

**Minutes - Draft**

**I. 1p Chair Rebecca Harbage, Welcomes and Opens Meeting**

a. **Chair Harbage called the meeting to order at 1:02 pm.**

b. Roll Call

i. Commissioners present: Chair Rebecca Harbage, Vice Chair Morgan Hubbard, Commissioners: Kevin Myhre, Kelly Ackerman, Eric Strauss, Donnie Wetzel, Jr., Karen Moses\*, Jim Larson, Thomas Risberg, Kami Kirchberg, Pamela Carbonari\*, Jim Swan\*, Doug Mitchell\*, Donald Lovejoy\*

ii. Guests and Staff present:

1. *Guests:* Elaine Dahl, Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies, the Montana Coalition

2. *OCS Staff:* Sarah Sadowski, Director; Joe Naiman-Sessions, Program Officer; Keena Irby, Fiscal Officer; Kristina Jordan, Grants Specialist; Alyssa Mathieu, Communications Specialist; Allie Shepler, Administrative Specialist

\*Indicates individuals who attended on zoom

c. Opening Activity: Commissioner Swan led the commission & staff in an opening activity

d. Commission Appointments & Introductions, Director Sadowski

i. Two current commission vacancies: Local government representative and public representative

e. Approval of June 9, 2022 Minutes

i. Commissioner Moses suggested edit for grammar and spelling: error on Pg 4

ii. Commissioner Strauss made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Moses. *Minutes approved with edit made.*

f. Commissioner Reports & Updates: share announcements and recent volunteer engagements

i. Commissioner Ackerman request for volunteers to help maintain Helena Veteran's Cemetery landscaping and placing headstones. Volunteer form on [dma.mt.gov](http://dma.mt.gov)

ii. Commissioner Moses reports K-12 Education Foundation for Billings Public Schools had annual Saturday Live event, a multi-school carnival that raised over 140K to fund grants from the foundation to go to schools.

iii. Commissioner Wetzel reports new hires for the Office of Public Instruction Tribal Relations & Resiliency Unit, a Tribal Youth Coordinator, and an AmeriCorps Planning Grant Coordinator. Looking to do a student exchange with native and non-native schools and students.

**II. AmeriCorps the agency, Montana Update,** Donald Lovejoy AC Portfolio Manager, Denver, CO.

**a. Mountain Region:**

- i. Our region is in the processing of hiring for multiple positions. As it stands, we have a vacant Associate Portfolio Manager, multiple Portfolio Managers, and a VISTA Recruitment focused position.
- ii. Our 2023 federal fiscal year started on October 1 as of this meeting, and the regional office has been reviewing priorities and strategic planning for the year. We hosted a leadership retreat in August and had a full-Mountain Region retreat in September. These meetings have been some of the first times since the COVID-19 pandemic where we were able to gather as a full team in person.
- iii. Currently our Federal Budget for fiscal year 2023 has been operating under a Continuing Resolution through December 16 based on last year's funding level.

**b. AC Seniors:**

- i. For FY 2023, AmeriCorps Seniors announced an increase to the volunteer stipend for Senior Companion and Foster Grandparent Programs. We are very excited on this update as the hourly rate is increasing from \$3.15 to \$4.00 an hour for volunteers.

**c. AC VISTA:**

- i. AmeriCorps VISTA also recently announced its [FY 2023 Request for Concept Paper](#) process. There are four cycles where interested applicants may apply. The first round has a due date of November 2, 2022 with a target award date in January, 2023. There will be several webinars throughout the year as well to help interested organizations through the application process. Please feel free to share this with your networks!

**d. Volunteer Generation Fund:**

- i. The [Volunteer Generation Fund \(VGF\) funding opportunity](#) recently closed on September 13. The agency will be moving through the review process for submitted applications. We will report out more information as we receive it, including any that move to award for Idaho. As a reminder, the Volunteer Generation Fund grants will be used to develop and/or support community-based entities to recruit, manage, and support volunteers. AmeriCorps seeks to fund effective approaches that expand volunteering, strengthen the capacity of volunteer connector organizations to recruit and retain skill-based volunteers, and develop strategies to use volunteers effectively to solve problems.

**III. Governor's Office of Community Service Updates**

**a. Directors Update, Director Sadowski**

**i. FFY2023 Budget**

1. Director Sadowski shared information on the Financial Snapshot and invited Commissioner Lovejoy to share any available information on the FFY2023 federal budget. Commissioner Lovejoy reported the federal gov is operating on a Continuing Resolution and managing budget based on last year's budget.

- a. Commissioner Risberg asked about increasing state general fund. Director Sadowski reported Commission Support Grant APR requires 1:1 match requirement and she is working with the Governor's Office to secure funds to meet the match.

- ii. OCS staffing updates: new Fiscal Officer Keena Irby, and Administrative Specialist Allie Shepler. Applications for Training Specialist close 10/16.
  - iii. AmeriCorps State & National Symposium: entire staff attended virtually this August.
- b. Communications Specialist Updates, Alyssa Mathieu
- i. Youth Serve Montana Scholarships getting ready for launch. Applications open 11/1.
    - 1. Partnering with Montana Campus Compact (MTCC) – funds increased 125k in total
    - 2. 2 levels – 50-99 hours apply for \$1k scholarship and 100+ hours apply for \$1.5k scholarship for attending MTCC institutions
  - ii. ServeMontana Award nominations opening in December. Working on new categories for nominations, will be finalized for next meeting.
  - iii. Montana Student Volunteer Award – partnership with MTCC to recognize student volunteers within university system. More to come in December
  - iv. Will resend [SurveyMonkey for Commissioner Highlights](#) in newsletter.
- c. AmeriCorps Updates- Joe Naiman-Sessions, Program Officer & Kristina Jordan, Grants Specialist
- i. Grants – Formula, Competitive, Commission Support Grant (CSG), Commission Investment Funds (CIF)
    - 1. CSG/CIF – *Notices* received and applied for. Hoping to be awarded by 1/1
    - 2. Formula – 5 new planning grants started 9/1. Planning notice for Fall FY22 due 10/28 for 2/1 start date.
    - 3. Competitive – 3 programs began 9/1 and 2 start 1/1. January start programs close in November, Commissioners invited to Close of Service Activities.
      - a. NOFO for FY23 open through 10/28
      - b. Commissioner Strauss asked for report on planning process generally.
      - c. Commissioner Risberg asked about flexibility of funding for planning grants. Joe reported either formula is used for new and existing operating programs, planning or as a safety net should a competitive program not be awarded a recompetete. No penalty for carrying forward funds but will not be accessible after 3-year prime ends.
  - ii. [ServeMontana Symposium](#), March 15-17, 2023 at Carroll College
    - 1. This is OCS's signature event, convening as many Montana AmeriCorps members as possible for three days of learning, serving, and growing together
    - 2. Planning Committee kicking off Thursday, 10/27, engaging staff and AmeriCorps member representatives from Montana VISTA and AmeriCorps State & National programs. Commissioners welcome to join committee.
    - 3. Call for theme suggestions (past theme 'Service on Common Ground')

4. Call for breakout session presenters or session ideas – official call will open early December. Commissioners welcome to present and submit ideas
5. Commission meeting morning of Symposium beginning 10am, 3/15, Commissioners invited to stay and engage with members and program staff.

- d. Financial report- Keena Irby, Fiscal Officer
  - i. Funding Snapshot shared and changes highlighted.
  - ii. Honorarium, claim or waive

#### **IV. New Business, Chair Harbage**

- a. Commission Bylaw Update, Commissioner Myhre - *action item*
  - i. Commissioner Myhre made a motion to approve bylaws as amended. Commissioner Larson seconded motion. Bylaws approved.
- b. AmeriCorps Grant Review Workgroup formation - *action item*
  - i. Grant Review scheduled November 16<sup>th</sup> in Helena 9:30 am – 4:00 pm at Montana Wild
  - ii. Planning and competitive grant applications to be reviewed.
  - iii. November 2<sup>nd</sup> at 12:00 pm, workgroup orientation via Zoom
  - iv. Call for 3-4 volunteers for workgroup, expectation is for workgroup members to serve for fall and spring grant reviews. Commissioners Kirchberg, Strauss (or as alternate), Myhre, and Wetzel volunteered. *Grant Review Workgroup formed.*

#### **V. Public Comment**

- a. Elaine Dahl from Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies, the Montana Coalition distributed 2<sup>nd</sup> annual LIFTS magazine. See digital copy here: <https://hmhb-mt.org/magazine/>

#### **VI. Adjourn: Chair Harbage adjourned meeting at 2:43 pm.**

The regularly scheduled fourth quarterly Commission meeting is Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup>.