

Wisconsin National and Community Service Board | MINUTES

Meeting date | Thursday, March 14, 2013

Meeting location | Sheraton Hotel, 706 John Nolen Drive, Madison, WI 53713

Meeting called to order | Tony Hallman, Board Chair, 9:08 am

Note Taker | Cheryl A. Leménager, AmeriCorps Program Officer

Introductions

Attendees

Board Members | Marguita Fox, Scott Fromader, Sue Grady, Kathy Groat, Bob Guenther, Tony Hallman, Michael Hinman, Jim Langdon, Thi Le, Sondra LeGrand, Domingo Leguizamon, Jane Moore, Mark Mueller (teleconference), Linda Sunde

Serve Wisconsin Staff | Tom Devine, Jessica Kewin, Cheryl Leménager, Gloria Nikolas, Steven Yule

Public | Brian Blahnik (Marshfield Clinic), Karen Dischler (Schools of Hope), Andrew Hoyer-Booth (Wisconsin Primary Health Care), Pat Marcus (Boys and Girls Club Milwaukee), Lauren Martin (Mobilizing Skilled Volunteers), Shannon Rolf (CNCS State Office), Camilla Vargas (DATCP)

Public Comment

Brian Blahnik (Marshfield Clinic) shared information regarding their midterm training conference; a survey analyzing the program and its staff indicated all members would recommend the program. He indicated the difficulty of funding awards that are below what is planned for and that it can damage placement site relationships. He also highlighted the impact of the program, detailing a story of a tribal member who works with youth in the tribal nations who had received a suicide pact note from one of the girls he had worked with; the member notified the authorities and personally went to the girl's home, getting her into a treatment program. He also noted that while teleconferencing is a good use of time and money, but programs view it as the four times per year that they have the opportunity to interact with the Board. He stated that keeping face-to-face meetings while maintaining a teleconferencing option would be preferred. He concluded by thanking the Board for all it does for the programs.

Camilla Vargas (DATCP) thanked the Board for supporting the program. As she continued, she indicated she will be leaving her position in May to attend the University of Wisconsin in the Physician's Assistance program, highlighting her role in the DATCP AmeriCorps Program and her previous experience as an AmeriCorps VISTA in her application to the program. She noted DATCP is recruiting for a replacement and the department is dedicated to the program; she added that DATCP will keep the program if they are awarded funding.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

With June 14, 2013 as the anticipated competitive announcement date, the June 13, 2013 meeting must be rescheduled. Steven says how long it takes to prepare for the Board meeting depends on how many competitive programs are selected, and how many formula programs that would leave for review. He also noted that the sequestration could affect funding decisions. Tom noted that the Corporation for National and Community Service has traditionally made commitments to continuing programs, and in the 2013-2014 application pool, Serve Wisconsin only had two continuing competitive applications. He added that this likely leaves many continuations across the country to likely get funding and leaves Serve Wisconsin unsure of what funding may be awarded. Tony suggests tentatively looking to hold a meeting at the end of June (week of June 24th), rather than the week following the expected announcement dates, as it would likely conflict with the National Conference. Gloria offers that June 27, 2013 is a Thursday.

Thursday, June 27, 2013 selected as the meeting date for the June Board Meeting.

Upcoming Meeting Dates | Thursday, June 27, 2013
Thursday, October, 17, 2013
Wednesday, December 18, 2013

Approval of Thursday, January 10, 2013 Minutes

Kathy motioned to approve the minutes. Jim seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Honoring Board Member Marguita Fox

Tony presented Marguita with a plaque of appreciation for her experience, knowledge, and dedication to the Board and commitment to the people of Wisconsin.

Marguita thanked Tony and noted it has been a pleasure to work with the Board, now entering her twentieth year as a Board member. She called herself the "resident historian" of the Board and shared her memories of milestones throughout the years. She highlighted many historic events, while also sharing personal anecdotes of past meetings and previous Board members.

Scott suggested recording the history of the Wisconsin National and Community Service Board as recounted by Marguita (and others as appropriate) to be shared on the Serve Wisconsin website. He believes there should be records archived at the Wisconsin Historical Society that could help with this.

Board Member Orientation Guide

Sondra and Mark have been working on a draft of a table of contents for a Board Member Orientation Guide. Sondra stated that the guide should serve as a way to keeping the Board on track, understanding and supporting staff, and possibly to help recruit other potential Board members. She described what each area was intended to include and Mark commended Sondra for her efforts on the guide. Tony suggested the inclusion of a document Steven previously created regarding the Competitive/Formula process. Tom highlighted to the Board that Serve Wisconsin has a State Service Plan, not a Strategic Plan, and emphasized the difference. Linda commented that the AmeriCorps link sent out prior to the meeting is a directory and not a website that was created by CNCS State Office staff member Kara Klein.

As the conversation developed, requests included a vocabulary/terms page and information on costs to commission members and the procedures for requesting mileage and/or meal reimbursements. Thi added that when she began serving on the Board, she had a mentor and found it helpful, but the frequency of the meetings would often make for forgetting some of the specifics she had previously learned; Tony noted that the mentoring process is still available and that it is either a voluntary or assigned duty to serve as a mentor. The key developments of the conversation were agreements to: make the guide both hard copy and electronic, posting links and other resources on the Serve Wisconsin website as appropriate; the completion of the guide for the next Board meeting (June 27, 2013) with the Board receiving the guide one week prior to meeting for review (June 20, 2013); and the possibility of having a one page document to highlight key Board responsibilities and activities to use as a recruiting tool. The conversation concluded with Tony thanking Sondra and Mark for putting the Table of Contents together.

Board Vacancies

Positions to be Filled | Public Representative (2 vacancies), Participant/Supervisor of Service Program (age 16-25), National Service Program/Volunteer Sector, Community-Based Agency, Public/Business Representative, Youth Representative

Kathy asked if there were restrictions on where Board members come from, as she has a possible recruit in Appleton and Tony responded that more variety from the state would be good and that the individual should apply, if interested. Sondra added that the possible recruit could have other valuable connections and skills, while Tom noted that it is ultimately the governor who determines appointment and that Board members should not discourage anyone from applying.

Tony inquired about the status of the Board Recruiting Committee. Jim noted that he and Mark had previously met with Tom and Steven to discuss board membership and teleconferencing. It was noted that in prior years, the Board had an inactive Nominating Committee and Serve Wisconsin staff have not recruited to fill vacancies. Jim added that the Wisconsin National and Community Service Board differs from other boards he has served on, in which it has been staff's role to find members. Tony asked if the boards were all governor-appointed and Jim responded that seven of the eleven boards were. Jim highlighted the Coastal Management Council to demonstrate that in his experience, it is the responsibility of staff to recruit for board vacancies. He further suggested that the idea of the Nominating Committee was to expand and utilize professional networks, but the multiple vacancies, indicated that the method has not worked.

Tony asked if it is a conflict of interest and if it would be part of the job description for staff to recruit; and it is determined not to be a conflict. Sondra noted there has been a lack of a single person taking charge of this responsibility and that the Board has never assigned the task of recruitment to staff. Scott volunteered to take the lead role in recruitment; Jim stated it should be the responsibility of staff. Tom stated he will assume responsibility and explained that he was told by a previous Chair not to nominate. Scott noted he will meet with Tom. Bob inquired a master AmeriCorps alumni list existed, and Pat Marcus (Boys and Girls Club Milwaukee) suggested the AmeriCorps Alums website. The conversation concluded with Scott suggesting that staff contact the governor's office, if appropriate to include it in the newsletter at Tony's suggestion, and that Scott will serve as a consultant to Tom, as recruitment will be staff's responsibility; Kathy added Board members can still recruit, but that it is not the duty of the Board.

Teleconferencing

Jim stated the best practice is to be at the table whenever possible; however, teleconferencing is often used in both state government and outside civil service to facilitate meetings. Every public meeting still has the public notice, there is a physical location to accommodate the public, and the use of a speakerphone is available for Board members to participate from a distance and the public who are present at the public meeting space can hear the proceedings. Use of computer technology to share PowerPoint and other documents was also suggested as a means to help teleconferencing participants follow along. He highlighted it would accommodate individuals from farther away to participate, and that quorum would be more easily reached for unforeseen meetings, also noting it would be more cost-effective than reimbursement, and could also attract Board members outside of Dane County. Discussion of the different technology options continued. Tom thanked Jim for his involvement and explained that teleconferencing has always been available to Board members. It was confirmed that teleconferencing is for Board members only, and that the public meeting space is for the public. It was established that no action was required, but that while attending in person is ideal, advanced request for alternative attendance can be accommodated.

New Funding Opportunity – School Turnaround AmeriCorps

Steven explained the receipt of a new funding opportunity: School Turnaround AmeriCorps, a collaboration between the Department of Education and the Corporation for National and Community Service. He explained the priorities and tiers for the programs, as well as the procedures for different scenarios based on the number of applicants. If Serve Wisconsin receives one application, no peer review process would be required. If two or more applications are received, a peer review process would be necessary. The Peer Review process would be scheduled for April 8-12

and Board vote would likely be on April 15th. Jane inquired what type of applicants were eligible and Steven explained that all applicants eligible for other AmeriCorps funding would be eligible for this opportunity, just that the funding requirements might not fit with all program designs. Tom explained the release of the funding opportunity and the options the Corporation for National and Community Service had for granting it, as well as confirming that it had been advertised. Tony suggested the PE&D Committee would hear presentations, and the Executive Committee would meet, possibly by teleconference, to approve the application(s). Marguita made the motion to have the Executive Committee approve the application(s). Jane seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Late Application/Document Submissions

Tom explained that in the past the Board has made exceptions for noncompliance of documents and applications submitted after the deadline. Serve Wisconsin staff proposed the position of not accepting of any late application materials. Only if all application materials are received on time will an application be peer reviewed; if an application is not received in its entirety and is therefore not peer reviewed, it will not be presented to the Board. Tony noted it is the responsibility of the program (not the Corporation for National and Community Service or Serve Wisconsin staff) to ensure all application materials are submitted on time. Steven referenced the email he had previously sent to the Board regarding language changes to the RFP. A discussion on methods of receipt followed. The use of a timestamp was suggested, as well as not opening a packet of hard copy documents until after the deadline passes. Discussion continued regarding the checklist as a required document; Tom noted the checklist could be removed from the list as a required submission. Sue suggested changing the language in the Serve Wisconsin materials from "Additional Documents" to "Required Grant Application Documents".

Karen Dischler (Schools of Hope) called staff checking hard copy documents a "reassuring service provided" by Serve Wisconsin. The Board discussed this idea, as Tom stated he does not want Serve Wisconsin to continue the practice and explained the effect distance can play in a program being able to submit a missing piece of the hard copy packet; Steven added that in the past staff has done this for all applicants. Sondra stated she does not want to change the practice.

The conversation led to a discussion of minor omissions and errors. Jim referenced the state procurement document he previously sent regarding minor omissions. Linda and Scott note that language to ensure a standard for correcting minor omissions and errors needs to be established. Jessica added that without the possibility of allowing corrections after the Board has approved, no applications she reviewed would have gone forward. Jim proposed that the Board will not accept late proposals, but edits after Board approval would be allowed. It is determined that defining "minor" is necessary. Camilla Vargas (DATCP) noted the importance of the discussion, as the previous practice of accepting late submissions had made some Program Directors question the importance of being timely in their submissions. Brian Blahnik (Marshfield Clinic) and Pat Marcus (Boys and Girls Club Milwaukee) noted that having policies and guidelines for what minor omissions and errors would be helpful. Shannon Rolf (CNCS State Office) explained that in Washington, D.C., the Corporation for National and Community Service does an initial compliance check to see if all the pieces have been submitted on time; if so, they move forward in the process.

The Board broke for lunch at 12:35 pm. Meeting resumed at 1:43 pm.

Conversation continued with use of the term "technical specifications" to describe minor omissions and errors. It is determined that staff, with help from Scott and Jim, need to develop language to determine policies for "technical specifications" to identify what types of edits would be allowable.

State Service Plan

Board received State Service Plan brochures. Collective impact is discussed and Tom noted he will try to make arrangements for Paul Schmitz (Public Allies) to visit with the Board; Tony suggested shooting

for the October 17, 2013 Board meeting. Tom notified the Board that Rachel Bruns (Volunteer Generation Fund) will be leaving her position at the end of May; he shared that he and Rachel met with Marshfield Clinic to present the opportunity for Marshfield to take over the Volunteer Generation Fund Grant for the third year and that Marshfield Clinic will get back to him with a decision.

Commissioner Updates

Kathy indicated she would be attending the upcoming ASC Board Meeting regarding sequestration and noted that Fox Cities received a RSVP grant.

Linda shared the special initiatives the CNCS State Office is involved with of Global Youth Service Day and Mayor's Day. She also noted the impact the cuts sequestration would have on the VISTA program.

Marguita thanked everyone again for her recognition of service and called it a "delightful day".

Executive Director Update

Tom explained the impact of sequestration on Serve Wisconsin, sharing a handout of the Commission's Budget. He shared that Serve Wisconsin has made some accounting and procedural errors and have been working with Department of Administration staff to make all the necessary corrections and learn the proper procedures.

Steven had no updates.

Cheryl shared the events she had attended since the last Board meeting, that she has learned a lot in her nine months with Serve Wisconsin, and that she was excited for her upcoming vacation.

Jessica stated she has been learning a lot in her "whole four months" with Serve Wisconsin and appreciates the patience other staff has had with her, especially Steven. She shared her efforts on the newsletter that would be going out the following week.

Gloria updated the Board on her activities in the office including monitoring visits and reflection pieces.

Conclusion

Tony presented Tom with a plaque from ASC, thanking him for fifteen years of service.

Jim motioned to adjourn the meeting. Bob seconded. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned | 2:29 pm