

Agenda (Note: All times are tentative)

I. 1p Vice-Chair Hubbard, Welcomes and Opens Meeting

a. Roll Call, Anastasia Matheison

- i. Commissioners Present: Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioners Dawn English, Rob Lawler, Donnie Wetzel, Vicki Turner, Jim Swan*, Clifford Kipp*, Thomas Risberg*, Kami Kirchberg*
- ii. GOCS Staff Present: Director Sarah Sadowski; Keena Irby, Fiscal Officer; Kristina Jordan, Program Officer; Elaine Dahl, Grants Specialist; Alyssa Mathieu, Communications Specialist; Elly Fisher, Training Specialist; Anastasia Matheison, Administrative Specialist
- iii. Guests: Bryan Wilson, Big Sky Watershed Corps (BSWC); Harley Ternes, Justice for Montanans (MLSA-JFM); Toni Goroski*, Action for Eastern Montana Senior Companion Program; Lynette Scriver-Colburn*, RSVP Cascade County; Angela Davis*, Montana Office of Rural Health and Area Health Education Center at MSU; Kimberly Boyd*, RSVP Richland County; Duane Schlabach, Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP); Josh Vanek*, Montana Campus Network for Civic Engagement (MCNCE); Sarah Brady*, Family Scholar House
- iv. Excused Absences: Chair Rebecca Harbage, Commissioners Kelly Ackerman, Dylan Davids, Jim Larson, Pete Pace, Kevin Myhre

**Indicates attendance by Zoom*

b. Introductions, All

c. Video message – Governor Gianforte

d. Opening Activity, [donation to Good Samaritan Ministries Thrift Store](#)

- i. Director Sadowski: This activity started years ago with warm clothing donations. We donate to Good Samaritan as the organization provides for many needs within the community.
- ii. Commissioner Wetzel: We take our growing kids' too-small clothes to Good Samaritan.
- iii. Commissioner Kipp: donated growing kids clothing locally.

e. Group Photo with State Capitol Christmas Tree

f. Approval of [October 10, 2024 Minutes](#)

- i. Approved as read.

g. Commissioner Updates – Engaged with GOCS since October? Community opportunities?

- i. Vice Chair Hubbard: The local school is working on reforming and rebranding the Forsyth school logo with the hope of building a good culture within the school.
- ii. Commissioner Turner: During Helena Food Share's transition to their new building, she helped assemble many backpack food bags that are given to local elementary students.
- iii. Commissioner Wetzel: Thank you, Director Sadowski, for helping with the Montana Indian Athletic Hall of Fame event this November.
- iv. Commissioner Lawler: Will be delivering 12 pallets of Christmas toys throughout the state.
- v. Commissioner Risberg: There are roughly 900 airmen deployed for the holiday season, will be making cookies for these families.
- vi. Commissioner Kirchberg: Bozeman health adopted a family through Operation Holiday this year. We were able to get gifts for three little ones and a family gift. Planning on continuing this in the future.
- vii. Commissioner Kipp: His family donated to a food drive and clothing drive through his kids' schools.

- II. 120p Office of Regional Office Update**, Dylan Davids, Senior Portfolio Manager, AmeriCorps - Director Sadowski read updates sent in by Commissioner Davids
- a. Congress passed a continuing resolution that runs through December 20 meaning the agency will operate on FY24 levels until Congress passes a final budget.
 - b. Hearing on Wednesday December 11 with agency leadership in front of the House Education and Labor Subcommittee. CEO Michael Smith shared:
 - i. Nearly 1,000 AmeriCorps members have supported recovery from hurricanes
 - ii. \$82.2 million tax dollars have been returned through AmeriCorps programming.
 - c. Transition paperwork MOU with incoming administration has been signed.
 - d. Appointees will be leaving at the start of the year.
 - e. Funding Opportunities:
 - i. VISTA Concept Papers were due December 6, next round March 25.
 - ii. NCCC Concept Papers for teams are due January 3.
 - iii. The review process for AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP is happening. Will be awarded in March 2025.
- III. 130p Director's Update, Director Sadowski**
- a. Legislature, Staffing, Confidentiality Statements
 - i. The state legislative session will begin January 6. The Governor's budget is out and on website which will be presented to the Legislature and sent back to the Governor for approval, the state budget is House Bill 2 in each session.
 - ii. Confidentiality Statements, please sign and return if you have not already.
 - iii. Attended an event with MCNCE at the Helena Food Share along with their Executive Board
 - iv. The 2025-2027 State Service Plan is now available and is provided to all Commissioners present, those attending online will receive one in the mail.
 - v. Conducting outreach to eligible organizations to encourage planning grant applications in 2025.
 - vi. The annual Tribal Relations Training was December 5 where 300 people gathered for a one-day event. Commissioner Wetzel spoke at this event, and three GOCS staff served to support.
 - vii. During the February Leadership convening in DC, planning to meet with newly elected congress people.
 - viii. Staffing update: Grateful that the Governor has approved me to serve as Director for another four years. Alyssa Mathieu and Elly Fisher are both moving on to different opportunities. Thankful for their time in this office.
 - ix. Vice Chair Hubbard: Director Sadowski, congratulations on continuing in your position. We are grateful for this. Thank you to Alyssa and Elly.
- IV. 140p Governor's Office of Community Service Updates**
- a. ServeMontana, Alyssa Mathieu, Communications Specialist
 - i. Youth Serve Montana Scholarships
 1. Now accepting applications. Will award 100 scholarships for \$1,250 for 100 hours of service.
 2. Vice Chair Hubbard: Please share scholarship information to your networks. This is a good opportunity, but individuals cannot apply if they are not aware the scholarship exists.
 3. Commissioner Lawler: Please share a digital scholarship poster.
 - ii. ServeMontana Awards, nominations open early January
 1. Please submit nominations, ideally at least one per Commissioner.
 2. Vice Chair Hubbard: This is a great event that I have been a part of and have loved.
 - b. Financial, Keena Irby, Fiscal Officer

- i. Financial Status Report
 - 1. Next 6 months are looking tight due to continuing resolution.
 - 2. No updates with the Executive Planning Process (EPP). Will track the legislative session.
- ii. Honorarium end of year report out
 - 1. Thank you for all who were donated their honorarium to GOCS. A total of \$2,200 was generated from commission meetings, not including the grant reviews or other events.
 - 2. Annual email will go out tomorrow. Please respond if you are waiving or claiming honorariums.
 - 3. Vice Chair Hubbard: Those in the room who can receive honorariums, please fill those out.
- c. AmeriCorps, GOCS staff
 - i. Grants update: Competitive & Formula, Kristina Jordan, Program Officer
 - 1. Competitive: applications were due October 24, and the review workgroup was November 20. Applicants will go into a clarification period before they are sent to the agency.
 - a. Commissioners Turner, Lawler, and Kipp along with community volunteer, Colin, reviewed the applications: JFM, BSWC, and MCNCE. Thank you to applicants and reviewers.
 - b. JFM and MCNCE are a few months into the program year. BSWC will start in January.
 - 2. Formula: More information will come in March about formula grants, anticipating similar timeline to last spring.
 - a. AgCorps, BSWC, and FWP will start new program year in January.
 - b. Currently two planning grantees are moving through the process.
 - ii. ServeMontana Symposium: Elly Fisher, Training Specialist
 - 1. Call for breakout session proposals is open. Please send to your networks and consider submitting a proposal. Priority deadline is December 20, final deadline is January 8.
 - 2. Seeking event sponsorships this year, informational packet is on the website. Hoping to have speakers fully sponsored this year, roughly \$7,500. Submitted to Blue Cross Blue Shield, and Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation.
 - 3. Commissioner Wetzel: suggest the Arthur M. Blank Foundation and the Helena Indian Alliance.
 - 4. Commissioner Lawler: Offered to help connect Arthur M. Blank Foundation with GOCS. Suggested the Kiwanis Club and the Rotary Club.
 - 5. Commissioner English: Town Pump Foundation sponsors food shares, they might sponsor if it can be tied to food security.

V. 150p New Business

- a. AmeriCorps Grant Review Workgroup Recommendation, Commissioner Lawler – action item
 - i. Commissioner Lawler moved to approve recommendations as presented.
 - 1. Commissioner Wetzel seconded.
 - ii. Brief discussion was had. Commissioner Turner: This was a hard day because MCNCE has a long history and provided many opportunities. But we hold the public's trust and their money, so we need to set forth programs to the agency that are shinning stars. Hopefully, MCNCE can take this time to fix the issues and get the program back on track. To BSWC and JFM, we are proud of these programs and look forward to giving them this opportunity. Commissioner Kipp: It was very challenging, but it is also a great opportunity. Was happy to be there. All approved. Motion passed.
- b. Organ Donor Memorial Fundraising Workgroup - Director Sadowski

- i. Helena Area Community Foundation is now receiving funds for the memorial. Handouts available, please hang in your community. Project needs to be completed by October 2028. Visit serve.mt.gov for more information.
 - ii. A workgroup of three commissioners, a GOCS staff, an organ donation recipient, and a person waiting for an organ donation will be formed next year to support fundraising.
 - iii. The memorial is being made in Bozeman and will be transported and assembled in Helena.
 - iv. So far, we have sent out letters, participated in Giving Tuesday, and posted on social media. Most recent GOCS intern supported by getting materials ready for social media.
 - v. Model of the memorial is available for fundraising events.
 - vi. Commissioners Wetzell and Turner expressed interest in being on workgroup. Commissioner Pace also expressed interest.
 - vii. Vice Chair Hubbard: Donations of all sizes are valuable and will make a difference.
- c. ServeMontana Award Workgroup – formation
- i. Commissioners Kipp, English, and Hubbard volunteered for this workgroup.
 - ii. Vice Chair Hubbard: This is very fulfilling and easy to accomplish.
 - iii. Director Sadowski: The workgroup will meet to review the process, and recommendations will be due in April. The Awards ceremony with the Governor and or Lieutenant Governor is in June.
 - iv. Director Sadowski: AmeriCorps Seniors, please nominate your volunteers.
- d. Engagement opportunity, MLK Day Helena, January 20, 2025
- i. Director Sadowski: GOCS is facilitating a planning committee for MLK Day and encourages AmeriCorps members and others to serve their community on this day. GOCS will reach out in the new year with opportunities for Commissioners to engage.
 - ii. Commissioner English: RSVP will be doing a Read for Peace event in Butte School District #1. 30 classrooms have signed up to participate and would love volunteers to join.

VI. 205p Public Comment

- a. Bryan Wilson: Thank you, Commissioners and reviewers, for reviewing grants, appreciate all the work you do.
- b. Harley Ternes: Thank you for your support. There has been a lot of work put into the Justice For Montanans AmeriCorps program, and we are excited for next year as the program will be expanding.

VII. 212p Adjourn

Vice Chair Hubbard: Adjourned meeting

Next regularly scheduled Commission meeting Wednesday, March 12, 2025...10am!

ServeMontana Symposium, March 12-14, 2025