



# ServeNebraska Commission

## Board Meeting Minutes

### April 29, 2010

<b>NOTE TAKER:</b> Nancy Hock	<b>LOCATION:</b> University of Nebraska Foundation – Omaha 2285 South 67 <sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200	<b>DATE:</b> 4/29/2010	<b>TIME:</b> 12:40 p.m.	<b>DURATION:</b> 2.5 hours
<b>PURPOSE:</b> Quarterly Commission Meeting	<b>ATTENDEES:</b> <b>Commissioners Present:</b> Nancy Faber, Sally Ganem, Jessica Hilderbrand, Barry Kriha, Jamie Moore, Gerry Osborn, Susan Schnase, Carol Speicher, Nancy Wang, Rose White, Lois Wine <b>Commissioner(s) Present via Teleconference:</b> Lorinda Brown <b>Staff Present:</b> Barbara Thomas, Greg Donovan, Janet Schmidt, and Nancy Hock			

**PROGRAM – AmeriCorps Program from YouthBuild at Goodwill Industries (Omaha)**

**SPEAKERS:** CHAD GARVIS, AMERICORPS PROGRAM COORDINATOR  
DOMINIC LEE AND ISAAC CRIBBS, AMERICORPS MEMBERS

YouthBuild Omaha is a program for connecting young adults between the ages of 16-24 years who do not have a high school diploma with proper services and support once they leave the program. In the 24-month program, participants will spend time in the classroom earning their GED while working with Habitat for Humanity to learn construction skills and build homes for low-income families. Members also receive counseling services from Heartland Family Services, and tools and winter coats through the Work Force Investment Act. Through YouthBuild Grant members must complete 675 hours of community service along with attaining an academic scholarship. This is a great resume builder as someone who wants to give back to the community. There is a need to grow in a controlled fashion. Funding obstacles include the living allowance, children, and an opportunity to “earn and learn”. These things are vital to the success of the program and without AmeriCorps; it would have been a much harder hill to climb. Commissioners congratulated them on their accomplishments.

Dominic and Isaac commented on why they enrolled in the program and what it means to them:

- Personal responsibility
- GED
- Construction site is a good opportunity to get out of the classroom environment
- Seeking employment and college for auto mechanic opportunities in Ames, Iowa
- Excellent instructors enable you to ‘win’
- A desire to get out of the violent environment in north Omaha
- Financial aid to attend a trade school and become a realtor

**BUSINESS MEETING – CALL TO ORDER**

The business meeting was called to order at 12:55 p.m. by Barry Kriha, Chair of the Commission.

**ROLL CALL – DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

Roll call was taken by Janet Schmidt to determine a quorum of 10 members as required by the Bylaws. Twelve (12) Commissioners were in attendance and there is a quorum.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING – January 28, 2010**

- Motion #1:** Gerry Osborn  
To approve the January 28, 2010, minutes as written.
- Second:** Sally Ganem
- Vote:** Yes – 12. Motion carried unanimously.

---

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING – April 29, 2010

- Motion #2:** Nancy Faber  
To approve the April 29, 2010, business meeting agenda as written.  
**Second:** Susan Schnase  
**Vote:** Yes – 12. Motion carried unanimously
- 

## PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments.

---

## ACTION ITEMS

### 1. 2010 Commission Operations and Administration Budget

- Handouts:
  1. *2010 ServeNebraska Operations/Program Administration Budget for January 1 – December 31, 2010*
  2. *ServeNebraska Commission Administrative Minimum Alternative Match Because of Severe Hardship*
- Instead of the required 1/1 Administrative Grant Match (\$250,000), we have been approved to meet a match of \$130,000 for 2010. Staff took a different approach to justify our request for a match waiver since we haven't lost state appropriation support, we didn't have it to start. Our rationale, the data used and the lack of state funding was presented to support the request. CNCS granted the waiver with a slightly higher minimum match than required by federal statute. Instead of the required \$75,000 when a waiver is granted, CNCS required that Nebraska provide \$130,000 which is the level we have been able to match in the past.
- Discussion followed about the timeframe for filling two vacant staff positions. Barb indicated staff were wanting to have them filled by July and develop the third new position to be approved and filled shortly after that.
- The Citizen Corps grant funding have been zeroed out on the 2010 budget with the return of that program to NEMA's management February 12, 2010.
- Barb explained that CNCS reduced the PDAT Grant allocation by \$12,000 so significant reworking of that budget was done.
- The Disability Program was increased by \$7,000 and \$13,000 in supplemental funding was requested.

- Motion # 3** Nancy Faber  
To approve the Operations and Administration Budget as revised and submitted to the Commission today.  
**Second:** Lois Wine  
**Vote:** YES – 11 (Commissioner Schnase stepped out of the room)

### 2. Request to add a Senior Corps Program Director to Commission Board as an Ex-Officio non-voting member to serve a 3-year term with the Senior Corps Program Directors Association taking the lead to name candidate for the position each term.

- Commission focus has always been to have close partnerships with other national service in Nebraska so this addition of a Senior Corps rep would help. Commissioner Osborn stated that it would be a good idea.
- The Senior Corps member would start with the July, 2010 Commission meeting at the same time as the other newly appointed Commissioners.

- Motion #4** Gerry Osborn  
To approve adding a Senior Corps Program Director to Commission Board as an Ex-Officio non-voting member with a 3-year term and the Senior Corps Program Directors deciding who would be the new Commissioner for each term.  
**Second:** Sally Ganem  
**Vote:** YES – 12
- 

## REPORTS

### 1. Executive Director's Report (Executive Director, Barbara Thomas)

#### a. Emerging Partnerships/New Grants-Programming

- *Partnering with ServeMinnesota – US Dept of Education Invest in Innovation Grant*  
ServeNebraska was invited to partner with ServeMinnesota as were 7-8 other State Commissions on a \$20 million grant with the US Department of Education to replicate ServeMinnesota's very successful *Reading Corps* AmeriCorps program to improve early literacy and reading outcomes for "age 3 to grade 3" students. The program works primarily with children who are currently on a path of failing to achieve reading proficiency.

- Barb showed a video Introduction to the SM Reading Corps program which is the exclusive focus of AmeriCorps in Minnesota.
  - It is a highly competitive national application process that requires replication of successful evidence based programs.
  - The SM grant application proposes a 5-year project for \$20M that will begin with replicating the RC program in Texas and then, through a RFQ process that selects 3-4 other states, they will collaborate to replicate the program in more rural states.
  - Nebraska would look a applying for a CNCS Competitive AC Grant to sustain the program the requires Match from private sources.
  - MOAC – Metro Omaha (Susan Schnase) and Sherwood Corporation (Sally Ganem) would be interested in support and funding for this young age group; propose to firm up partnerships to have an arsenal of supporters we can utilize in September to prepare for our response to the RFQ.
  - Susie Buffet has a presence on the national scene; look for others who are players at that level.
  - If selected as a partner state by SM, an early 2011 roll-out would be expected. The “3i” Grant has a graduated Match (in-kind and Match).
  - If this application is funded, there would be one year of planning to develop the Nebraska partnerships with schools that want to participate and the private funders. Staff has developed early positive support from Bright Futures and the Douglas-Sarpy County Learning Community in Omaha and the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation in Lincoln.
  - It would be good to develop the groundwork even if the application is not funded.
  - This is a tremendous opportunity to replicate such a well respected, evidence based program.
  - Timing is perfect with Title I funding is going away.
  - P-16 Committee: representatives from early childhood through college (Sally Ganem) University and NE Dept of Ed resources
  - Legislature, Governor, Department of Education, all working together – united effort.
  - A Douglas-Sarpy County Learning Community rep contacted Barb early in 2010 stating they were ready to start an AmeriCorps Program quickly.
- Partnering with United Ways and Volunteer Centers – CNCS Volunteer Generation Fund Grant  
ServeNebraska will apply for a CNCS Volunteer Generation Funding. The Corporation expects to award grants of approximately \$75,000 or more under this Notice.
    - The grant requires a match which we'll have to get from the current and new Volunteer Centers we work with. Jamie Moore has committed some match resources.
    - Results of this competition will be made public by the end of August 2010.
    - Applications are due May 18, 2010; the Commission sent a Letter of Intent to apply in mid April.
    - The current 3 Nebraska Volunteer Centers are supportive and will provide a Letter of Support.
    - The purpose of the Nebraska grant application is to develop new centers in rural Nebraska and build a statewide database for any volunteer center and other organization to upload their volunteer data.
    - The model for developing a new rural volunteer center will be based on the Connect Columbus model. The director, Denise Kollath has volunteered to provide training based on their center development processes.

**b. Commissioner Training Opportunities**

Because of our unique situation in this year's budget and the staff vacancies, there are funds to support sending commissioners to an out-of-state Commissioner training. A chart was distributed at the meeting for each commissioner to sign-up indicating a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> priority for each of the trainings identified below:

- North Central Cluster Commission/Commissioner Meeting at the NCCC Campus (Vinton, IA) – July 12-13
- CNCS Commissioner Institute (Washington, D.C.) – September 13-15
- Multi-State Commissioner Training (Little Rock, AR) – September 28-30

More commissioners will be able to travel to the regional trainings than to the national institute

**c. Commissioner Recruiting**

- New Applicants: Barb reported that we have five excellent applicants for Commissioner that includes persons who can fill some of our vacant required categories. This year's candidates expand representation further west: 1 from Gering, 1 from Grand Island, 1 from Columbus, and 2 from Omaha.
- Current Commissioner's terms are ending for Susan Cook, Mike Kissler, Curt Krueger, Rick Nation, Carol Speicher, and Nancy Wang. Susan Cook and Carol Speicher have requested reappointment. Barb will provide that information to the Governor's office.
- A three-year commissioner attendance summary was provided to the commissioners. After discussion it was the consensus that attendance at 100% of the meetings is the minimum expectation for serving as a Commissioner.

**d. AmeriCorps Week – May 9 – 15, 2010**

Barb shared that the Commission's AmeriCorps Week event is a diversity training. All Commissioners are invited to attend the celebration of National Service training event Tuesday, May 11, at the Center for People in Need in Lincoln.

**e. New ServeNebraska Publications**

- 2007-2008-2009 Annual Report - completed and shows a historical record of the Commission accomplishments for the last three years. It is impressive and we should make sure it's on the website.
- Brochure – if we get one or both of the new grants, we will be able to add another card back into the brochure where Citizen Corps used to be.

**f. Citizen Corps Grant Program Transition to NEMA**

- The Citizen Corps program was officially returned to NEMA's management on February 12, 2010. NEMA is actively managing all 2010 grants and funds for all programs. Total management was transferred to NEMA and staff is finishing reconciliation of past billings, Governor's Conference scholarship costs, and a few other minor obligations. All other grant related issues are now being managed by NEMA.

**2. Executive Committee – Annual Executive Committee Meeting with the Governor (Commissioners Gerry Osborn/Jamie Moore)**

- Commissioners Gerry Osborn and Jamie Moore represented the Executive Committee at the annual meeting with the Governor on April 26, 2010. Jamie commented to the Governor on how meaningful the meeting was for the Commission and how much we appreciate the First Lady's active involvement as a team member. The Governor was provided with copies of the annual report and the brochure. Commissioners Osborn and Moore highlighted the Commission's accomplishments last year and our desire to be #1 in the volunteer rankings with better methods of tracking information. They shared with the Governor that our needs still include more funding, more staff, and, primarily, a larger office location.

**3. Organizational Development Committee (Chair, Jamie Moore)**

- The Committee reviewed the Commission Matrix – some commissioners have not yet completed the form.
  - In looking at constituencies we represent, we still need a local labor and local government representative.
  - Although we have a current Youth Commissioner, she has never attended a meeting since her appointment. We would like an active and engaged youth commissioner; a discussion followed about ways for that person to be a participating member of the Commission.
  - One idea is to have current Commissioners mentor the Youth Commissioner and/or bring that person to the meeting and take them home.
- Three Commissioners of our current commissioners will leave the commissioner and the officers will change. Awards and recognition will be done at the July meeting as well as introducing the new appointees.
- The Committee reviewed the members' attendance report for the last three years. A few meetings have not had a quorum and without that, we cannot conduct business. A reminder was made that the Bylaws, Section 3 state that it is expected that commissioners come to the meetings; if you cannot come, let someone know; failure to comply could cause a review by the committee and **requested resignation**. The commissioners want to be more proactive at keeping track of the attendance and recommended:
  - Staff will draft a letter about importance of attendance.
  - Depending on their attendance statistics, different letters will be distributed.
- Fall Planning Retreat
  - Scheduled for Thursday, October 28<sup>th</sup>.
  - With so many new Commissioners, we need to do something extra for the group to come together to form a team and do more thorough work on the strategic plan, the state service plan and restructuring/redesigning the commission board's work.
  - A longer period of possibly a day and a half. The Committee is asking Commissioners to participate on Wednesday and Thursday with an overnight stay at a facility where team building activities can be included the first evening. Commitment is needed for attendance with 100% participation.
  - The Lied Conference Center in Nebraska City is the best location but it is not available on our usual Thursday meeting date.
  - There are other locations we could select such as the Leadership facility near Aurora, Benedictine facility near Schuyler, Platte River State Park and Mahoney State Park; any other options are welcome.
  - A Retreat Planning Committee has been appointed to work on this activity – others are welcome to volunteer. A professional facilitator will be secured. The planning retreat will focus on "how the board is structured" and does this structure enable us to do the work we need to get done? If no, restructure.

- Planning vision - blue sky thinking; need to keep in mind where we want to be in five years, what do we want to accomplish?
- We also need to conduct a short Business meeting.
- Staff will distribute an invitation.
- **Group Census: Agreement for a 2-day meeting and to stay to finish our work.**
- **Group Census: Propose October 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> depending on Commission participation.**
- For quarterly meetings, and with technology today, we could have the meeting anywhere in the state though that may be costly; we may not have enough in the budget to move the meetings outside of Omaha and Lincoln.

#### 4. Public Relations Committee – 2010 Governor’s Conference Recap (Chair Gerry Osborn)

- First Lady’s Awards – we did not get the number of nominations expected but those received were valuable and deserving. Four of the ten winners were from rural Nebraska.
- Conference Feedback [Barb asked for comments from the Commissioners]
  - Seminars all went well. An orderly location. Total attendance was down this year. National Service is our primary audience. Need to continue this event in the metro area.
  - A formal feedback/evaluation report will be developed for distribution at the July meeting.
  - With the economic recession, many non-profits do not have a lot of discretionary funding. Even with 55 in attendance, we did well. Attendance at every event is down due to budgetary and time concerns. Consider, instead, what we did do well and that the size of the conference (200+/-) is about right for us.
  - This Conference is a signature event for the Commission that we have done well. Improvement this year was in advertising – associated press contact, Omaha World Herald, out-state, rural Nebraska winners were recognized in local newspapers. This improvement was primarily due to the very helpful work of Andy Greenberg. Lois Wine was the primary contact for Andy Greenburg, KFAB, and all press release contacts. USA Today, Jamie Moore coverage on Omaha markets television.
  - Ken Minnig, Basset, NE, and award winner was unable to attend (virus) but Gerry Osborn presented the award to him and they made front page news in the local newspaper.
  - A request was made to consider a general approach session geared toward Corporate Volunteerism. This is similar to the idea the Commission was working on two years ago – the Business Volunteer Council. With us not managing the Citizen Corps program maybe there will be more time to spend on business volunteering. Due to downsizing, corporations may cut funding but still want to encourage employee involvement and have a presence in their communities.
  - Perhaps we should offer partial registration – one day, half a day, and full day.
  - The drop in attendance is good in comparison to industry standards of ~22%.
  - FLA Award Nominations: Parents and volunteers in the school system sign in daily and we should be able to process data and hours of service. Do more with less. Appreciate volunteers but it isn’t the top priority
  - Reach out to school volunteerism. Each Commissioner visits a school in their district to discuss volunteerism and awards nominations. Establish a process that stays.
  - Add a Corporate Volunteer Service Award Category – hundreds of businesses do wonderful things for the community.
  - Vendor booths went really well. Vendor cards were appreciated and provided interaction and conversation, even to offer additional door prizes. From registration to seminars. More diverse vendors were an improvement. Good feedback from vendors since their booth traffic was high.
  - Recommend whether gifts were appropriate for AmeriCorps and other national service members. Perhaps gift cards might be of value to more of our attendees.
  - Commissioners could be asked to provide monetary support for the conference, i.e., \$100 each to help offset their meal and registration expenses. Some organizations would reimburse these fees.
  - Sally: this is the only Commission I haven’t been asked to donate. We should ask “What commitment can you make?” May not be the same for everyone. “What are your expectations?” A financial commitment to something you belong to helps you take ownership.
  - Several prize winners thanked Barb, Sally, and Lorinda.
  - Wheelchair accessibility was difficult in certain areas:
    - Ballroom – more space between tables; easier access to buffet tables (non-stacking)
    - Raised carpet in some areas

#### 5. Program Committee – the Program Committee did not meet today (Chair, Nancy Wang)

- Nancy Wang reported that 2009/2010 AmeriCorps Programs are under way. The Corporation is seeking clarification from three of the four programs that we submitted for competitive funding. This is considered a good sign they are interested in the programs and we should hear which ones get competitive funding by the end of May.
- Formula funding applications must be submitted to the Corporation by July 6, 2010 prior to the next Commission meeting.

---

## FINANCIAL REPORT

- Janet Schmidt explained the three fiscal reports and our current level of expenditures on office operations/administration, subgrants and the Administrative Grant match. Commissioners asked questions about the potential for AmeriCorps programs to use all of their funds as well as the administrative/operations grants (Administration, PDAT, Disability). We don't want to turn back funds.
- Handouts:
  1. *ServeNebraska Operations Funds – Quarterly Expenditure Report, dated 03/31/10.*
  2. *ServeNebraska Subgrant Funding – Quarterly Expenditure Report, dated 3/31/10*
  3. *ServeNebraska Administrative Grant Match Monitoring, dated 3/31/10*
  4. *2010 Commissioner Meeting Donations Claimed for Match*
- Janet reported that she has completed all but three AmeriCorps Fiscal Site Visits for the current program year.
- Janet reported that the National Grants Management Association and Conference had some very good grant management and federal requirement information for members to emphasize accountability. Janet is on the Board of Directors and was elected for a second year. She also was on the committee to help put the conference together.

---

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. **Plan to develop New Commission 5-Year Strategic Plan (2011-2015)**
  - Proposed as part of the core work at the Fall Strategic Planning Retreat
  - See comments in Organizational Development section. The Retreat Planning Committee will work on developing the retreat agenda with more information to be shared with the Commissioners. We will revisit the current 5-year plan that ended this year and review our accomplishments.
2. **Revising State Service Plan to Comply with Serve America Act**
  - Handouts:
    1. *Nebraska State Service Plan – 2010 Information Gathering Community Forums, Proposed Process Outline*
    2. *State Service Plan, Serve America Act Guidance*
    3. *State Service Plan Development (Graph)*
  - Local community public forums - our 2010 Listening Tour listening to local needs will be the first time the Commission has done this type of face to face project.
  - Staff will work on the locations; commissioners were asked to sign-up to attend one tour stop to assist with forum facilitation.
  - A state service plan is required for submission to CNCS by November. The trend for service has reversed dramatically with the 2009 Serve America Act. Last fall responses to the online survey about engaging people 55+ years more in service were better than anticipated. Six Community Forum Meetings will be held to reach the public across Nebraska. Staff would ideally like to see at least two Commissioners at each meeting.
  - As this project moves forward, Jessica Hildebrand has youth resources available in all of the listed communities.

---

## NEW BUSINESS

1. **Nebraska Volunteer Foundation – Identify new Members of Advisory Committee**
  - As an affiliated fund of the Nebraska Community Foundation, we are required to have a Volunteer Foundations Advisory Committee that meets at least annually.
  - Currently there are 4 members but two are past commissioners who do not wish to continue on this committee. We need commissioner volunteers to work on this committee and look at ways to increase the impact of the Foundation.
  - The Board MATRIX filled out at the January meeting shows that there are five commissioners who have an interest in this area. Two of those are leaving the Board. Mike Kissler indicated he does not have time. Jessica, Ron and Lois all expressed an interest.
  - Jessica, Ron, Lois are asked to be the new Advisory Committee to join Pat Beans who continues to serve as the Treasurer, sign checks and meet with Janet twice a year to reconcile the two accounts.
  - At the January meeting, the structure was discussed including the involvement of non-Commissioner members. He also assists with the annual audit of the books. **The Foundation serves as the fiscal agent for the Governor's Conference.** Commissioners can E-mail their interest to Barb. Rick Nation has asked to be removed from this advisory committee.
2. **Commission Officer Elections**
  - Nominating Committee: Ron, Barry, and Jessica. Several other commissioners who were asked to run for an office appreciated the vote of confidence but felt they were not yet ready.
  - Barry asked for nominations from the floor. There were none.

- The slate for 2010-2012 officers (Chair and Vice-Chair) include:  
Chair: Jamie Moore  
Vice Chair: Lois Wine
  - Commissioners were given written ballots to complete. All voted and they were submitted to Janet to tally the votes.
  - **Jamie Moore and Lois Wine were elected with a unanimous vote.**
  - Barry recognized Commissioner Nancy Wang who has been on the Board for two 3-year terms serving as Program Committee Chair for the past three years. Commissioners thanked her for her exceptional services and wished her the best of luck since her former company (MDS Pharmaceutical) was bought and has been renamed Solaria.
  - Rick Nation and Curt Krueger **did not seek reappointment and** will also be leaving the Commission Board.
- 

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Commissioners are encouraged to volunteer for **Special Olympics National Games in Lincoln, July 15-23, 2010** as part of the ServeNebraska Team. Deadline to volunteer online is May 1 at: <http://www.2010specialolmpics.org>
  - **NEXT MEETING** – July 29, 2010, hosted by Commissioner Rose White at AAA Nebraska, 910 North 96<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha. Any special dietary needs, E-mail Rose White at [RWhite@aaane.com](mailto:RWhite@aaane.com)
- 

#### AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

None were given

---

#### Adjourn Business Meeting

- Commission Business Meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Submitted by,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nancy Hock

Approved by,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Barry Kriha, Chair