

Wisconsin National & Community Service Board Meeting

March 21, 2109 • 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Goodman Community Center, Evjue Room

49 Waubesa Street, Madison, WI 53704

Present: Angela Ahlgrim, Christine Beatty, Sarah Brady, Laura Doolin, Robert Griffith, Anthony Hallman, Michael Hinman, Paula Horning, James Langdon, Jane Moore

Not Present: Susan Schwartz, Pamela Charles, Kate Jaeger, Amy McDowell Latoya Holiday, Steven Janke

Serve WI Jeanne Duffy, Alexis Matthews, Casey Sweeney, Steven Yule, Kyle Clower

Staff Present:

Program Staff Present: Karen Dischler - Schools of Hope, Cally Ehle - Easter Seals Wisconsin, Anna Korb - Easter Seals Wisconsin, Shelly Kaiser - Marshfield Clinic AmeriCorps Programs, Amanda Ross – United Way Fox Cities

CNCS Staff Present: Ruhamah Bauman – CNCS Wisconsin State Office

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 am by Paula Horning

Introductions

The Commission members and Serve Wisconsin staff introduced themselves.

Public Comment

NO PUBLIC COMMENT

Approve Minutes from December 13, 2018 Board Meeting

Angela Ahlgrim made a motion to approve the December 13, 2018 WNCSB meeting minutes. Second by Jim Langdon. The motion was unanimously approved.

2019 Board Priorities

Paula Horning shared background on the state service plan and how it will be used to create focus areas for the board, asking board members to review the items in the plan over the next two weeks and to contact both Paula and Jeanne Duffy with the priorities on which they would be interested in working. She noted that some items with the potential for board engagement were highlighted in their packets of the state service plan objectives, while there are other areas of the plan in which board members can play a role, the highlighted pertain more to the board in general.

Jeanne Duffy provided an overview of the areas staff are seeking Board engagement.

The first highlighted section of the plan was the bullet stating “Identify underserved areas, geographic or focus or priority initiative, and work with local partners to build AmeriCorps programs that meet local needs” from Section 1 - Facilitate the Growth & Development of Strong AmeriCorps Programs. She noted that board members could be very helpful in being able to identify and address a need in their geographical region and their background area on the board.

Jeanne Duffy then noted that the next three highlighted areas are the three subsections of the bullet stating “Emphasize and strengthen the workforce development aspects of AmeriCorps” from Section 2 - Support AmeriCorps Members from Recruitment through Alumni Status.

The first of these was Part 2a, which states “Increase the number of Employers of National Service in Wisconsin as an avenue to increase opportunity for AmeriCorps Alumni and help employers have increased access to a dedicated, highly qualified, and mission-oriented pool of potential employees.” Jeanne explained that Employers of National Service are businesses that give preferential hiring treatment for AmeriCorps members and that the CNCS website lists these companies, organizations, and governments. Christine Beatty noted that employers will choose to do this because they realize how the AmeriCorps experience creates mature and experienced workers.

Jeanne then indicated that the next two subsections both involved advocating for changes in policy with the education award earned by AmeriCorps members, which are Part 2b “Advocate for the Education Award to be matched by public and private colleges and universities in the State of Wisconsin” and Part 2c “Advocate for the Education Award to be State Income Tax free in Wisconsin.”

Jeanne stated that we would like colleges and universities in Wisconsin to match the education award at 50% or 100%. She expanded that some private colleges have some elements of match for the education award or give some free graduate tuition, as Marquette has the Trinity Fellows program. Jane Moore mentioned that another college has a similar program. Jeanne additionally noted that legislation has been introduced in Arizona to create a scholarship match program for the education award.

Jeanne indicated that the final highlighted section was the bullet stating “Promote AmeriCorps and national service to recruit both new programs and members through participation at conferences, digital outreach, monthly newsletters and other opportunities when appropriate” under Section 7 - Increase awareness of Serve Wisconsin, AmeriCorps and National Service in Wisconsin.

Anthony Hallman asked a question about the lack of veterans AmeriCorps programs in Wisconsin.

Jeanne Duffy provided an overview of current and past programs with a veterans focus. She indicated that Serve Wisconsin had been working with the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs for a potential program, but that their application for planning grant has been put on hold. She stated that Easter Seals currently has weekend camps for veterans and their families each year. Additionally, there had previously been an AmeriCorps program with UW-Oshkosh that targeted veterans, but that it was difficult getting veterans involved and to complete term of service, particularly because veterans in Wisconsin already receive free tuition for 8 years, which makes the education award less of an incentive.

Alexis Matthews noted that nationally, several other states have been struggling with recruiting veterans as AmeriCorps members. Sarah Brady added that nationally it is a tougher focus area for AmeriCorps programs, as Senior Corps has better engagement rates for veterans for volunteerism, but that this because many of these veterans are retired, which makes participation easier. She further noted that successes in this area vary state by state and that Senior Corps also does more projects directly benefiting active troops as well.

Anthony Hallman asked if there was a state that could be looked at for best practices for this area. Sarah Brady indicated that she believes there is a good example of best practices with Senior Corps, but that she would have to check which state it is, and that she can additionally ask for any good examples that might translate to AmeriCorps. Paula Horning then asked Anthony Hallman if he would take on outreach to our former board member with the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs for any potential ideas and then reach out to its new person on the board once they are appointed.

Jane Moore asked to have more explanation of Part 2c about advocating for the education award to be income tax free. Jeanne Duffy indicated that in the previous federal legislative session, there was an effort to have the

education award exempted from income tax, although it was not passed during the previous Congress, and that we would like to see the state similarly follow suit, following the example of Iowa and a few other states. Anthony Hallman asked if the board members can contact the state legislators and Paula Horning indicated that she would. Christine Beatty stated that board members should push for advocacy on multiple levels.

Board Governance:

Paula asked all of the board members to check their contact and board info on the document in their meeting packets, turning in changes to Serve Wisconsin staff.

Committees:

Paula Horning shared background on the current WNCSB committees and the potential creation of new WNCSB committees noting that the board has two committees that are currently operating, which are the Program Evaluation and Development Committee and the Executive Committee.

Anthony Hallman provided a brief overview of the Program Evaluation and Development Committee, explaining that the committee provides an evaluation of the applications that programs make for funding and makes recommendations to the full board. This streamlined board meetings, as there are no longer roughly 18 people asking questions to each applicant. Additionally, the PE&D Committee examines policy changes for Serve Wisconsin and makes recommendations to the board on these changes. He concluded that the committee can have more members if they are interested. Paula Horning stated that the committee typically meets twice a year, approximately a week before the June and December meetings, and asked if anyone else on the board was interested in serving on the committee. Laura Doolin indicated that she was interested. Additionally, Michael Hinman clarified that non-voting board members can vote on the committee.

Paula Horning gave a brief overview of Executive Committee, which is composed of the current board president and vice president, as well as past board chairs per the guidelines. This committee meets on an as-needed basis, addressing personnel and other limited issues.

Paula Horning then started a discussion about past WNCSB committees and the potential formation of new committees. She indicated that in the past there had been a committee that reviewed the state service plan and a marketing committee.

Jeanne Duffy stated that instead of forming a new marketing committee, she would prefer that a broader Outreach Committee be formed, which would not only do marketing, but also promotion of AmeriCorps and Employers of National Service. She further described the idea of creating a Public Policy Committee, which would work on advocacy efforts, such as the education award. She stated that this work could be done by two separate committees or one combined committee.

Paula Horning indicated that it seems that two committees would make more sense, as they are separate ideas. She then asked board members about their interest in joining one of these committees.

Anthony Hallman indicated that in establishing the committees, there would need to be the creation of written guidelines and parameters for the committee. He also indicated that the by-laws require formal board approval of the addition of members to committees.

Anthony Hallman motioned for the following board members to be added to committees

- Christine Beatty and Angela Ahlgrim to a newly formed Outreach Committee
- Paula Horning, Jane Moore, and Latoya Holiday to a newly formed Public Policy Committee
- Laura Doolin to the Program Evaluation and Development Committee

Second by Angela Ahlgrim. The motion passed unanimously.

Jeanne Duffy indicated the Outreach and Public Policy Committees will draft the goals and expectations for each committee at their first meeting of the committees and then report back to the board. Jeanne indicated that she will staff the Outreach Committee and that Kyle Clower will staff the Public Policy Committee.

Paula Horning requested hearing reports on goals and expectations from the Outreach and Public Policy Committees during the June WNCBSB meeting

- **Board Member Recruitment**

Jeanne Duffy shared background on the vacancies for WNCBSB members and recruiting new members, noting that there are currently five vacancies on the board and the focus on recruiting new board members. She indicated that the five vacancies are in the slots for a representative of a community-based agency, a representative of local government, a representative of local labor organizations, an individual between age 16 and 25 that is part of a school-based or campus-based service program, and an individual that can fit any of the board appointment categories.

Anthony Hallman asked if the board vacancies have caused compliance issue with CNCS and Jeanne Duffy responded that we are in communication with CNCS regarding how we have been trying to maintain compliance. Christine Beatty asked if there were still issues in having nominees to the board nominated and approved.

Jeanne Duffy responded that she has spoken with the new appointment person at the governor's office and that there is a new online system, with the link to it on the Serve Wisconsin website. She indicated that the governor's office is open to suggestions of candidates and that they would like a diverse set of applicants for the openings. She then checked in with board members regarding their appointment status, with Anthony Hallman indicating that he had reapplied, Angela Ahlgrim indicated she had reapplied and Christine Beatty saying that she will complete the online process.

- **Board mandated in state statute**

Jeanne then continued to a discussion of recruiting new board members, asking board members for suggestions and indicating that their packet includes a handout for suggesting new potential board members with their contact information.

- **Review "Board Member Responsibilities" document**

Paula Horning shared background on the responsibilities of WNCBSB members, noting that the board member responsibilities and their position description was shared in advance of the meeting. She indicated that the main role of the board is to approve the funding for programs and that it appears that board members generally do the others, asking the board if anyone saw anything that was lacking in this description. Christine Beatty indicated that she wants to make sure that raising public awareness fits into the advocacy ideas. Paula responded that hopefully that will come in through the new committees being formed.

Laura Doolin then asked for a description of the primary responsibilities of the Executive Committee. Paula Horning indicated that it has addressed questions about salary and raises for staff and as another example, met prior to this board meeting to decide if it would be appropriate to release the formula RFP before the board meeting.

Sarah Brady indicated that when she was working in Ohio they limited their executive committee to three people because of access to personnel information and stated that she would be interested in what Jim Langdon may have to say on this through his role at DOA. Jim Langdon stated that all of the Serve Wisconsin staff are Department of Administration employees and that while there are certain laws that govern release of salaries and

titles, other information regarding staff is not easily publicly available, such as evaluations, discipline, training records, as these can be requested, but can be process to obtain.

He continued that the Board has the same availability as other members of the public on these limited areas, as all activities for the board are available for public records, which is why we do a training each year, although certain personnel parts are not available. He stated that in 2015 the executive committee convened over salaries and that it convened to create a process for hiring new Executive Director. Jim Langdon stated that since staff are employees of DOA, that they are responsible for doing these evaluations, although the board chair has reviewed draft of performance evaluation for the executive director and given input.

Paula Horning asked board members to familiarize themselves with the responsibilities and by-laws and that she is happy with direction the board is taking for recruiting new board members

- **New Board Member Orientation- who is willing to help mentor new members**

Paula started a discussion on holding a new member board orientation and looking at a process for mentoring new board members, asking if anyone is interested in being a mentor for a new board member once they are appointed. Laura Doolin indicated that she does not currently have a mentor and as someone that recently joined the board that it would be a real benefit to have some form of new board member orientation, as it would have made it easier to be more engaged during her initial meetings.

- **Prepare for June 2019 Board Officer Elections**

Paula Horning shared background on the upcoming June 2019 Board Officer Elections, noting that typically the vice chair position has been nominated for a two-year position and has learned about the chair position and then often serves as chair afterward. She further explained the responsibilities of the board chair, which include leading commission meetings and signing contracts.

Following this discussion the board took a 10 minute break until 11:35am.

ASC Strengths Accelerator – Tony Hallman/Steven Yule

Anthony Hallman introduced the ASC Strengths Accelerator, indicating that Steven Yule could describe it in more detail. He described the document as a list of elements with which we should be in compliance and a list of best practices to potentially follow. He mentioned that it seemed to him that doing a full three-day session with an ASC team that costs \$14,000 would be more helpful for a new commission than us.

Steven Yule shared background on the ASC Strengths Accelerator, noting that this is a tool that a team of subject matter experts visiting a state commission would use to assess commission operations. This process involves a team leader from ASC and then staff from other state commissions that serve as an evaluation team.

Steven then explained that prior to the Serve Wisconsin staff meeting earlier in the week, that he had developed comprehensive list of items on the framework to assess what we are doing. At the staff meeting, the staff went through all of those elements to determine the status of each of the areas in question. The plan would then be to take this document and add more columns to it, describing what we are doing for each area and status updates for these elements.

Anthony Hallman explained that this could be a tool for board improvement, first to make sure that we are in compliance with everything and then to go through to see what we can do to improve.

Jane Moore stated that she thinks this could be excellent to use as a tool for creating an action plan for improving, similar to what done at non-profit organizations. Christine Beatty stated that something similar also happens with senior centers, where they are trying to guarantee quality operations and best practices identified through

research. She then asked if this was to be proposed as something for us to move forward with and what the next steps for this would be.

Anthony Hallman requested that Serve Wisconsin staff put together a document for what they are doing, similar to the proposed chart described earlier. Michael Hinman then stated that once that document was completed that we could do a gap analysis for areas not being fully met.

State Service Plan Update

Jeanne Duffy shared background on the State Service Plan, noting that at the previous meeting that Paula had requested a status update on the aspects of the State Service Plan. Jeanne described the overview chart/document that was provided.

In connection with the goals tied to outreach, Paula Horning asked about having AmeriCorps gear/clothing to use during events. Jeanne Duffy indicated that we have uploaded the logo to Land's End and can supply items Serve Wisconsin currently has to board members doing outreach events.

Robert Griffith then asked about having short statements to explain AmeriCorps that would assist in outreach efforts that the board members could have prepared. Paula Horning stated that as part of this, they had done elevator speeches at previous board retreats. Anthony Hallman suggested having the Outreach Committee come up with a version of an elevator speech that could be shared with all of the board members.

Christine Beatty concluded the discussion on the State Service Plan, indicating that she liked having simplified tracking document for these, as it made it clear where we were on each element of the plan.

Following this discussion the board took a 30 minute break for lunch until 12:40pm.

Update from CNCS State Office Sarah Brady

Sarah Brady shared an update from the CNCS WI State Office regarding National Service Recognition Day, the criminal history check exemption period, the upcoming CNCS board meeting, the CNCS Transformation and Sustainability Plan, and the proposed presidential budget for FY 2020 and the corresponding CNCS Budget Justification.

Regarding the CNCS Transformation and Sustainability Plan is continuing to move forward toward regionalizing the state offices and grant structure by 2020, with Wisconsin slated to be served out of the Kansas City office. She explained that the physical space of the CNCS Wisconsin State Office will be closing on June 1, with staff working from home until then, with the office formally closing in November. The Kansas City office is currently slated to open in September.

Update from Program Director Association

There was no report, but an indication that the group would be meeting in May.

Updates from Commission Members

Christine Beatty indicated that and Robert Griffith serve on States for Service, stating that it is important to know that the transformation plan is moving ahead and that people needed to continue contacting their legislators regarding the budget request that would fade out AmeriCorps.

Anthony Hallman congratulated Robert Griffith on completing and defending his dissertation.

Jim Langdon indicated that Governor Evers issued his first executive order on nondiscrimination, Executive Order 1, which expands that contractors can only hire based on merit and that future contracts will include new information to comply with this policy.

Paula Horning stated that the Executive Committee met on March 14 to discuss the release date for the formula RFP for AmeriCorps programs and planning grants. After Serve Wisconsin received feedback from CNCS on submitting the applications as early as possible, the Executive Committee met to discuss releasing the RFP before the March board meeting to facilitate more time for programs to apply and for an earlier submission to CNCS. The Executive Committee voted to release the RFP on March 18, 2019.

Staff Updates

Jeanne Duffy introduced Ruhamah Bauman, who will be the newest staff member for Serve Wisconsin. Ruhamah will be officially joining the staff on April 15 and will be program officer and heading up our disaster services efforts.

Jeanne thanked Shelly Kaiser for her work managing the Volunteer Wisconsin website the last four years, which connects organizations, volunteer centers, and volunteers throughout the state. She then stated that the management of the Volunteer Wisconsin website will transition to the United Way of Wisconsin on April 1, 2019.

Alexis Matthews spoke about two Trauma Informed Care trainings, three regionalized celebration of service events this spring/summer, and on two upcoming recruitment efforts that Recruitment Consultant Josh Harwell organized.

Casey Sweeney described the Formula RFP process and the Serve Wisconsin efforts to reach out to potential programs before the RFP release. He stated the formula allocation for this year is over \$2.6 million, which is \$58,000 more than last year. He explained that Serve Wisconsin wanted to release the Formula RFP earlier this year and received approval from the Executive Committee to release the two separate RFPs for AmeriCorps programs and planning grants. The applications for both are due on May 2.

Casey then described two events held to reach out to potential programs. Serve Wisconsin held a grant writing workshop with the Wisconsin Evaluation Collaboration (WEC) on March 5 covering application instructions, program narrative, budget, logic models, performance measures and data collection. Serve Wisconsin also held a National Service Summit on March 12 at the Boys & Girls Club of Menasha where people 18 attended, with many interested in being host sites.

Steven Yule first described the April 1 notifications regarding grant funding from CNCS, indicating that the information will be embargoed from public release until April 19.

Steven then described elements of the ongoing criminal history check exemption period. He expressed thanks to the DOA accounting staff for their help in the process for the invoicing for making reimbursement payments to programs.

Kyle Clower let the board know that the 2017-2018 Annual Report for Serve Wisconsin will hopefully be coming out in the next few weeks. The vast majority of the report is complete, as there are a few pages needing final photo edits and we are waiting for the letter from the governor that introduces the report.

Kyle then informed the board that he has created templates of letters for programs to send to their elected officials to help build relationships, including letters of introduction from the programs and invitations for the official or a staff member to attend a service project or a set event at the program. Additionally, he let the board know that he had also drafted versions of templates of letters for both the programs and individual AmeriCorps members to reach out to their elected officials for National Service Recognition Day.

Kyle then let the board know that Serve Wisconsin is planning an appreciation breakfast for host site supervisors in Madison on April 11. The hope is that this will be a pilot for doing similar events in other regions of the state. Jeanne Duffy added that when looking at survey data of AmeriCorps members, host site supervisors were

frequently mentioned by both those that had wonderful experiences and those that had challenges during their service. She further added that the event will have speaker that will help focus on the vital mentorship and leadership role that they have for our AmeriCorps members.

Finally, Kyle asked the board members that if they have posts with information or photographs that they would like shared by Serve Wisconsin over social media, to please tag @ServeWisconsin in their posts, as he receives notifications when they do and can easily share them. He followed up that he will be making a similar request to all of the AmeriCorps programs as well.

Following the staff reports, Paula Horning brought up being pleased to see the proclamation issued by Governor Evers for AmeriCorps Week. Alexis Matthews then indicated to the board that the proclamation was put together and obtained by Kyle Clower.

2019 WNCSB Meeting Scheduled

Paula Horning reviewed the remaining 2019 WNCSB meeting dates, which have been initially scheduled to be

- Thursday, June 6, 2019
- Friday, October 18, 2019
- Thursday, December 12, 2019

Jeanne Duffy indicated that the October meeting date is still fluid, as we may have that meeting in conjunction with the Opening Ceremony. She continued that we are working with Congresswoman Gwen Moore, who is a VISTA alumna, to be part of the ceremony to help celebrate the 25th Anniversary of AmeriCorps.

Adjourn

Christine Beatty made a motion to adjourn the WNCSB meeting at 1:30pm. Second by Angela Ahlgrim. The motion was unanimously approved.