



ServeNebraska Commission

Board Meeting Minutes

April 28, 2011

NOTE TAKER: Janet Schmidt	LOCATION: UNO Thompson Alumni Center Omaha, Nebraska	DATE: 4/28/11	TIME: 1:40 p.m.	DURATION: 2-1/2 hours
PURPOSE: Quarterly Commission Meeting	ATTENDEES: Commissioners Present: Lorinda Brown, Nancy Faber, Sally Ganem, April Kelly-Maresh, Denise Kollath, Jamie Moore, Gerry Osborn, Susan Schnase, Carol Speicher, Angela Volovich, Rose White and Lois Wine. Commissioner(s) Present via Teleconference: None Absent: Jan Fitts, Tanya Janulewicz, Barry Kriha, Julie Nash, Donlynn Rice, Ron Sedlacek Staff Present: Barbara Thomas, Greg Donovan, Kim Hall, Janet Schmidt, and Valerie Knaub Guests Present: John Gomperts, Director-AmeriCorps State and National, Corporation for National & Community Service			

BUSINESS MEETING – CALL TO ORDER

The business meeting was called to order at 1:40 p.m. by Jamie Moore, Chair of the Commission. Jamie introduced guest, John Gomperts, the national director for AmeriCorps from CNCS who also attended the First Lady's Awards Luncheon. John will meet with Omaha AmeriCorps and VISTA members in a round table discussion to be held later this afternoon at the new offices of the Goodwill YouthBuild AmeriCorps Program.

ROLL CALL – DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Roll call was taken by Janet Schmidt to determine a quorum of 10 members as required by the Bylaws. Twelve commissioners (11 voting; 1 non-voting) were in attendance at 1:41 p.m. and there was a quorum.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments.

ADOPTION OF A CONSENT AGENDA PROCEDURE

A recommendation from the Executive Committee was received to adopt the use of a consent agenda as part of the Commission's operating procedures.

Motion #1: Gerry Osborn moved approval of the recommendation from the Executive Committee to use a consent agenda as part of the Commission's meeting operating procedures.

Second: Lois Wine

Vote: 11-Yes Motion was carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 28, 2011 CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Agenda from the April 28, 2011 Meeting.
2. Approval of Minutes from the January 27, 2001 Meeting.

Motion #2: Lorinda Brown moved that the items on the consent agenda be approved.

Second: Rose White

Vote: 11-Yes Motion was carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS – Janet Schmidt, Fiscal/Operations Officer, ServeNebraska Staff

1. Commission Operations & Subgrant Expenditures Report ending March 31, 2011

2. Administration Grant Match Report ending March 31, 2011

Janet stated that on Table 1: ServeNebraska Operations – Grant Fund Sources, the Disability and PDAT funding received No Cost Extensions through December 31, 2011. Table 2: 2010-11 AmeriCorps Subgrants: These are expenditure numbers from Periodic Expense Reports submitted monthly by the subgrantees online through February 28, 2011. Janet stated that the expenditures for the 2011 Administration Grant as of March 31, 2011 were \$38,508.80 with a match amount of \$23,823.18.

- Handouts:
 1. *March 31, 2011 ServeNebraska Operations & Subgrant Expenditures Report*
 2. *March 31, 2011 Administrative Grant Match Report*

Motion # 3: Susan Schnase moved to accept the Quarterly Commission Operations & Subgrant Expenditures Report and the Quarterly Administrative Grant Match Reports ending March 31, 2011.

Second: Nancy Faber

Vote: Yes – 11. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Executive Director, Barbara Thomas

1. 2011 & 2012 Federal Funding Situation

- Barb distributed handouts regarding the impact on Nebraska with the elimination of the funding for the Corporation and a list of AmeriCorps programs, AmeriCorps member numbers and funding by congressional districts that shows the reach of our programs state wide.
- John Gomperts, CNCS AmeriCorps State and National Director, said this was an excellent summary for commissioners and the public to help them understand how important the service of AmeriCorps members is in Nebraska. He mentioned that the Serve America Act passed a couple of years ago contained the framework for the potential of great growth in national service and everyone seemed to be poised to expand national service. With the 2010 elections, the mood in Congress changed. The Continuing Resolution passed a final vote on April 7th to reduce national service funding and became law on April 15th. Ninety-four percent of the CNCS budget was funded for this year. Learn & Serve America funding was eliminated. The Senior Corps program, RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) took a 20% cut imposed half way through the current fiscal year. AmeriCorps grant funding took a 6% (\$23 million) cut. The Administration, PDAT & Disability grant allocations were cut .2% and Commissions will soon be notified of the new allocations. \$208 million will be available for the 2011-2012 CNCS competitive funds. With the cut in these funds, no program expansions will be funded. Continuing programs will be looked at closely on member retention.
- The 2012 federal budget negotiations promise to be as difficult as the 2011 budget negotiations.
- An article written with a negative bias on AmeriCorps programs by Michelle Malkin appeared in the April 22, 2011 Midlands Business Journal and was brought to the Commission's attention by Commissioner Rose White. The question that was proposed is should there be a response from the Commission, and if so, what type of response? John Gomperts suggested that a local business or civic leader who has some personal story about why AmeriCorps matters should provide a response in the Midlands Journal.
 - One suggestion from Commissioner Susan Schnase was for Gary Gates, CEO of the Omaha Public Power District as that person. Mr. Gates is a former chair of the Commission. With this scenario, Jamie suggested a draft response for his signature be developed. She thought his response could be distributed more widely than just the Journal.
 - A second suggestion was to encourage the utility companies to put a blurb in their customer payroll inserts about AmeriCorps. Jamie said this might be better if it were to go out through the Nebraska Energy Assistance Network that is a group of all energy companies such as NPPD, OPPD, MUD, LES and others. **Jamie agreed to contact Judy Martin, the current Chair of NEAN to inquire if there was interest in this type of information being shared with their employees.**

2. ASC State Service Commission Leadership Summit (March 28-30, 2011)

- Jamie and Barb attended the ASC Leadership Summit held at the National United Way headquarters in Alexandria, VA. The evaluations for this event emphasized how popular this event was with Commission executive staff. The Executive Directors requested that the summit continue as a way for EDs to work together on problems that face commissions.
- The session with the United Way national director and holding the Summit at the UW national headquarters has forged a strong partnership between United Way and Commissions that encouraged commissions to do more with their state United Ways organizations and state UW associations. Jamie indicated that there are 1204 United Way organizations across the

country. They all belong to United Way Worldwide (UWW) but decide at the local level which issues they will address. There are 19 United Way organizations in Nebraska but no state UW association.

3. AmeriCorps Week (May 14-21, 2011)

- ServeNebraska Staff are working with the InterCorps Council AmeriCorps and VISTA members to implement projects for AmeriCorps Week:
 - May 14th Postal Union Food Drive.
 - Initial contact has been made at some Nebraska colleges to organize a reception to show screenings of the *Story of Sergeant Shriver* who was instrumental in starting the Peace Corps.
 - AmeriCorps members are asked to speak at civic clubs, school groups, business associations, neighborhood gatherings and faith-based groups in their communities about service.
 - A contest is being organized for AmeriCorps members to submit photos or create videos that show AmeriCorps members making an impact in their communities.
- Jamie said that John Gomperts asked Mayor Suttle to lead a Mayor's Round Table for AmeriCorps members to learn more about their service in Omaha. It would be good to have the Round Table during AmeriCorps Week. **Jamie will work with the Mayor's scheduler to get a Round Table on his schedule early in AmeriCorps Week. Barb will contact Omaha programs to recruit some of their members to attend the Mayor's Round Table after the date and time are set.**

4. Training Program Update

- A ServeNebraska training partnership with Southeast Community College and three other community colleges (Northeast Nebraska CC, Central CC and Western Nebraska CC) has enabled us to offer a six-session series on Volunteer Management using long distance technology. Sixteen seats have been taken already in Lincoln, Scottsbluff and Grand Island for AmeriCorps and VISTA members to participate in those sessions.
- A 2-day training in June will be held to learn how to facilitate member conversations on Civic Reflection. AmeriCorps Program Directors, two ServeNebraska staff, and a few members of the InterCorps Council are registered to attend so they can facilitate conversations with national service members about civic responsibility, civic engagement and continued involvement in their local communities next program year. This approach has been very successful for several other commissions in other states.

5. Youth Service Days Mini-grants (April 15-17, 2011)

- Using the State Farm Foundation's grant funds, the Commission awarded mini-grants for Global Youth Service Day projects to 11 youth-serving organizations in 10 communities for a total of \$1,750. An additional \$2,070 in disability grant funding was awarded to seven organizations serving youth with disabilities in six communities. Most of these projects were implemented the weekend of April 15-17.
- AmeriCorps/Disability Program Officer, Cathy Plager's daughter was awarded a \$500 grant from the Sodexo Foundation to implement a Feed the Hungry project for Youth Service Day. The project was led by Kylee Plager and the Park Middle School Student Council partnered with the Lincoln Food Bank and Lincoln Public Schools to challenge other middle school student councils and their students in the City of Lincoln and surrounding areas to increase awareness of hunger issues and raise money for the Backpack Program. ServeNebraska served as the fiscal agent for the grant.

6. AmeriCorps Program Site Visits (April and May 2011)

- Barb explained that Greg, Cathy and Janet have completed 7 program fiscal and programmatic site visits and have 5 remaining to finish in May. Letters will be sent to each program with the results of each of the annual site visits and corrections plans, if needed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. **2011 First Lady's Awards Luncheon Evaluation:** Recommendations for future Awards Luncheons were shared by the Commissioners.
 - Facility was wonderful.
 - Thanks to Gerry and the awards judges for a great slate of winners.
 - Publicity and outreach for nominations was significantly expanded resulting in more nominations than we have ever received before.
 - The diversity of the winners was amazing.
 - Suggest the program be shortened if we want to pull in the business sector.
 - The Bellevue East H.S. Swing Choir was entertaining.
 - Award winners should be notified sooner and adjust the timeline.

- All people that were nominated and their nominators will be notified with certificates given to all who received a nomination.
 - There should be more of an effort by commissioners to secure underwriters for the Luncheon.
2. **Commissioner Vacancies & Recruitment** – Jamie Moore, Commission Chair
- **Category Representative Vacancies**
 Jamie said that we still have vacancies in required categories. One of those is a *Local Union Representative*. **Nancy and Sally said they could contact someone to apply to represent the Teacher's Union. Jamie said she could contact someone from the state labor organization.** The other open category is not mandatory, but a priority if we can fill the position of a *Native American Representative*. **Gerry said that he had made a contact with a Native American from Winnebago who indicated some interest. He will follow up to confirm if the individual would like to submit an application to serve.** Susan is going to encourage a student from UNO to apply for the Youth Commissioner position. Barb said three new applications have been received by the Governor's Office and of those, two have been received from a person who can represent *Local Government* from rural Nebraska and a second is from a high school youth to represent the *Youth Commissioner*.
 - **Commissioners Agreed to Re-Appointment**
 Lorinda Brown, Nancy Faber, Gerry Osborn and Lois Wine have agreed to be reappointed to the Commission.
3. **2011-12 AmeriCorps Formula Applications** – Carol Speicher, Program Committee Chair
- The Commission received eight formula applications. New applications were received from the following organizations:
 - The Hub (Lincoln YouthBuild Program) to do a wide spread youth project.
 - University of Nebraska Lincoln to collaborate and spread service across the University's campuses.
 - Together Inc., a non-profit agency, to extend its hunger efforts.
 - Other applicants who will competing for Formula funds with the Commission include:
 - City of Lincoln ECHO (primarily serving youth)
 - City of Lincoln Go Green
 - Center for Rural Affairs (Lyons)
 - Hastings Literacy Council
 - Kearney Community Foundation
 - Goodwill YouthBuild
 - Metro Community College (Omaha)
 - RISE AmeriCorps (State Probation Administration)
 - Center for People in Need (Lincoln)
 - Blue Valley Community Action Partnership
 - Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance, a current AmeriCorps program, did not reapply for funding.
 - All of the applications are being reviewed internally by staff and by peer reviewers. Funding decisions will be made in late May or early June and presented to the Program Committee for approval. The recommendations will be forwarded to the Executive Committee to approve for the Commission because the applications have to be submitted to CNCS by July 6th. The Executive Committee's approval of the formula funding will be ratified by the full Commission at its July 2011 meeting.
 - Competitive Applications Submitted in January. Of the seven applications submitted to the Corporation in January, two continuation projects were asked clarifications: University Medical Center-Monroe Meyer Institute and Lutheran Family Services in Nebraska. When applicants are asked for clarifications, there is almost a certainty they will receive competitive grant awards from the CNCS.
4. **Nebraska Volunteer Foundation Fund Advisory Committee (FAC) Report** – Lois Wine, FAC Chair
- The Fund Advisory Committee had a meeting on Friday, April 22, 2011. Lois invited Commission Chair, Jamie Moore, to join the meeting. The Committee reviewed and provided input on the draft of the Articles of Operation. The NVF's webpage on the Nebraska Community Foundation (NCF) website will be updated for the July 22, 2011 NVF meeting. The Committee decided that more work needs to be done to develop a fundraising plan and have something to sell before they recruit additional committee members. They felt they need to determine what ServeNebraska does better than anyone else and develop a strategic fundraising campaign around that theme.
 - The next meeting will focus on developing specific goals for a fundraising plan. Janet Schmidt and Pat Beans will contact the NCF for technical assistance on developing a fundraising plan. The Committee decided that some research needs to be done to look for capacity building grants. The Committee understands that people give to people and not causes. Relationship building and making connections will need to occur before fundraising can begin.

5. **Additional Unfinished Business** – Jamie Moore, Commission Chair

- **Performance Review Process for Executive Director.** Jamie explained she has been talking with Barb about putting a new process in place for her performance review. Jamie will create a three-member team of the Past Chair, Current Chair and Vice Chair to develop the performance review of the Executive Director. Barb is working with DHHS Human Resources to provide the newly developed DHHS performance review process, tools and classified rules to Jamie as a starting point.
- **Commission Funds Owed to DHHS for NEMA/Citizen Corps Denial of Payments.** Jamie asked about the status of the repayment of funds the Commission owes to DHHS. Barb explained that a final amount that the Commission owes has been agreed upon by DHHS financial staff and the Commission. Barb delayed making the payment for two reasons: (1) to confirm the amount of the Commission's unexpended state general funds to determine there is enough to make the payment and not leave us without any state funds, and (2) to ensure Congress was going to continue to fund the Corporation and state commissions would continue to operate instead of having to close. **Once those two items are assured, Barb will contact DHHS to make the journal entries to have the Commission's debt to DHHS repaid for the funds NEMA refused to reimburse the Commission.**
- **Commission Report to the Governor.** Jamie asked about the status of the Executive Committee's meeting with the Governor. It has traditionally occurred early in the second quarter of the year. Barb explained that she had delayed the meeting because of the uncertainty of Congressional funding for state commissions for the rest of this year and the need for additional time to complete the report to the Governor. After the ongoing funding to the commission is known, she will make the arrangements for the Executive Committee to meet with the Governor after the 2011 Legislative session is over.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **2012 Commission Annual State Conference** – Gerry Osborn, Public Relations / Outreach Committee Chair

- Handout: *Defining An Alternative Approach to A Statewide Conference*
- Since the Commission lost money on the 2010 Governor's Conference, Commissioner Gerry Osborn introduced and recommended to the Commissioners that they support a new idea to strategically redirect commission resources from a single state conference to multiple events and partnerships/collaborations with complementary organizations/groups. This would go far to expanding ServeNebraska's reach for conferences and training events throughout Nebraska. He reinforced the idea of collaborating with other organizations to partner on state conferences and events instead of ServeNebraska holding the Governor's State Conference on Volunteerism since we have lost so much money holding that conference.
- Advantages are many in collaborating with other organizations to partner on a conference or bring a volunteerism/community service track to another conference – they include expanding organizational connections, reaching more individuals throughout Nebraska, expanding to new audiences who are already committed to another conference, reduced / shared costs (not losing money), and reduced labor for staff. The disadvantage is that ServeNebraska loses exclusivity in having a leading event.
- Discussion was held to on the recommendation to change the format for delivering Commission conferences and large training events.
 - The Commission could meet the need of training AC members through the use of on-line learning.
 - The Awards Luncheon will remain a signature event and the need to secure annual sponsorship still exists.
 - New partnerships that benefit the Commission should be built.
- Two types of formats were discussed: (1) hold two regional larger trainings at different times and in different Nebraska locations with partners or (2) hold one state conference but partner with an existing state conference to share resources. Neither of these received more support than the other. It was generally thought that the Commission should keep it's options open for all opportunities.
- **Commissioners agreed** on the following:
 - The commission will not hold a Governor's Conference on Volunteerism in 2012.
 - The Commission will instead partner with organizations that may host a state conference or other event with statewide coverage (if possible), to share resources and increase the visibility of the Commission to a new group of individuals who would be attending the conference.
 - If additional opportunities to partner on conferences become available, the Commission staff should seek them out. Commissioners will inform staff of these events when they hear of them and facilitate communication when possible.

BOARD REVIEW

1. **Progress on Board Report Card** – Jamie Moore, Commission Chair
 - Handout: *Board Report Card – Summary of Discussion at Planning Retreat and “Next Steps” – Goals and Work Tasks*
 - Barb explained that the results of the 2010 Board Self-Assessment were analyzed last year by a small committee and discussed at the October Board Planning Retreat. At that time, Commissioners provided extensive input on the changes they would like to implement for themselves which included developing some new requirements. Barb requested assistance from the commissioners with developing those products to complete the Board Report Card for itself. The specific items to be developed are listed on the summary sheet Barb handed out.
 - **Jamie asked commissioners to contact Barb directly within the next two weeks regarding which items they can help develop.**
 2. **Progress on Strategic Plan** – Jamie Moore, Commission Chair
 - Jamie reported that two of the groups have completed their action plans and the Sustainable Infrastructure work will be integrated with the other two groups (AmeriCorps Group and Community Volunteers Group).
 - The next steps will involve an in-person meeting with the two planning group leaders, Jamie and the staff who are liaisons to the groups. They will review common themes and integrate inter-related activities (Commission Chair, Planning Group leaders, 3 staff liaisons); look at action steps for the last six months of this year, for all of 2012 in the short-term and for the long-term through 2015.
 - **Staff will develop the draft 2011-2015 Strategic Plan with a Service Plan section for the commission (1) to review at the July mtg and (2) commissioners will determine how progress reporting will happen.**
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **Next Meeting** – July 28, 2011 Columbus Connect Center (Host: Denise Kollath)
 2. **Commission Meeting Hosts** – please arrange conference call option
 3. **AmeriCorps Week (May 14-21, 2011)** – Commissioners were asked to attend events.
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Adjourn Business Meeting

- Commission Business Meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.
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Submitted by, _____
Janet Schmidt, Fiscal/Operations Officer

Approved by, _____
Jamie Moore, Chair