



Commission Meeting Minutes

June 10, 2021

Montana State Capitol

Room 152

1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m.

AGENDA	DIALOGUE	ACTION ITEMS
<p>I. Chairman Myhre called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm</p>		
<p>a. Roll Call</p>	<p><u>Commission Members Present:</u> Chairman Kevin Myhre, Vice Chair Rebecca Harbage; Commissioners Pam Carbonari, Karen Moses, Kim Lloyd, Juanita Vero*, Hadley Jackson*, Jim Larson*, Heather Margolis*, Kevin Sylvester*, Doug Mitchell*, Morgan Hubbard*, Amy Busch*</p> <p><u>Commission Members Excused:</u> Commissioners Karin Olsen-Billings, Donovan Hawk, Eric Strauss</p> <p><u>Guests and Staff Present:</u> <i>Guests:</i> Anne Pichette*, Montana Business Assistance Connection; Jono*, Montana Conservation Corps</p> <p><i>OCS Staff:</i> Sarah R. Sadowski, Executive Director; Joe Naiman-Sessions, Grants Manager; Sheree Isola, Fiscal Officer; Kristina Jordan, Training and Technical Assistance Specialist; Alyssa Mathieu and Milly Allen, Program Specialists</p> <p>*Indicates individuals who attended via phone.</p>	
<p>b. Opening Activity</p>	<p>Director Sadowski led the Commission and OCS staff in an opening activity.</p>	
<p>c. Approval of March 10, 2021 Minutes</p>	<p>Commissioner Larson moved to approve minutes, seconding by Commissioner Vero. Minutes approved through acclamation.</p>	<p>March 10, 2021 Minutes approved</p>
<p>d. Announcements</p>	<p>Director Sadowski announced that the Commission will continue to meet in person.</p>	

<p>e. Commissioner Reports, Updates, and Volunteer Engagements</p>	<p>Commissioner Moses says that MSU-Billings Foundation is working hard on scholarships and has a new chancellor and athletic director. There will be a ribbon cutting for the new Yellowstone Health building soon.</p> <p>Commissioner Carbonari announced that Montana Food Bank Network closed on their building, thanks to the generosity of Montanans. They handed out 3.3 million pounds of food in 2020, and 1.9 million in 2019. They have engaged an architect and mechanical engineers to repair and upgrade the building and look to becoming a distribution center.</p> <p>Commissioner Jackson states that Soft Landing Missoula is welcoming new refugee families to town.</p> <p>Vice Chair Harbage, who also serves on City of Helena Zoning Commission, informed attendees that city boards across Montana have positions to fill and would love to have service minded folks join.</p>	
<p>II. AmeriCorps the Agency Regional Office Update</p>	<p>Commissioner Busch anticipates American Rescue Plan dollars to be announced soon. The Agency is working on its national 5-year strategic plan. They are incorporating everyone's feedback from May into this plan.</p> <p>AmeriCorps.gov is going through updates to reflect feedback from grantees, making it more accessible and user-friendly. Updates will continue and the Agency appreciates your patience.</p> <p>The Mountain Region is hiring portfolio managers and other positions, more details in the coming weeks.</p> <p>AmeriCorps VISTA is developing new projects and changing existing programs, expanding in new areas and directions to address critical needs. VISTA Summer Associates recruitment is going on now; listings are live on americorps.gov. They will bring on 17 full time VISTAs in June for a total of 43 VISTAS when combined with Summer Associates.</p> <p>Area 2 RSVP out of Roundup was awarded an expansion grant to include Wheatland County. Commissioner Busch is working with the director there as this expansion gets off the ground.</p>	
<p>III. Governor's Office of Community Service Update</p>		
<p>a. ServeMontana</p>		

i. Office & General Updates

Director Sadowski introduced Joe Naiman-Sessions as OCS's new Grant Manager; his presence has made a great difference at OCS, and the team at OCS is now fully staffed.

The State of Montana is running a return to work plan, bringing 50% back into the office. OCS has 5 of 6 people in the office, safely exceeding that goal. Our building will be open to the public soon, and folks are invited to visit.

OCS has completed the FFY2021 AmeriCorps Grant cycle, including review of two Planning Grants on May 19. Thank you to Commissioners Carbonari and Margolis for serving on the Grant Review Workgroup!

Some Commissioners will complete their term July 1. Director Sadowski has reached out to Lt. Governor Juras, and Commissioners whose term ends in July will be hearing from the Boards and Appointments Advisor. Moving forward OCS will work to strengthen the Commission as much as possible, e.g. through training and field mobilization with travel cost support. It means a lot to AmeriCorps programs and members when Commissioners engage with them.

In May OCS participated in online input for the Agency Strategic Plan process. Where appropriate, OCS will the 2022-2024 State Service Plan with the Agency Plan as much as possible and are excited to grow the human services portion of our service portfolio. Workforce development, homelessness, mental health, and suicide prevention are priorities.

The State Service Plan is under way with the launch of the Community Needs Assessment. OCS will synthesize community priorities from the Community Needs Assessment, Agency Focus Areas, and Governor Gianforte's priorities into the State Service Plan. After a draft is created, we will send it to the Governor for approval.

<p><i>ii. Newsletter</i></p>	<p>Chair Myrhe and Vice Chair Harbage asked OCS to add all the Commissioners to the newsletter subscription list, and they have been added.</p> <p>Milly Allen said OCS would like to share words about the importance of service from Commissioners and asks that Commissioners please reach out with inspirational national and community service stories that can be included in the newsletter and, on social media.</p>	
<p><i>iii. State Service Plan, Community Needs Assessment</i></p>	<p>Milly Allen reports that the Community Needs Assessment just broke 150 responses, bringing us to 15% of our goal of 1,000 responses. Hearing from Montanans is crucial to creating a responsive State Service Plan. OCS needs help sharing the Community Needs Assessment and asks that Commissioners take it themselves and share it with their networks.</p> <p>The Community Needs Assessment can be accessed at serve.mt.gov; a popup with a big eared deer connects people to the anonymous survey.</p>	
<p><i>iv. Gift of Life Awards</i></p>	<p>Alyssa Mathieu says OCS enjoyed the annual Gift of Life event virtually on April 29. Governor Gianforte shared a video message for families. The Gift of Life Awards are in partnership with LifeCenter Northwest, and we look forward to hosting this event in person in April 2022.</p>	
<p><i>v. ServeMontana Awards</i></p>	<p>The biggest upcoming event for OCS is the ServeMontana Awards. Alyssa thanks the Commissioners who served on the ServeMontana Awards Workgroup. The Governor approved the workgroup's selection of five individuals and two organizations. The Commission is invited to attend the event on June 25. Alyssa will send an email with detailed information.</p>	
<p>b. Financial</p>	<p>Sheree Isola reports that our general fund was decreased by \$10,000. Next year we will have restored \$3,500 of that \$10,000.</p> <p>Commissioner Margolis asked if this was done across the board. Sheree said this was a decision made by Legislature and several agencies experienced budget cuts.</p>	
<p>c. AmeriCorps</p>		
<p><i>i. General Updates</i></p>	<p>Joe Naiman-Sessions is happy to be here at the table with the Commission, and OCS and looks forward to the upcoming program year.</p>	
<p><i>ii. Competitive Grants</i></p>	<p>Joe reports that Montana Conservation Corps was granted National Direct funding and in January 2022, will no longer be a subgrantee of OCS. This enables MCC to easily serve across state borders. To the best of our knowledge, they are the first national direct based in Montana.</p> <p>Montana State Parks AmeriCorps and Justice for Montanans were both funded competitively this year, freeing up formula funding.</p>	

<p><i>iii. Formula Grants</i></p>	<p>This year, OCS has \$763,856 in formula allocation. The Workgroup recommended expanding Richland County Communities in Action Corps to 27 MSY from 15; they have great ideas for filling those member slots and are securing new host sites. As a successful program focused on human services, this is the perfect time for them to expand.</p> <p>Two planning grants were received and recommended as well. Montana Business Assistance Connection seeks to plan workforce navigators/workforce development and Montana Association of Conservation Districts seeks to plan to improve soil health in rural and agricultural communities. OCS created placeholder grants (11.7 at \$16,300 cost per) to direct funds to existing programs; program directors were excited to hear that on yesterday's call.</p>	
<p><i>iv. Grant accessibility</i></p>	<p>Sheree Isola, Kristina Jordan, and Joe Naiman-Sessions attended America's Service Commissions' Grantmaking Bootcamp and came out of it with new ideas to make grants more accessible. OCS will develop and implement a planning grant concept paper that will be accepted year-round, ensuring we can help interested parties develop their idea.</p> <p>Joe is working with Kristina to put together pre-application training, which will cover topics like choosing the right stream of service and designing AmeriCorps programs.</p>	
<p><i>v. Accommodation Assessment Report</i></p>	<p>Kristina Jordan reported that the 13th annual Accommodation Assessment had 483 respondents as of June 10. The assessment asks members if requested accommodations were made available to them, and if those accommodations helped them fully participate in their programs.</p> <p>Fewer respondents were aware of accommodations available to them this year – only 58.2%. We think this may be due to online orientations and will work with program directors to increase awareness among members. Four respondents indicated they requested accommodation; 3 said it was provided and it helped them fully participate in their programs, and the fourth person answered N/A to this. Please reach out to Kristina with questions.</p>	
<p>IV. New Business</p>	<p>Chair Myrhe says that new commissioner orientation is October 7 or around then and encouraged current Commissioners and others to attend. It will be for about two hours with lunch provided, then the Commission meeting will begin at 1p.</p>	
<p>V. Public Comment</p>	<p>Jono McKinney, Montana Conservation Corps: After 27 years, MCC is now a National Direct program. Jono emphasizes this does not change MCC's standing or relationship here in Montana and looks forward to being partner with the Commission and is excited for flexibility to serve neighboring states.</p> <p>Chair Myrhe happy to have MCC in Lewistown next year and congratulates them on this</p>	

	<p>next chapter as an AmeriCorps program.</p> <p>Commissioner Moses welcomes OCS team and is happy they've been working mostly in person. Chair Myrhe happy to have full staff as well.</p>	
<p>VI. Adjourn Chair Myrhe adjourned meeting at 1:58 p.m.</p>	<p>The third quarterly Commission meeting is Thursday, October 7, 2021.</p>	

Governor's Office of Community Service

PO Box 200801

Helena, MT 59620

Phone: 406-444-9077

Email: serve@mt.gov

Website: <http://serve.mt.gov>

Commissioner Contact Information posted at www.serve.mt.gov