

Grant Review Committee Conference Call Minutes August, 23rd, 2010

Call Participants: Chris Kolstad, John Ilgenfritz, Jack Chambers, Chas Van Genderen, Bob Harris, Julia Gustafson, Rebecca Steele, and Tony Dean.

Not available for the call: Karin Olsen Billings, Kim Miske, and Jan Lombardi.

10:00 a.m. to 10:45a.m.

- Review the proposed Funding/Grant Review Timeline **Julia/Tony**
 - Staff went through the timeline noting changes from previous years and the split between competitive and formula review.
 - The elimination feedback and revision time for applicants before recommendations are given to the full commission.
 - Staff will provide feedback on applications after the interviews and after the Grant Review Committee has scored the applications but before the ranking.
- Comments/Questions/Concerns on Timeline **Commissioners**
 - Concerns were raised about how applicants will be notified of changes and new expectations of them- staff explained it will be in the RFP and discussed on the technical assistance call. Applicants will also be notified of the difference between the scoring and ranking of applications.
- Concerns were raised about the gap in funding for first round of planning grants that received their funding in February 2010 and would not be applying for formula money until April 2011. Staff explained that planning grants have been notified of the timing is and if they have extra funds still available they can apply for an extension to their planning grant.
 - **NOTE:** Post call it was determined that Tony will follow up with CNCS to make sure programs can extend the funding period.
- Approve the Timeline **Commissioners**
 - John, Jack, Chas, Bob, and Chris all voted yes to approve this timeline

10:45 a.m. to 11:10 a.m.

- Review the Priority Areas for Funding **Julia**
 - Staff went through the priority areas noting the two Montana initiatives are on clean energy and math and science education. Expectations of programs were added from areas that were formerly under state initiatives.
- Quickly discuss the anticipated CNCS new Strategic Plan **Julia/Rebecca**
 - Staff went through the anticipated CNCS strategic Plan noting how the focus areas were narrowing slightly. It was also noted that there is a new Federal Initiative- Disaster Preparedness.
 - Staff expects the new Strategic Plan to be released in September and the new federal initiatives will be incorporated into the NOFA we release.

- **Comments/Questions/Concerns** **Commissioners**
 - Concerns were raised that not enough focus is given to Veteran's needs. It was noted that the Commission can add their own initiative to formula funding that focuses on Veterans, but this would affect programs that move onto competitive funding.
 - Concerns were raised about how these priority areas incorporate into the grant review process. It was determined that they are bonus points that factor into the ranking of applications.
 - Concerns were also on how the Grant Reviewers determine which priority areas applicants fall into. Staff will look into how to clarify this on the application and in the review process.
- **Approve the Priority Areas** **Commissioners**
 - John, Jack, Chas, Bob, and Chris all voted yes to approve this presentation of priority areas.

11:10 a.m. to 11:25 a.m.

- **Discuss Grant Review Committee(s) make-up/commitment** **Julia/Tony**
 - Staff discussed the options for the make-up of the grant review committee
 - Split into 2 committees? Competitive & Formula
 - Maximum 4 Commissioners, 1 external reviewer?
 - Partial commissioner rotation?
 - Require all commissioners to serve on committee at least once?
 - Include one of the 3 new commissioners on the grant review committee?
- **Comments/Questions/Concerns** **Commissioners**
 - Kim Miske's email comments were noted- one committee for formula and competitive, uneven number of commissioners, do not require all to be on the committee, and committee members must be willing to do due diligence to the work.
 - Bob Harris commented that he also desires a single committee, he has concerns about an outside reviewer causing more time to be needed for the review process, and that requirements to serve are too drastic.
 - Jack commented that he thinks two committees would be nice for a time commitment reduction, but for continuity one committee is better.
 - Chas asked what staff recommends and the time commitment required to serve. He noted that requiring commissioners to serve on the committee does bring awareness to the importance of the grant review process.
 - John commented that he does not believe an odd number is that necessary and he would like an outside person on the committee if they are willing to commit the time to the process.
 - Concerns were raised about the difference between a full application and a continuation application. Because the continuation application is much shorter, John was concerned that he is unable to review it with enough diligence.

- Staff commented that there are currently 5 commissioners on the committee not including Chris. With an outsider reviewer, (possibility Kathy Bean), it would be 6 reviewers.
- Recommendation for committee make-up **Commissioners**
 - John, Jack, Chas, Bob, and Chris recommend keeping the grant review committee the same for competitive and formula.
 - This will be brought up at the October Commission meeting to confirm members and revisited in the spring if current members need to resign due to time constraints.

11:25 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

- Discuss Next Steps **Julia**
 - Approve staff to move forward with this process?
 - Commissioner Spokesperson for Committee?
- Comments/Questions/Concerns **Commissioners**
 - John, Jack, Chas, and Bob all feel the grant review committee can give their recommendation to the executive committee and there is no need for a full commission vote on the funding timeline and priority areas.
 - Chas volunteered to be the spokesperson for the grant review committee at the next commission meeting.
- Give final recommendation from this call **Commissioners**
 - John, Jack, Chas, Bob, and Chris give their recommendation to approve the funding timeline and priority areas and staff can move forward with the process of determining dates.

11:30 a.m.

- Any other business, comments, questions, or concerns **Commissioners**
 - John expressed his concern about full versus continuation applications and noted he might not be able to serve on the committee any longer.
 - Meeting adjourned.