



Attendees

Tony Dean	Governor's Office of Community Service
Jim Auer	Governor's Office of Community Service
Katie Gallagher	Governor's Office of Community Service
Julia Gustafson	Governor's Office of Community Service
Janet Harper	Governor's Office of Community Service
Karin Olsen-Billings	Commission on Community Service
Adam Vauthier	Commission on Community Service
Chantel Scheiffer	Commission on Community Service
Lee Gault	Big Sky Watershed Corps
Bryan Wilson	Big Sky Watershed Corps
Ann Schwend	Big Sky Watershed Corps
Jan Fontaine	Big Sky Watershed Corps
Jeff Tiberi	Big Sky Watershed Corps
Brittany Waiss	Montana Legal Services Association
Allison Paul	Montana Legal Services Association
Katie Mckeown	Montana State Parks AmeriCorps
Ken Soderberg	Montana State Parks AmeriCorps
Roger Semler	Montana State Parks AmeriCorps
Crissie McMullan	FoodCorps

11:00AM Meeting Convened & Introductions

T. Dean: Provided an overview of the agenda. It was noted that workgroup member, Commissioner Jim, Corson, was unable to attend due to illness. Workgroup members present, Governor's Office of Community Service (OCS) staff, and AmeriCorps Program representatives were introduced.

Process Review

J. Auer: Described the formula funding process and noted that the application submitted by Montana Legal Services Association (MSLA) was still under consideration for competitive funding at the national level. The award determination should be made by June 14, 2013.

There is approximately \$609,743 to distribute for FY 2013 and two (2) recommendations will be made dependent on the outcome of the MSLA competitive application. There is the option for the OCS to request supplemental funding. Four (4) continuation applications were submitted for 2013 formula funding. The expectation is that funding will continue unless there is strong evidence that suggests lack of performance.

J. Auer: Provided an overview of the scoring rubric, introduced the lead reviewers, and outlined the meeting processes. Applicants may be asked clarifying questions if applicable to the content of their application. Applicants will be asked to provide an overview of their current enrollment and retention status before reviewers decide on a consensus score for the *Member Enrollment and Retention* category. Applicants may not submit any supplemental materials. A public comment period will open after discussion for all four (4) applications is complete.

Conflict of Interest Discussion

J. Auer: Requested that the commissioners disclose any potential conflicts of interest.

Commissioner Olsen-Billings: Noted that in her role at the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) she interfaces with the FoodCorps AmeriCorps program; however, her relationship doesn't present a clear conflict of interest.

Commissioners Vauthier and Scheiffer concurred that they did not see a conflict of interest and agreed that she should participate in the evaluation of the FoodCorps application.

FoodCorps Application Review

Continuation Proposal

J. Auer: Provided clarification on the FoodCorps Member Service Year (MSY) cost and total members. Discussed briefly the five (5) areas to be assessed and scored. Commissioner Vauthier was the lead reviewer. The consensus scores are as follows:

A. Program Match/Cost Per MSY

Program Match/Cost Per MSY Consensus Score: 2

B. Compliance Findings

There were no compliance findings.

Compliance Findings Consensus Score: 3

C. Member Enrollment & Exits

Member Enrollment & Exits Consensus Score: 3

D. Has the program met deadlines?

Deadline Consensus Score: 3

E. Member Enrollment & Retention

C. McMullan: FoodCorps originally enrolled ten (10) members, but their member located on the Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation was unable to complete the term. J. Auer confirmed that the member exited because of compelling circumstances, which means FoodCorps maintained 100 percent retention. All remaining nine (9) members are slated to complete their terms of service in July 2013.

Member Enrollment & Retention Consensus Score: 3

Final Score: 93/100

FoodCorps Interview Question Period & Clarification

FoodCorps Representative: Crissie McMullan

Commissioner Olsen- Billings: Requested clarification on the recruitment process.

C. McMullan: Discussed the current application and recruitment process. The organization is currently looking at 70 applicants that have already been vetted by FoodCorps at the national level.

Commissioner Vauthier: Provided an overview of the FoodCorps program application, highlighting the organization's proven record, strong connection to AmeriCorps, clear mission and, program growth as evidenced by new placements and members. What are the new sites and contracts that the program has secured for next year?

C. McMullan: Discussed the four (4) new and replacement sites, which include: Poplar (Ft. Peck Reservation), Sidney Public Schools, the Lockwood Boys and Girls Club, and a compact of three (3) schools on north Flathead Lake.

Commissioner Billings: Provided insight on the new Lockwood and Poplar sites, citing good infrastructure to support the new programs.

Commission Scheiffer: Asked for clarification on geographic distribution of sites and recruitment methods.

C. McMullan: Stated that FoodCorps does extensive vetting of potential sites and requires a solid written application and site interview. FoodCorps seeks to ensure that site supervisors have the capacity to oversee a FoodCorps member and understand the AmeriCorps program. Recruitment of new sites is done via word of mouth, FoodCorps email contacts, OPI, Department of Agriculture, Montana Farmers Union, and other groups. Although FoodCorps does have sites in far Eastern Montana, most sites are concentrated in Western Montana because of population and infrastructure (i.e. supervisor and site capacity, existing partnerships, etc.).

Commission Vauthier: Asked for clarification on disability inclusion, program diversity with a focus on recruiting and serving Native American populations, and sustainability efforts.

C. McMullan: Stated that there are a few existing placement sites that may be sustainable without AmeriCorps members within the next few years, notably the Ennis program. These programs will become models of sustainability, with solid volunteer bases and institutionalized programming and curriculum. FoodCorps member networking and communication is critical to moving the programs toward sustainability.

FoodCorps strives to make the program accessible for both members and participants (i.e. participating youth)

The program is networking with a number of schools and organizations on reservations (Fort Peck and Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes). FoodCorps has also hired a Tribal

Outreach Intern. To date, the intern has conducted outreach at University of Montana and Chief Dull Knife College to connect Native American students with the program.

T. Dean: Inquired about the status of the new site, the North Shore Compact. Is it an organized or incorporated entity?

C. McMullan: The compact consists of three (3) schools that commonly work together. The compact is not a 501c3.

Montana Legal Services Association (MLSA) - Justice for Montanans Project
Application Review
Continuation Proposal

J. Auer: Commissioner Vauthier was the lead reviewer. The consensus scores are as follows:

A. Program Match/Cost Per MSY

J. Auer led a cost reimbursement discussion and highlighted the match requirements. The program has increased their match.

Program Match/Cost Per MSY Consensus Score: 3

B. Compliance Findings

There were no compliance findings.

Compliance Findings Consensus Score: 3

C. Member Enrollment & Exits

Member Enrollment & Exits Consensus Score: 3

T. Dean: One (1) member did enroll outside the thirty (30) day window afforded to programs. T. Dean suggested to the reviewers that they look at the percentage of members enrolling and exiting within the allowed window.

D. Has the program met deadlines?

Deadline Consensus Score: 3

E. Member Enrollment & Retention

B. Waiss: One member did not complete their term of service due to a medical issue. J. Auer confirmed that the member did exit because of a compelling circumstance and therefore the program was at 100 percent retention. Currently, the program is at 93.8 percent enrollment due to recruitment challenges to fill a supplemental position that was granted. To overcome this challenge, the program decided to seek candidates for two (2) part-time positions. They have recently interviewed three (3) viable candidates and hope to have both slots filled soon.

Member Enrollment & Retention Consensus Score: 3

Final Score: 100/100

MLSA Interview Question Period & Clarification

MLSA Representatives: Brittany Waiss and Alison Paul

Commissioner Olsen-Billings: Asked for clarification with regard to the recruitment of people with disabilities.

B. Waiss: The program does not currently target individuals with disabilities, but all sites are accessible and the program seeks to leverage partnerships with disability organizations.

Commissioner Vauthier: Requested clarification on the organization's grant year.

B. Waiss, MLSA: The organization's current funding cycle will end December 2013 because of the extension granted to account for the supplemental funding.

Commissioner Olsen- Billings: Does MLSA collect data on the background of applicants?

B. Waiss: The program enrolls a diverse group of members. A high percentage of members are college graduates and many go on to graduate programs post term of service, especially law school.

Commissioner Vauthier: Provided an overview of the program, highlighting the duration of the program (5 years) and the organization's ability to increase the match amount.

Commissioner Olsen-Billings: Noted her appreciations of outreach to veterans, as it matches both the direction of the Commission and the Bullock administration.

Commissioner Scheiffer: Requested clarification about the program's presence in Eastern Montana.

B. Waiss : MLSA currently does not have a physical presence east of Billings. To service a statewide population, including the reservations, MLSA AmeriCorps members regularly circuit ride to eastern Montana communities. MLSA is currently expanding its partnerships with organizations serving rural, eastern Montana. The court system in the region is currently at capacity, which presents a barrier.

Commissioner Vauthier: Requested clarification about the programs recruitment of Native Americans.

B. Waiss: MLSA tracks the number of Native Americans that it provides services to and it seeks to recruit Native American members mainly through partnerships with tribal colleges.

Commissioner Vauthier: Requested clarification on the organization's current recruitment challenges and program sustainability.

B. Waiss: MLSA is refining its outreach methods to appeal to diverse populations. With regard to sustainability, MLSA is institutionalizing systems based on the work that AmeriCorps members are completing.

Allison Paul, MLSA: With regard to financial sustainability, MLSA is seeking out additional partnerships and increasing the cost share that partners provide to help cover personnel and operation costs.

T. Dean: Requested clarification on any partnership and/or host site changes.

B. Waiss: The program is maintaining mostly the same host sites because of proven capacity. One (1) Modest Means site was added.

J. Auer: Requested clarification on the program's connection to the Healthy Futures focus area.

B. Waiss: The program seeks to connect clients to social service providers and public benefits, which aligns with the Corporation's focus on access to healthcare, including mental and physical health needs. Members also provide services to victims of domestic abuse.

J. Auer: Requested clarification on the Self-Help Law Center Coordinator's time allocated to the grant (.60 FTE).

B. Waiss: The Coordinator develops resources and supervises members at all self-help sites. The Coordinator has tracked her time. Time spent and allocated to the AmeriCorps grant has been verified.

Big Sky Watershed Corps Application Review

Continuation Proposal

J. Auer: Provided clarification on the cost reimbursement grant. Commissioner Olsen-Billings was the lead reviewer. The consensus scores are as follows:

A. Program Match/Cost Per MSY

The match exceeded the required amount.

Program Match/Cost Per MSY Consensus Score: 3

B. Compliance Findings

There were no compliance findings.

Compliance Findings Consensus Score: 3

C. Member Enrollment & Exits

Member Enrollment & Exits Consensus Score: 3

D. Has the program met deadlines?

Deadline Consensus Score: 3

E. Member Enrollment & Retention

B Wilson: The program is at 100 percent enrollment and retention. They are continuing to build and improve their recruitment and supervision structure.

Member Enrollment & Retention Consensus Score: 3

Final Score: 100/100

BSWC Interview Question Period & Clarification

Big Sky Watershed Corps Representatives: Bryan Wilson, Lee Gault, Ann Schwend, and Jeff Tiberi

Commissioner Olsen-Billings: Asked for clarification on disability inclusion.

B. Wilson: BSWC works with colleges and Montana Conservation Corps (MCC) on disability inclusion efforts. Currently one member has disclosed a disability.

Commissioner Scheiffer: Asked for clarification on veteran participation.

B. Wilson: One veteran submitted an application late. The applicant was referred to MCC's Veterans Green Corps.

Commissioner Vauthier: Requested clarification and insight on program recruitment and member activities post term of service.

B. Wilson: Many members have Masters Degrees and are seeking professional experience through BSWC. Members in the past have been hired to work as permanent employees at their host sites while other members have either applied to complete a second term or applied to graduate school. Host sites help members connect with other opportunities post-service.

Commissioner Vauthier: Requested information on program expansion and sustainability.

B. Wilson: One of the main goals of the program is to build capacity at the host sites. Often, the presence of an AmeriCorps member frees up the time of other staff members to seek additional resources to grow their capacity. For example, in Hamilton, a nonprofit host site added a permanent *Education & Outreach Coordinator* position because of the success of their AmeriCorps member and the ability to fundraise to finance the new position.

Commissioner Vauthier: Requested information on the host sites.

B. Wilson: The program anticipates that nine (9) or ten (10) sites will reapply while others will)not because they've transitioned the AmeriCorps position into an actual staff position. The program is currently expanding partnerships, so that they can develop more sites beyond the 1-90 corridor.

Commissioner Vauthier: Asked for clarification on Native American inclusion.

B. Wilson: The program has a steering committee that has identified Native American inclusion (members and host sites) as a long-term priority. They seek to expand their work with tribal natural resource agencies. The program cited the challenge of identifying sites and projects that have the capacity to supervise the member and the ability to provide the required match. BSWC members attend the State Tribal Relations Training.

L. Gault: Noted that MCC has developed the 'Bridging Cultures Conservation Corps Crew', which is a partnership between MCC, the United States Forest Service (USFS), and tribes.

J. Auer: Requested clarification on the program's educational sustainability efforts.

B. Wilson: The program emphasizes training, access to resources for members, and communication between sites. Members develop lesson plans to share among each other and with teachers

J. Auer: How does BSCW engage more resource-poor watershed groups?

B. Wilson and A. Schwend: The impact of the BSWC members is often greater at the low-capacity organizations. The presence and work of members at low-capacity sites acts as a model for other interested conservation groups. BSWC is committed to helping low-capacity groups secure buy-in for the program, provide cost-share assistance, and connect with other resources.

Jeff Tiberi: In the last legislative session, \$200,000 was allocated in a bill to provide funding to watershed groups for capacity building purposes. The hope is that members will help watershed groups secure funding to build their capacity. He noted that housing continues to be a barrier to member placement in eastern Montana.

Montana State Parks AmeriCorps Application Review

Continuation Proposal

J. Auer: Commissioner Scheiffer was the lead reviewer. The consensus scores are as follows:

A. Program Match/Cost Per MSY

There was a decrease in MSY and number of members. This change occurred because the program model changed. The program exceeded the match.

Program Match/Cost Per MSY Consensus Score: 3

B. Compliance Findings

There were no compliance findings.

Compliance Findings Consensus Score: 3

C. Member Enrollment & Exits

Member Enrollment & Exits Consensus Score: 3

D. Has the program met deadlines?

Deadline Consensus Score: 3

E. Member Enrollment & Retention

Member Enrollment & Retention Consensus Score: 3

K. Mckeown: The program has 100% retention with four (4) members starting on Monday (June 3, 2013).

Final Score: 100/100

Montana State Parks AmeriCorps Interview Question Period & Clarification

State Parks AmeriCorps: Katie Mckeown, Ken Soderberg, and Roger Semler.

Commission Scheiffer: Requested that the program explain the adjustments to their model.

K. Mckeown: The program is modifying their model based on what types of slots work best for their member and host sites. Three (3) members are returning to the program for a second term of service.

Commission Scheiffer: Requested information on how the program increases the awareness of the state park system in Montana.

K. Mckeown: Members seek to build awareness of park activities and opportunities in the surrounding communities. In addition, the program encourages the members to participate in community activities/meetings.

Commissioner Olsen-Billings: Has the decrease in state park funding impacted the work of AmeriCorps members?

R. Semler: The Federal sequestration has not directly impacted the Montana State Parks AmeriCorps program. However, federal land management agencies have reduced hiring, which may indirectly impact the program by expanding the pool of qualified candidates.

Commissioner Vauthier: Requested clarification on sustainability and program promotion.

K. Mckeown: Approximately 10 percent of member time is dedicated to community outreach. Other typical member tasks include program/curriculum development and delivery. With regard to sustainability, members are helping Parks develop and train their volunteer base. For example, in Lone Pine State Park the member developed a project to recruit retired teachers to host/guide park programs.

K. Soderberg: At Travelers Rest State Park, members helped the park managers develop a volunteer training program and institutionalize the associated curriculum and processes.

Commissioner Olsen-Billings: Asked for clarification on disability inclusion.

K. Mckeown: The program has vetted its screening process to make sure that recruitment is accessible, including the interview methods as to not create a barrier at the beginning of the process. The program provides disability training to members and encourages members to see people with disabilities as a great asset in their communities.

Commissioner Olsen-Billings: Asked for clarification on veteran inclusion.

K. Mckeown: The program attracts a diverse pool of applicants and members. Currently there is age diversity and two (2) veterans have served per year. The program does not do any targeted veteran outreach.

J. Auer: Requested clarification on strategic partnerships.

K Mckeown: The program explores different opportunities with Fish, Wildlife, and Parks as well as different state park support groups. The program is growing it's partnerships with schools.

R. Semler: Because of the added capacity that AmeriCorps members bring, Montana State Parks is expanding its partnership with Leave No Trace: Center for Outdoor Ethics.

Funding Recommendations Discussion

J. Auer: Asked the review committee if there was any discussion as whether any of these programs should not receive continued funding

Grant review Workgroup: Agreed that all the programs reviewed should receive continued funding

J. Auer: There are two scenarios to be presented based on whether MLSA is funded through its competitive request. The recommendations will be presented to the full Commission at the meeting on June 14, 2013. It was clarified that programs cannot combine formula and competitive funds.

J. Auer: Scenario 1: If MLSA receives competitive funding; all programs will be funded at their requested level. Under this scenario, approximately \$80,000 would remain and likely be used to support planning grants. The ceiling on planning grants is around \$30,000.

J. Auer: Scenario 2: Shared the projected funding amount and member allocations if MLSA is not funded through the competitive opportunity. Under this scenario programs would be funded at the previous year's level, \$8,000 would remain. Staff suggests that the remaining funds be offered to BSWC. In addition, the OCS recommends that supplemental funds are requested to support additional MLSA and Watershed members.

Full Commission Meeting Overview

J. Auer: Asked the work group if they accept the two scenarios to be presented to the full Commission on June 14, 2013.

Commissioners Vauthier, Olsen-Billings, and Scheiffer approved the funding recommendation scenarios. Commissioner Olsen-Billings volunteered to present the recommendations to the Commission.

Public Comment

Several attendees thanked the Commission workgroup members and the OCS staff.

2:00 Meeting Adjourned

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