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SERVE WISCONSIN

Wisconsin National & Community Service Board Meeting October 11, 2019, 3:00 p.m.

Milwaukee County Zoo, Peck Center – 10001 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53226

Present: Angela Ahlgrim, Christine Beatty, Latoya Holiday, Paula Horning, James Langdon, Leah Lechleiter-Luke, Benjamin Lehner, Jane Moore, Donald Placidi

Not Present: Sarah Brady, Pamela Charles, Laura Doolin, Robert Griffith, Anthony Hallman, Michael Hinman, Kate Jaeger, Steven Janke, Amy McDowell, Susan Schwartz, Yolanda Shelton-Morris

Staff Present: Jeanne Duffy, Alexis Matthews, Steven Yule, Kyle Clower, Ruhamah Bauman, Margaret O'Sullivan

Program Staff Present: Karen Dischler - Schools of Hope, Steve Frodl – NCCAP, Kirstie Yu – Wisconsin HealthCorps

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m. by Christine Beatty

Introductions

The board members and Serve Wisconsin staff introduced themselves.

Public Comment – comment period will not exceed 20 minutes in total

No public comment

Approve Minutes from June 6, 2019 Board Meeting

ACTION ITEM – *Jane Moore made a motion to approve the March 21, 2019 WNCBSB meeting minutes. Second by Angie Ahlgrim. The motion was unanimously approved.*



Commission Support Grant and Commission Investment Fund Grant Update & Continuation Approval

Jeanne Duffy presented an overview of the Commission Support Grant (CSG) and Commission Investment Fund (CIF) submission process and the proposals prepared by Serve Wisconsin staff. Jeanne indicated that these are usually drafted and presented for approval at this meeting before their submission to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), but that CNCS required them to be completed more quickly this year due to the federal budget being under a continuing resolution. She continued that these already had to be submitted to CNCS, but that the board can still make changes to the submission.

Jeanne then went over the different elements of the submissions for the CSG and CIF, explaining changes from last year due to new staff being added. She also explained that money has been budgeted for the training available for board members in Washington, DC and for the upcoming regional conference, which will be held next May in Milwaukee.

ACTION ITEM – Jane Moore made a motion to approve the CSG and CIF budget proposals as submitted by Serve Wisconsin staff to CNCS. Second by Paula Horning. The motion was unanimously approved.

State Service Plan Update

Jeanne Duffy described how the State Service Plan was drafted last year and outlines the goals for this year and next year, with color coding demonstrating progress on each element.

Paula Horning indicated that she had conversations with some members about some of the items we were working on in the document, including getting the Education Award to be exempted from income tax and matched by institutions and Employers of National Service.

Jeanne informed the board that City Year, which is a national direct program, is working with a lobbyist through its non-profit operations on the income tax exemption issue. Additionally, she described how a bill has been drafted here in Wisconsin and that the bill will be submitted once bipartisan co-sponsors can be found.

Jeanne continued that we are happy to have Donald Placidi join the board from Veterans Affairs, as she hopes this can help bolster our work on adding more to our outreach efforts with veterans.

2018-2019 Member Survey Results

Alexis Matthews explained how the AmeriCorps Member Survey is administered, describing how it goes out twice a year and is adjusted to impact response rate, as the summer response rate is often different due to many AmeriCorps members serving over the summer being at camps.

Alexis described the survey results summary provided to the board members, starting with the elements that members were most satisfied and dissatisfied with during their service. Four key items showing very high levels of satisfaction were providing services to the community, receiving valuable “hands-on” experience, gaining a greater understanding of the community, and learning new job or other skills (went up 5% since last year). The highest element showing dissatisfaction centered around how their training prepared them for their service term and to serve in their community.



Alexis continued by discussing how the survey results were fairly consistent with those from previous years and then went over the word clouds and charts for different aspects of the survey.

She then described results on how the members learned about AmeriCorps, with schools and friends/family having the two highest amounts, with several mentioning the programs themselves and online job boards, with responses mentioning Indeed being up quite a bit. She stated that this survey also had responses from the first year of members that saw the “Stand Up, Step Up” PSA campaign, with the number being higher than what initially thought it might be, potentially due to paying for better time slots for the PSA. She also described that the AmeriCorps members indicated that the most effective ways to recruit new members would include college fairs/job fairs (top at 46%), word of mouth, social media, and advertising, and job boards.

James Langdon asked about results surrounding dissatisfaction with management and supervision issues, with Alexis indicating that these went down dramatically this year.

Memorandum of Agreement between Illinois & Wisconsin Update

Jeanne Duffy described the memorandum of agreement between Illinois and Wisconsin that allows for AmeriCorps members in times of disaster or if working in an area near the state border to perform service in both states. She indicated that there have not been any AmeriCorps members perform service under this agreement to date, but that the board wanted an update after it was enacted last year.

Unexpended Program Funding

Jeanne Duffy described how Steven Yule was taking care of these funding issues and holding down fort and getting financials/RFP done while much of the staff was preparing for opening.

Steven explained that Serve Wisconsin’s prime grants under which AmeriCorps subgrants/programs are funded, for the second and third years we can use unexpended funds to support other programs; at the end of the three-year grant period remaining unexpended funds go back to CNCS. He also described how the amounts in unexpended funds are amounts programs send in as estimates and that CNCS uses the total amount of unexpended funds that are reported as being retained/used by us to reduce by the same amount the new grant dollars allocated through the next year’s prime grant award. He indicated that the final column for 2018-2019 on the Unexpended Funds handout provided to board members was left blank because Serve Wisconsin had not yet processed all final payments to programs for the 2018-2019 program year.

Paula Horning stated that this is good information to have, but programs often have good reasons for the amounts left unexpended, and the board would want to look at the full picture when making conclusions from the data in the charts.

Ben Lehner asked for a description of where the unexpended funds go when not used.

Steven described that competitive funding , goes back to CNCS to expend, while Serve Wisconsin has the ability to expend formula funding and that we have some flexibility there.



Update from Program Director Association

Karen Dischler indicated that the Program Association did not meet since the last board meeting, but she had some informal feedback.

First, she offered thanks for new format for opening ceremony, as it felt more celebratory without the workshops.

Second, she indicated that recruitment issues are happening and that it will have a trickle-down effect eventually to each program's budget. She appreciates that the board takes these issues into consideration. She said that some programs are doing well but that is often because of their service areas.

Third, she indicated that programs have to create an evaluation plan and program directors are realizing that they are often not able to create these on their own. They are having to hire out for assistance and this expense will be appearing on their budgets, with Serve Wisconsin already having a relationship with Wisconsin Center for Education Research and these programs will probably all be utilizing these services.

Ben Lehner asked about the causes of the recruitment issues and the issues that have resulted from them.

Karen replied that fewer people are applying and that the quality of applicants is somewhat lower than in previous years, as many applicants need more coaching and job development and are coming to AmeriCorps for those skills, with there still being a pool of high quality applicants that have always wanted to serve in some capacity.

Jane Moore asked if these recruitment issues were being seen nationally, and Jeanne Duffy indicated that declines in recruitment are common across the country.

Leah Lechleiter-Luke asked if declines are tied to lower higher education enrollments.

Jeanne indicated that the AmeriCorps enrollment process not as easy as many traditional jobs, with there being more barriers instead of the relatively easy access in hiring and the potential to start higher at some entry level jobs.

Jane Moore pointed to the difference in recruitment from when the economy was lower in 2008-2010 when fewer options were available, with Jeanne indicating the Serve Wisconsin is working with the company that doing all the marketing at major Wisconsin colleges to help expand and target recruitment efforts.

Jane Moore asked if we are doing more about evaluation now, with Jeanne describing that Serve Wisconsin is working with WEC, the Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative, to work directly with the programs and to do a workshop each year for evaluation, budgeting for each of these.

Steven Yule indicated that CNCS is responding some to these issues, as demonstrated by the new recruiting campaign with the "Be the Greater Good" PSA and the new brochure.



Update from Commission Members

Christine Beatty described the work of States for Service and provided information for board members that might be interested in joining.

Jane Moore described that while she was out in Washington, she heard about a program about peer to peer support with veterans becoming farmers, which could be worth exploring.

Latoya Holiday described that the DPI Superintendent gave the annual state of education speech on September 19 and some of the statistics and data that was discussed. Some of this data showed some small declines, helping to demonstrate why AmeriCorps support programs are important. To help to be able to expand on this, she had a meeting with City Year on their program and its impact. She described how there are significant educational aspects that need to be addressed, as the recent Center on Wisconsin Strategies (COWS) studies showed significant educational disparities, with Wisconsin being worst in nation on four, and that she will send out the data to the board.

Staff Updates

Jeanne Duffy indicated that she will have an extensive year-end summary about Serve Wisconsin's operations at the December meeting. She described that the CNCS Transformation Plan is underway and that Serve Wisconsin is no longer reporting to Washington, DC for most aspects, as the regional office in Kansas City is now operational. She indicated that the head of the regional office is Michael Lavery and Serve Wisconsin staff spoke with him at the ASN Symposium in September. She continued that we are in the first set of regions to go through transition and that they are roughly through with hiring for our region and still have some DC staff available to help out as needed.

Ruhamah Bauman provided an update on the disaster services project with Team Rubicon in Oconto County in late September and early October. She indicated that the project was very successful, with Governor Evers coming to visit the project and 43 Serve Wisconsin affiliated members volunteering during the project, including WNCSB member Sue Schwartz. Jeanne continued that Ruhamah spent 10 days on a cot at Camp Bear Paw and the final basecamp to help operate this project.

Kyle Clower provided information on Alexis Dean, who served with Schools of Hope, winning the national Excellence in AmeriCorps Award in September.

Steven provided some detail on elements of how the national/regional relationship will work with CNCS and that he will be giving feedback to Chester on the CNCS AmeriCorps NOFO language.

Adjourn

ACTION – Angie Ahlgrim made a motion to adjourn the WNCSB meeting at 4:10 p.m. Second by Latoya Holiday. The motion was unanimously approved.

2019 Meeting Dates

PE&D Committee: Tuesday, December 3, 2019, 10AM-2PM

WNCSB Board Meeting, Thursday, December 12, 2019, 10AM – 2PM

Both meetings will be held at the Lussier Family Heritage Center, located at 3101 Lake Farm Road, Madison, WI 53711

