

AGENDA	DIALOGUE	ACTION ITEMS
I. Chair Harbage called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.		
a. Roll Call	<p><u>Commission Members Present:</u> Chair Rebecca Harbage, Vice Chair Morgan Hubbard*, Commissioners Thomas Risberg, Jim Larson, Karin Olsen Billings, Kelly Ackerman, Amy Busch*, Doug Mitchell*, Jim Swan*, and Juanita Vero*</p> <p><u>Commission Members Excused:</u> Commissioners Kevin Myhre, Karen Moses, Heather Margolis, and Eric Strauss</p> <p><u>Guests and Staff Present:</u> <i>Guests:</i> Dannette Fadness*, Montana Campus Compact; Harley Brown*, Justice for Montanans Project; Chris Manos*, Montana Business Assistance Connection; Adair Peach*, Rural Dynamics Inc.; Judy Douglas*, Missoula Aging Services <i>OCS Staff:</i> Director Sarah Sadowski, Grants Manager Joe Naiman-Sessions, Fiscal Manager Sheree Isola, Program Specialist Alyssa Mathieu, Training Specialist Kristina Jordan</p> <p>*Indicates Individuals attended via Zoom.</p>	
b. Opening Activity	Director Sadowski led the commission in donating a coat to One Warm Coat in the Capitol Rotunda. This is part of Governor Gianforte’s 12 Days of Giving. Some commissioners who could not attend the meeting in person have donated coats locally in their communities.	
c. Approval of October 7, 2021 Minutes	Commissioner Mitchell moved to approve the 10/7/2021 meeting minutes, seconded by Commissioner Swan. The motion was approved by acclamation.	October 7, 2021 Minutes approved
d. Announcements	Commissioner Ackerman shared National Wreaths Across America day is December 18, 2021. She asked for volunteers to come to the State Veterans Cemetery, Fort Harrison, at 9 a.m. on the 18 th to help lay wreaths. There are over 4,000 wreaths to place, to pay tribute to veterans and veteran families, https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/pages/18320	

<p>e. Commissioner Reports and Updates – Volunteer & OCS engagements</p>	<p>Commissioner Olsen Billings shared she attended the Montana State Parks AmeriCorps Close of Service event on 11/19/21, where she heard great stories from members in their presentations.</p> <p>Chair Harbage highlighted the Governor’s 12 Days of Giving and encouraged everyone to give back through service if donation is not feasible.</p>	
<p>II. Office of Regional Operations Update</p>	<p>Commissioner Busch shared updates from the Mountain Region Office of Regional Operations: The U.S. senate confirmed Michael Smith as CEO of AmeriCorps.</p> <p>The Mountain Region Office is adding a fourth subregion, two Senior Portfolio Managers, and two Associate Portfolio Managers. The office is also in the process of hiring a Regional Administrator.</p> <p>The FY2022 budget continuing resolution was extended to February 18, 2022, so a government shutdown was avoided last week.</p> <p>The AmeriCorps agency Five Year Strategic Plan is in its final stages and almost complete. It is aligned with the President’s Management Agenda, https://www.performance.gov/pma/ which was released last week. AmeriCorps will begin implementing the plan in 2022.</p> <p>One National Direct program in Montana applied for Public Health Corps funding. Grants are set to be awarded in spring of 2022.</p> <p>The AmeriCorps Seniors Demonstration Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity is now open. Commissioner Busch encouraged the Commission to share and amplify this opportunity in their communities, for all three AmeriCorps Seniors programs (Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program [RSVP]). AmeriCorps is looking for strong applicants to apply to open areas, such as Yellowstone County. Flathead, Lake, Mineral and Ravalli Counties are priority service areas for RSVP. The Demonstration Grants are unlike traditional AmeriCorps Seniors grants; this is a 2-year grant, with the first 6 months set aside for planning, and the remaining 18 months set for implementation. Thinking of specific needs programs could serve. This demonstration grant increases the threshold of participant eligibility to 400% poverty level. Commissioner Busch asked the Commission to share with organizations in their communities and reach out to Commissioner Busch with any leads or questions. The application deadline is February 3,</p>	

	<p>2022.</p> <p>The Mountain Region office had a call with VISTA programs earlier this week and discussed Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service planning. MLK Day is an important opportunity for VISTA to participate in direct service, instead of the indirect service they typically provide. The VISTA programs mentioned the statewide opportunities ServeMontana is coordinating.</p> <p>VISTA recruitment is underway, with many positions targeted to fill in January or February 2022. Commissioner Busch asked the Commission to please share this opportunity with potential candidates.</p> <p>VISTA Projects submitted applications to augment budgets using American Rescue Plan funds. Funds will be used to support pandemic recovery.</p> <p>Commissioner Olsen Billings asked for background information about the new AmeriCorps CEO Michael Smith, which Commissioner Busch shared. His original nomination was in June 2021, so AmeriCorps is excited his nomination has been approved. Learn about Michael Smith here: https://www.americorps.gov/newsroom/press-release/senate-confirms-michael-smith-new-amerikorps-ceo</p>	
III. Governor’s Office of Community Service Updates		
a. ServeMontana Update	Delivered by OCS Program Specialist Alyssa Mathieu.	
i. Youth ServeMontana Scholarships	<p>The Youth Serve Montana scholarship application form is open. Scholarships are offered in partnership with Montana Campus Compact and Reach Higher Montana. 83 scholarships of \$1,200 will be offered to graduating high school seniors who plan to attend a Montana Campus Compact Institute next fall. Students must complete at least 50 volunteer hours to be eligible. 8 applications have been submitted with 43 applications in draft form. The deadline to apply is January 31. Information is posted on the OCS website and is available as a poster. Alyssa asked the Commission to share this opportunity with their networks.</p> <p>https://serve.mt.gov/ServeMontana/youth-serve-montana-scholarships</p>	

<p>ii. ServeMontana Awards</p>	<p>The ServeMontana Awards nomination form is open, and OCS encourages each commissioner to submit a nomination. Awards will be presented to 2 organizations and 5 individuals next summer. Those individuals and organizations who serve in Montana or are themselves Montanans are eligible for an award. https://serve.mt.gov/ServeMontana/ Alyssa then asked Chair Harbage to form a Commission Workgroup. OCS requested five commissioners to serve on the ServeMontana Award Workgroup to read nominations, select winners, and participate in award ceremony in June.</p> <p>Chair Harbage called for workgroup volunteers. Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioners, Larson, Ackerman, Risberg, and Busch volunteered to participate in the ServeMontana Awards Workgroup.</p>	<p>Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioners Larson, Ackerman, Risberg, and Busch volunteered for the ServeMontana Awards Workgroup</p>
<p>iii. Commissioner Highlight – OCS Newsletter</p>	<p>Opportunity to be featured in the ServeMontana newsletter and highlight your work in your communities and motivations for serving on the Commission. Short, 4-5 questions and a photo, may be paired with commissioner engagement. Alyssa will send a follow up email with more information and a SurveyMonkey link.</p>	
<p>b. Financial Update</p>	<p>Delivered by OCS Fiscal Officer Sheree Isola.</p>	
<p>i. Financial Report</p>	<p>Commissioners should have received the report, Sheree can answer questions.</p>	
<p>ii. Honorarium End of Year Report</p>	<p>In 2021, \$950.00 in Honorarium payments was waived, \$300.00 was paid, and no action was taken on \$300.00. In 2020, \$850.00 in Honorarium payments was waived, \$150.00 was paid, and no action was taken on \$800.00. Compared with 2020, the Commission has managed Honorarium payments better in 2021.</p> <p>Commissioner Swan asked if he waived the honorarium already. Sheree asked that he send an email to waive his Honorarium if he wishes.</p> <p>Director Sadowski noted that the goal is \$0 in no actions taken. Honorarium dollars with no action taken could have been used as match for OCS grants. She invited the Commission to ask questions about Honorarium payments, so the dollars can be utilized better in the future.</p>	
<p>c. AmeriCorps Update</p>		
<p>i. Grants Update</p>	<p>Grants Manager Joe Naiman-Sessions provided the following grant updates:</p> <p>Competitive program American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) amendments have now been approved through both AmeriCorps the agency and the Interim Budget Committee and Governor’s Office at this time. We are working on amending and/or awarding those funds.</p>	

	<p>The Grant Review Workgroup met on November 17 and had good conversation about applicants. Competitive grants are due to the AmeriCorps agency by January 4. Once the grants are approved, we enter a grant clarification period from 12/10 - 12/15. During this time subrecipients can strengthen applications.</p> <p>Upcoming Program engagement opportunities at Orientations. The Big Sky Watershed Corps will orient new members on 1/19 – 21 in Bozeman. Montana State Parks AmeriCorps will orient new members virtually M-Th 1/24 to 2/4 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Montana Campus Compact AmeriCorps members will orient new members on 1/10 and 11 in Missoula.</p> <p>To receive staff feedback, the last day to submit Formula Grant concept papers is February 14. The Formula Notice of Funding Opportunity will be posted on March 21. Applications due April 29.</p> <p>Joe asked the Commission to save the date for spring Grant Review Workgroup, which will meet on May 18 to discuss Formula Grant applications. Director Sadowski is conducting outreach to new applicants for both operation and planning grants. OCS will have two opportunities in spring 2022, for planning and operating grant applications. In addition to the annual allocation there is just over \$1 million ARP formula funding to be expended in next 3 years, which presents OCS with the opportunity to grow current programs and/or fund new ones. Joe then asked the Commission to share these Formula grant opportunities with organizations that could successfully use AmeriCorps as a resource to meet a need.</p>	
<p>ii. MLK National Day of Service</p>	<p>Training Specialist Kristina Jordan delivered the following MLK Day of Service Updates:</p> <p>MLK Day of Service is January 17, 2022. OCS has engaged AmeriCorps Seniors and AmeriCorps State staff and members in a planning group, to foster collaboration among streams of service in Montana, and plan service activities in honor of Dr. King. There are a variety of service activity options, such as the Montana Campus Compact Read for Peace event, or some other service project that meets a need within a community. The planning group will meet next on 12/15 to share what service activity they will lead or participate in. OCS will share engagement and service opportunities with the Commission. Activities will occur on or near January 17, depending on the activity.</p> <p>OCS is working to offer a Mini-Grant, to support purchase or rental of supplies, venues, food, etc. for service activities.</p>	

	<p>Chair Harbage shared that she discussed MLK Day of Service with Vice Chair Hubbard and Director Sadowski and encouraged the Commission to become more involved with this event. https://serve.mt.gov/americorps/days-of-service</p> <p>From Amy Busch in the chat: A big shoutout to Sarah and staff for your extra efforts to join all streams of service, including FGP, SCP and RSVP in MLK Day of Service planning and participation. THANK YOU!</p>	
<p>iii. Roberts Rules of Order Commission Training</p>	<p>Training Specialist Kristina Jordan delivered the following Roberts Rules of Order Training Update:</p> <p>To strengthen the competency of the Commission, OCS is offering a Roberts Rules of Order training to members of the Commission and AmeriCorps State program staff. This session will be led by Sara Rinfret, acting Dean of the Department of Public Administration and Policy at the University of Montana. Rinfret has served as Parliamentarian for the UM Faculty Senate, and is well versed in parliamentary procedure, particularly Roberts Rules of Order.</p> <p>OCS is currently holding January 12 and January 13 for this training, which would start at 11 a.m. and end at 12:30 p.m. The OCS preferred date is January 13. Kristina informed Chair Harbage OCS would like to select the date during this meeting.</p> <p>Chair Harbage asked the Commission for their opinions on training date. Vice Chair Hubbard and Commissioner Risberg did not have a preference, Commissioner Olsen Billings preferred January 12, and Commissioner Ackerman preferred January 13. Chair Harbage asked for any objections to January 13, to which there were none. She then noted 1/13 as the date of the training.</p>	
<p>iv. ServeMontana Symposium Update</p>	<p>Training Specialist Kristina Jordan provided ServeMontana Symposium Updates:</p> <p>Kristina thanked the Commission for saving the dates of the 2022 ServeMontana Symposium, March 9-11. The 2022 theme is “Montana AmeriCorps: Service on Common Ground.” OCS chose this theme due to the divided nature of our world, bringing the focus back to service, and a reminder that service is the common ground we will all share at the ServeMontana Symposium. This was also inspired by the line of the AmeriCorps pledge, “faced with conflict, I will seek common ground.” Program Specialist Alyssa Mathieu shared the logo and a brief explanation of the design.</p>	

	<p>Kristina shared that OCS has engaged Laura Nowlin (Musselshell Watershed Coalition) as the Rural Keynote speaker, Shane Doyle (Native Nexus) as the Tribal Keynote speaker, and Shannon Stober (Verve Exchange) as an opening keynote speaker, as she is not available to deliver a closing keynote. OCS is seeking a closing keynote speaker and will share more information in the future.</p> <p>The symposium will be in-person in Helena, at Carroll College. OCS intends to offer a limited virtual component using the Whova platform, which was used to host the virtual symposium in 2021. The virtual option is for individuals requesting accommodation or who feel unsafe attending in-person.</p> <p>The ServeMontana Symposium Planning Committee has met twice, and committee members include AmeriCorps State, National, and VISTA staff and AmeriCorps members, and one alum. They are an engaged group and OCS is grateful for their participation. The next meeting of the Planning Committee will take place on December 16.</p> <p>Kristina then reminded the Commission that the Call for Breakout Session Proposals is open, and Director Sadowski sent the announcement via email. She asked the Commission to please share the Call for Proposals with their networks and consider submitting a proposal if to present to AmeriCorps members as a Commissioner.</p> <p>https://serve.mt.gov/ServeMontana/servemontana-symposium</p>	
<p>IV. New Business- Chair Harbage</p>		
<p>a. AmeriCorps Grant Review Workgroup Recommendation – <i>action item</i></p>	<p>Commissioner Risberg spoke to the hard work grant applicants have done and continue to accomplish. He noted the spirit of service is alive and well, and then explained the recommendation that programs could increase their cost per MSY to \$21,600. The cost of living in Montana has gone up substantially, and OCS and the Grant Review Workgroup want grantees to have the funds to be “Mission Capable.” Commissioner Risberg noted the application review process was very robust. He emphasized this increased request is allowable, if grantees can sustain match against increased funds.</p> <p>Chair Harbage asked if OCS or the Commission could help find match resources. Director Sadowski responded yes and noted some programs may chose not to increase their Cost per MSY at this time (depending on grant type). Match is often generated by host sites. It is a challenging task and OCS is happy to support mechanisms to provide housing for members. There is limited safe, affordable housing available, but there are innovative ways to support member housing. OCS is working to build resources. Additionally, some</p>	<p>Funding recommendation approved, 2:19 p.m.</p>

	<p>programs are facing recruitment challenges. Director Sadowski then asked the Commission to please share the opportunity to support AmeriCorps member housing with property owners in and around their communities. Richland County Health Department has partnered with their area public housing to provide housing for members in Sidney. OCS will find ways to recognize landlords, building owners, and alums for providing housing to AmeriCorps members.</p> <p>Comment in chat: Commissioner Mitchell: I wonder if you might find some willing partners through the Housing Division at the Montana Department of Commerce. As you know, they work with landlords across the state.</p> <p>Grants Manager Naiman-Sessions noted there is no specific required match for fixed award grants, and therefore those applicants can request more without having to match it. There is a mechanism in the grant Notice of Funding Opportunity called a “cash match replacement” in which cost reimbursement grants can request federal dollars to be represented on the grantee share of their grant. There has always been a match waiver request opportunity as well should a subrecipient need it once awarded.</p> <p>Commissioner Swan thanked Commissioner Risberg for reporting to the Commission on behalf of the Grant Review workgroup. He agreed it was a valuable learning experience and he was impressed by programs and the flow of the workgroup session. He then thanked the applicants.</p> <p>Commissioner Larson moved to approve the funding recommendation, seconded by Vice Chair Hubbard. The funding recommendation was approved by acclamation.</p>	
<p>b. Commissioner Honarium</p>	<p>Director Sadowski introduced the item as new business, no action at this time. The goal is to bring a proposal to the commission for action in early 2022. Montana Community Service Act, https://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/title_0900/chapter_0140/part_0010/sections_index.html Section 90-14-104 (6) states: Commission members are entitled to payment and reimbursement as provided in 2-15-122(5), https://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/title_0020/chapter_0150/part_0010/section_0220/0020-0150-0010-0220.html MCA 2-15-122 (5)(a) states: Unless an advisory council member is a full-time salaried officer or employee of this state or of any political subdivision of this state, the member is entitled to be paid in an amount to be determined by the department head, not to exceed \$50 for each day in which the member is actually and necessarily engaged in</p>	

	<p>the performance of council duties and to be reimbursed for travel expenses, as provided for in 2-18-501 through 2-18-503, incurred while in the performance of council duties. The maximum daily pay rate must be adjusted for inflation annually by multiplying the base income of \$50 by the ratio of the PCE for the second quarter of the previous year to the PCE for the second quarter of 1995 and rounding the product to the nearest whole dollar amount.</p> <p>Grants Manager Naiman-Sessions asked if there were any volunteers on the Commission who could help OCS on this. Commissioner Larson offered.</p> <p>Chair Harbage shared that in discussions with Vice Chair Hubbard and Director Sadowski, the goal of this process and eventual proposal is to determine for what events the Honorarium will be available and the methodology for adjustments to the amount.</p> <p>Commissioner Mitchell asked for clarification of the note that each individual commission has been asked to interpret and implement an honorarium policy that fits the commission. Director Sadowski responded yes, that is correct.</p>	
V. Public Comment		
a. Director Sadowski	<p>Director Sadowski shared the State Service plan is hot off the press, and OCS will have them available as hard copies in the Governor’s office and will post on the OCS website soon. OCS will also mail hard copies to Commissioners. Director Sadowski reaffirmed that she is excited to share and implement this plan.</p>	
VI. Adjourn Chair Harbage adjourned meeting at 2:32 p.m.	<p>The regularly scheduled first quarter meeting is Wednesday, March 9, 2022 at 10a.m., at Carroll College, the same day as the 13th annual ServeMontana Symposium begins.</p>	

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