



Serve New Mexico Commission Board Meeting
March 18, 2022

Commissioners in Attendance

Bernadine Dallago, Chair
Barbara Armijo, PED designee
Erin Atkins (Proxy given to Ryan Steinmetz)
Alicia Benavidez
Jorja Armijo Brasher
Chanelle Delgado (Proxy given to Alice Perez)
Charles “Hank” Humiston
Alice Garza
Elaine Graff
Nancy Hughes
Laura Jagles
Justin MacDonald (Proxy given to Alice Perez)
Josefina Mata
Matthew Montoya
David Medrano
Alice Perez
Ryan Steinmetz

Staff and AmeriCorps Representatives

Zanquetta Gray, Senior Portfolio Manager, AmeriCorps Mountain Region
Dana Howard, Program Officer
Sam Sokolove, Executive Director

Guests

Chad Driscoll, Training & Technical Manager, America’s Service Commissions

Chair Dallago convened the meeting at 1:00 p.m., which was held on-line via Zoom due to state requirements on public gatherings during the COVID19 pandemic.

I. Approval of December 17, 2021 Minutes

Commissioner Graff moved to accept; Commissioner Mata seconded. December 17, 2021 minutes were approved with no objections or abstentions.

II. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. Accelerator Report

Chad Driscoll, Training & Technical Assistance Manager for America's Service Commissions (ASC), presented on the ASC Commission Strengths Accelerator program, a voluntary program for state service commissions interested in continuous improvement. America's Service Commissions visited Serve NM for approximately three days on November 2-4, 2021. The team of visitors included one ASC staff member, one fiscal grants consultant, and three commission staff peer volunteers. The team reviewed documentation provided by Serve NM in advance and facilitated discussion with staff using the developed Strengths Accelerator framework, and presented a final report compiling feedback from the participating team members on the areas of strength, areas for continuous improvement and priorities for Serve NM.

Recommended Commission Priorities for the Next 0-6 months include:

- Hiring a full-time fiscal officer that is 100% dedicated to Serve New Mexico team. This can be paid for out of the Commission Support Grant ARP funding or other funding available and in the future, collect up to 2% admin fee on subgrants, as allowed, to add to budget to support this capacity. ASC understands this recommendation is already in process.
- Review staff position classifications and assess the process to reclassify and adjust salary as applicable. ASC understands this recommendation is already in process.
- Create comprehensive compliance, monitoring, and reporting procedure manuals for internal commission operations. Having written procedures would help with staff transitions and onboarding.
- Schedule regular meetings (i.e., monthly) between Sam, and another Serve New Mexico team members as appropriate, and state agency leadership and fiscal or budget department to provide updates on work, staff efforts, and track successes and challenges as well as answer or address questions and concerns, and update on grant balances and projections.

In addressing Commissioners, Mr. Driscoll noted that the commission is balanced with respect to race, ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, disability characteristics, and geography of the state. There is a functional board structure with by-laws and working committees. This also includes a State Service Plan Committee. Commissioners can engage with the work of the commission in the grantmaking process and by conducting outreach. Commissioner roles and responsibilities are defined. Mr. Driscoll encouraged Commissioners to conduct community outreach to promote AmeriCorps and engage in legislative outreach. The goal is for commissioners to be "emissaries and legislative ambassadors," with a suggestion that an assessment process be conducted to understand their strengths and abilities regarding furthering Commission work. This can be done through a survey on an annual basis, or when newly appointed. Commissioner Benavidez expressed her support of surveying Commissioners to determine how that can best assist the plans.

Subgrantee reports

Program Officer Dana Howard presented on her monitoring of subgrantees Roadrunner Food Bank and Mandy's Farm, which are considered lower risk as the result of their operational status within the Commission portfolio. Ms. Howard said that annual monitoring for subgrantee Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (RMYC) would begin later in the month. Following up from his announcement at the December 18, 2021 Commission Board meeting that he had been subpoenaed by the AmeriCorps Office of the Inspector General (OIG) in regard to potential member fraud issues with subgrantee Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, Mr. Sokolove announced that OIG had notified the Commission that they have declined further investigatory activities around RMYC, and had turned over any further questions to the AmeriCorps agency. Mr. Sokolove informed the Commission that RMYC had been placed on formal probation by the Commission in order to cure administrative issues associated with their AmeriCorps program.

Program Officer Bradley Knipper discussed his monitoring of NISN Indigenous Educator's Corps, EcoServants and Boys and Girls Club of Central New Mexico, which has also been placed under probation to resolve a number of administrative issues associated with member onboarding largely attributable to an unexpected change of the program's management. Mr. Knipper said the subgrantee has been responsive to remediating these issues. Mr. Kipper shared that member recruitment has been down throughout the Commission portfolio.

AmeriCorps Agency Update

Zanquetta Gray, Senior Portfolio Manager, AmeriCorps Mountain Region, began her remarks by acknowledging the Accelerator Report and thanking the Commissioners for their service. She noted that AmeriCorps week was an opportunity to celebrate and recognize National Service throughout New Mexico. Ms. Gray called the Commission's attention to the following:

- Public Health AmeriCorps: four applicants pending funding decision;
- Annual Tribal Competition (May 4th Deadline);
- AmeriCorps Seniors Expansion just wrapped up
- AmeriCorps VISTA Concept paper March 23 deadline; next round to follow
- Jill Sears has accepted the position as Regional Administrator

Mr. Sokolove announced that Phoebe Suina has resigned from the Commission at the request of the Governor in order to accept an appointment to the Interstate Streams Commission.

Adjournment

Commissioner Benavidez moved to adjourn; Commissioner Graff seconded. Meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Next Commission Meeting: Friday, May 27, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. (Annual Business Meeting)