention, accountability, community safety, and more
- Created art works independently and collaboratively for/with art companies, social justice organizations, colleges, and small businesses that promote collective liberation, antiracism, an end to violence, and resilience

### **Youth Advocate, The Women's Freedom Center, Brattleboro, VT (2017- 2019)**

- Worked as a domestic and sexual violence crisis advocate, covering a 24 hour crisis hotline, providing 1:1 safety planning and advocacy to survivors over the phone and in person, facilitating domestic and sexual violence support groups, providing assistance with court paperwork and Relief From Abuse hearings, providing supports in the shelter system, and connecting survivors to legal, housing, safety, food, employment, and other supports and resources
- Advocated with survivors in the court system, with police, with housing organizations, with employers, with DCF, in hospitals, with parole officers, with other domestic violence programs, and in many other contexts
- Lead the Center's youth work, including advocacy for teen and young adult survivors, as well as educational and community building work in local colleges and schools, focused on teaching young people and the adults that work with them about sexism

and homophobia and transphobia, gender and sexual identity, navigating dating pressures, identifying abuse, building healthy and safe relationship skills, bystander intervention, and educating young people about the possibilities and limits of community safety and support resources

- Trained many schools and local organizations, including some area elementary schools, most local middle and high schools, local colleges, and many non profit and social service organizations about supporting youth survivors, identifying abuse, responding to violence, honoring people of all gender identities, and creating safer cultures for young people of all genders, as well as orienting them to The Women's Freedom Center's supports

#### **Collective Member, The Royal Frog Ballet (2015- present)**

- Worked with collective members to create large scale, site specific, land based performance and installation work in the annual Surrealist Cabaret show in Western Massachusetts and Central Vermont.
- Produced a large gallery show and many annual performances, playing a variety of roles and working collaboratively

#### **Service Coordinator, Pathways Vermont, Brattleboro, VT (2016-2017)**

- Worked in the Housing First program to directly support individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, mental/emotional struggle, and recent incarceration with a variety of needs
- Supported people in crisis, sat with people in hospitals, visited people in The Retreat and other facilities, and provided rotational on call support.
- Supported people in navigating Vermont State Housing Authority, Social Security, Economic Services. Coordinated support with Groundworks Collaborative, Brattleboro Police Department, and other organizations.
- Shared the case load with a small Housing First team, met daily to assess needs and divide tasks, and participated in co-reflections, clinical supervisions, trainings, and other team collaborations.
- Obtained and utilized professional development and training in harm reduction, the housing first model, Intentional Peer Support, Alternatives to Suicide, staying in difficult conversations, first aid, overdose prevention, medical note compliance, and more.

#### **Sexuality, Health, Social (Justice) Studies Teacher, and 1:1 Support,**

Kindle Farm School, Newfane, VT, (2012-2016)

- Developed and delivered original, experiential, social justice and harm reduction based curriculum in the subjects of sexuality, consent, relationships, gender, health, social (justice) studies, and art for students in elementary, middle, and high school.
- Worked with behaviorists, therapists, school districts, administrators, and other service providers to implement collaborative and individualized curricular supports for students who have received diagnostic labels and Individualized Education Plans.
- Obtained and utilized consistent professional development and training in trauma and trauma informed teaching, de-escalation, suicide prevention, multiple intelligences, supporting learning diverse classrooms, data collection, narrative documentation, and much more.
- Consulted, mediated, and advocated in the spheres of sexuality and consent, gender diversity, antiracism, and social justice with staff, administrators, and students.

#### **Previous Work History, Abridged**

- **Substitute Teacher, Wildflowers Playschool, Putney, VT (2015-2020)**

- **Our Whole Lives Sexuality Educator**, UCC and UU congregations, Brattleboro, VT (2015)
- **Pre College Program Evening Enrichment Leader**, Marlboro College, Marlboro, VT (2013)
- **Politics/Wellness Educator**, Journey School Homeschool Cooperative, Brattleboro, VT (2011)
- **Assistant Manager**, Brattleboro Area Farmers' Market, Brattleboro, VT (2011-2012)
- **Gallery Supervisor**, Drury Gallery, Marlboro, VT (2010-2012)
- **Youth Summer Enrichment Program Leader**, Westgate Affordable Housing, Brattleboro, VT (2010)
- **Production Assistant**, "Toxic Tours-Nuclear Ohio" Documentary Film, Yellow Springs, OH (2009)

## Education

**Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management**, Marlboro College Graduate Center, Brattleboro, VT 2013

**BA in Political Theory, minor in Art**, Marlboro College, Marlboro, VT 2012

- Elected Commencement Speaker
- Elected Town Crier
- Orientation Trip Leader

## Volunteer Experience

**Board Member**, Women's Freedom Center, Brattleboro, VT 2012-2015

**Board Member**, Latchis Arts, Brattleboro, VT 2012-2015