

**I. 1p Vice Chair Lawler Opens Meeting:**

- a. Roll Call, Anastasia Matheison
  - i. Commissioners: Rob Lawler, Autumn Coleman, Dawn English, Becky Nelson, Thomas Risberg, Zach Hawkins, Vicki Turner, Pete Pace, Jim Swan\*, Jim Larson\*, Jacob Strissel\*,
    - 1. Commissioners absent: Chair Morgan Hubbard, Donnie Wetzel Jr., Cliff Kipp, Kelly Ackerman
  - ii. GOCS Staff Present: Director Sarah Sadowski; Kristina Jordan, Program Officer; Elaine Dahl, Grants Specialist; Anastasia Matheison, Specialist
  - iii. Guests: Lieutenant Governor Kristen Juras, Harley Ternes Justice for Montanans, Angela Davis Community Health Corps Montana\*, Angela Carter Billings Senior Companion Program\*, Stacey Bradley Dept of Labor and Industry\*  
*\*indicates attendance by zoom*
- b. Welcome & Introductions
- c. Opening Activity, Vice Chair Lawler
  - i. What is your favorite thing about weddings?
- d. Approval of [June 5, 2025, Minutes](#)
  - i. Moved by Commissioner Turner and Seconded by Commissioner Larson – Approved unanimously
- e. Group photo on Capitol steps
- f. Commissioner Report: share GOCS & local volunteer engagements & opportunities
  - i. Commissioner Risberg gave a shout out to the VISTA member in Great Falls who is doing a fantastic job at the recovery center, doing site visits, and building relationships. People can see the impact he is making.
  - ii. Vice Chair Lawler and his church helped clean up Vigilante stadium recently.
  - iii. Commissioner Hawkins gave a shout out to Helena Cyclones mountain bike team. Relies on volunteers to coach 40 kids. The last race is this weekend.

**II. AmeriCorps Mountain Region Office update, unavailable**

**III. 135p Governor's Office of Community Service Updates**

- a. Director's Report, Director Sadowski
  - i. New Commissioners and staffing updates
    - 1. Dylan Davids is our AmeriCorps portfolio manager and ex-officio representative on the Commission, unavailable due to federal government shutdown.
    - 2. Welcome to the new Commissioners, Becky Nelson, Autumn Coleman, and Jacob Strissel. Commissioner Ackerman is retiring in October from the Department of Veterans Affairs.
    - 3. GOCS will be hiring an Administrative Specialist and Compliance and Training
  - ii. National Service Summit, Sept 16-18, 2025
    - 1. Director Sadowski went to the National Service Summit hosted by AmeriCorps Service Commission. There were roughly 120 other commission staff from around the country present. She was able to meet with all four Montana congressional offices.
    - 2. AmeriCorps the agency, is offline – the website has been down for renovations since 9.3.2025. AmeriCorps has received one Presidential appointment, Chief of Staff.

3. GOCS, program and planning grants are operating from FY25 funds which are not impacted by the government shutdown at this time.
4. AmeriCorps Montana is recruiting for next program year.
5. Justice for Montanans (JFM) orientation was last month. We welcomed 24 members.

iii. GOCS outreach & Threshold of Life Memorial – case for support & more

1. Threshold of Life Memorial brief updates. Commissioners were given the Case for Support along with the support guide. Please like the Threshold of Life [Facebook page](#), share posts and invite with friends to also like the page.
  - a. Vice Chair Lawler: Please share the Case for Support with at least 3 individuals.
  - b. Commissioner Larson: From my experience, if you keep this in the back of your mind, it comes up naturally. Don't be afraid to ask people if their organization provides grants.
  - c. Commissioner Turner: A lot of people get donations other than major organs; stem cells, ligament, and bone grafts. Thank you to the GOCS team as they have been doing great work with this project.
  - d. Commissioner Swan: My Dad donated corneas, and we didn't know he was an organ donor until he passed. It's important to encourage people to be organ donors but also to make their families aware.
  - e. Commissioner English: Please provide a PDF to make additional copies.
  - f. Commissioner Risberg: Ideas of who to reach out to – Primary Care, Physicians Associations, insurance companies.
  - g. Director Sadowski: We are also asking for organizations and associations to put the memorial in their newsletters. Please reach out to us with your suggestions.

b. Financial report- Director Sadowski, prepared by Keena Irby, Fiscal Officer

i. Financial Status Report – review

1. FY25 ended on June 30. The Commission Investment Fund grant was awarded an extension.
2. Most AmeriCorps programs have completed the FY24 years with the remaining programs finishing in December.
3. UM-MCNCE retained 8 AgCorps and FWP members after the April grant terminations. Their service year will finish in November.

ii. Youth Serve Montana Scholarship - data snapshot

1. Discussion of initial findings from 2016-2020 Youth Serve Montana Scholarship data.

iii. Honorarium, claim or waive

1. Discussion was had. See honorarium procedure for further information.

c. AmeriCorps- Kristina Jordan, Program Officer

i. Grants update – Formula determinations

1. Entire formula portfolio was terminated in May however have been refunded for the 2025-2026 program year.
2. Two planning grants started Sept 1: Montana State Library and UM-MCNCE.
3. Formula grant process is still intended Spring 2026. It is unclear if we will have planning grants.

ii. Competitive – 'FFY2026'

1. Grant applications are due this fall expecting two applications this year.
2. AmeriCorps was working on getting the FY2026 NOFO approved. GOCS is working with applicants to keep the timeline while waiting for the official NOFO.

- iii. AmeriCorps program engagement opportunities
  - 1. Big Sky Watershed Corps (BSWC) close of service at the Hotel Finlen in Butte on November 13<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am-4:00pm.
  - 2. AgCorps and FWP combined close of service on November 7<sup>th</sup> from 9:00am-12:00pm at Montana WILD in Helena.
  - 3. Vice Chair Lawler: Encourage all to go to end of service events as they are great opportunities to learn about the service provided to Montana and the impact on the members.
- iv. ServeMontana Symposium, March 11-13, 2026
  - 1. Please consider submitting a breakout proposal. More information is coming soon.
    - a. Commissioner Strissel: Offered to submit a session proposal.
- d. ServeMontana Updates – Anastasia Matheison, Specialist
  - i. Youth Serve Montana Scholarships – updates
    - 1. There will be 90 scholarships at \$1,500. The application will open the first week of December. The YSMS is made possible in partnership with Reach Higher Montana and Montana Campus Network for Civic Engagement.

**IV. 215p New Business, Vice Chair Lawler**

- a. AmeriCorps Grant Review Workgroup formation - *action item*
  - i. One continuation applicant (JFM), and one recompetete applicant (BSWC)
    - 1. Commissioner Workgroup: Nelson, Coleman, and Risberg
- b. Threshold of Life Workgroup – members
  - i. Director Sadowski invited new commissioners to join this workgroup which will be refreshed in June. A community member with a direct connection to eye donation, will also be joining the workgroup.

**V. 230p Public Comment**

- a. Harley Ternes: JFM is one of the longest standing legal services programs in the country. Members are placed across the state and are often interested in continuing public service throughout their career, with many going to law school after service. Currently recruiting for one member in Havre.
- b. Angela Davis: Community Health Corps Montana through MSU will start in January. We are currently recruiting host sites and members. CHC is focused on mental health, social determinants of health, and is primarily serving in rural and tribal communities.

**VI. 245p Adjournment, Chair Lawler**

***Next regularly scheduled Commission meeting is Thursday, December 11, 2025...Thank you!***