



Quarterly Commission

August 10, 2021

10:00am-12:00pm

Locations

Virtual Meeting Via WebEx

Virtual Meeting Credentials:

Meeting credentials made available to meeting invitation or request the meeting link at dph.serveillinois@illinois.gov

Commissioners Present: Angeloni, Allison; Copeland, Ami; Rueff, Amy; Fernandez, Andrew; Roberts, Carolyn; Leonis, Cathy; Peace, Curtis; Geenen, Dave; Christensen, David; Lathan, Howard; Dixon, Jim; Johnson, Marci; Furllett, Natalie; Nelson, Ashli; Drumgoole, Rosie; Clarke, Scott; Long, Shelley; and Mathis, Tiffany.

Staff Present: Starling, Claire; Samuels, Ayoka; Kyle, Dannie; Pendergrass, Karen; Davis, Dawn; Haynes, Senyah; Tessema, Daniel and McNeil, Cassie.

Invited Guests: Foster, Heather; Trevadi, Shefali;

Minutes

1. Call to Order – Natalie Furllett, Chair
 - a. Meeting called to order at 10:07am.
2. Roll Call – please type in your name in the chat. Attendance will be recorded in the minutes, taken by Starling and uploaded to Basecamp pending approval.
3. Approval of the Minutes of the Last Meeting
 - a. A copy of the minutes was made available for commissioners to review via Basecamp. Chavkin motioned to approve and Rueff seconded. The motion passes, and the May 13th minutes will be uploaded to the Serve Illinois Website.
4. AmeriCorps Update – Heather Foster Introduction
 - a. Foster introduced herself as the interim AmeriCorps support for the commission. She is the regional administrator for the Midwest Regional Office. They are currently going through a staff transition and expect to have our new senior portfolio manager in position. She noted that the AmeriCorps agency is reviewing its return to in office operations and travel information. Moving back into the office will be a gradual process, likely between September-January. This process will also include different accommodations for those who may be at risk or may not feel comfortable coming back into the office immediately. AmeriCorps is currently assessing their workforce capacity and what kind of IT needs to be put into place.
 - b. AmeriCorps is also opening up an outreach process for new grantees regarding the American Rescue Plan funding. The first priority is going to be around a new program called Public Health AmeriCorps. It is an interagency agreement between CDC and AmeriCorps to deploy the future of the public health workforce. The primary consideration is to improve the health of our communities, and the second consideration is to think about it as a workforce

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development program. It will run through AmeriCorps State and National. It will likely be a 3 or 4 year program, though many of the details are unknown at this time.

- i. Foster reviewed various questions from the chat. She noted that the Public Health AmeriCorps Program will include state commissions and non-profit organizations (federal, local, government) in terms of applicants and it will be a direct competition at the national level.
- ii. The program will likely be in coordination with the city of Chicago and other federal programs.
- iii. The program will recognize the mental health benefits of volunteerism and will let volunteer centers apply under their core mission. There does need to be a direct connection with the public health agency however, meaning they should be part of a partnership but not necessarily the direct applicant.

5. Committee Reports

- a. Executive Committee – Natalie Furlett & Nisan Chavkin
 - i. The Board Retreat will be held October 4th and 5th at Starved Rock. Everyone should have received a save the date. We want this to be an in-person retreat if possible, especially since we have new commissioners. We will be sending out additional details as we get closer to the date. We will also pay special attention to the Public Relations Committee Report and the State Service Plan at this retreat in terms of discussion.
- b. Finance & Governance – Scott Clarke/Ayoka Samuels
 - i. Clarke noted the committee has discussed membership in particular. The governance and finance committee is looking for new members if you don't have a committee yet. They also discussed doing a periodic survey for our program directors for their needs, training, etc. This could help us set goals and budgets for the future as well, and help guide our new training staff.
 - ii. Clarke also noted the committee has asked the Executive Committee to review our by-laws, as it is necessary every two years.
- c. Public Policy – Steve Solomon/Ayoka Samuels
 - i. The committee has been very active since our last full board meeting. They had a series of meetings with different organizations, including ASC and Voices for National Service. They had an opportunity to learn more about what they do and how we can fit into their work as well. Both organizations will work with us and have trainings/conferences. One activity in particular is the Hill Days, which allow us to meet with elected officials to discuss what Serve Illinois is doing.
 - ii. We had a couple of different outcomes from these meetings. It was noted we should explore the idea of removing the state tax from member education awards. We learned that there are a few states who work with their elected officials to do so. Dixon noted we want to look at the states who have done this already and look at sample legislation. They would have to talk to the Governor's office and get their support as well. We would also need to speak to our representatives. It would be a minor effect on state budget but would have a great effect on members.
 - iii. Elected Official Relationship Scan – commissioner relationship with elected officials. This survey regarding this subject will be going out so Serve Illinois can gain a better understanding of this information in order to expand our reach.
- d. Public Relations – Cathy Leonis/Cassie McNeill
 - i. Group Discussion: Branding plan next steps. McNeil noted that they are continued to develop their presentation from the last meeting. They have worked on the Website

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- Landscape and will likely be done in the next 2 months. Marketing materials are also being developed and will be handed out at the State Fair.
- ii. McNeil noted that she has been looking at our metrics. We have improved our engagement and retention rates greatly. We have also increased our number and diversity of followers. We've been working on a campaign for the National Service Opening Day and the Governor's Volunteer Service Awards. Keep a lookout for the "Ayoka in" posts where Ayoka travels to meet with different commissioners.
 - iii. Leonis noted that the committee would like for commissioners to review the branding presentation and have notes/comments available for the next Board meeting as well.
- e. Recognition Events – Tiffany Mathis/Senyah Haynes
- i. Governor's Volunteer Service Awards is coming up in November. Applications are open through August 15th. The committee met recently to consider the potential dates. It will be a lunch event at Erin's Pavilion from 12:30-2:30pm on November 10th and we are hoping to have the Governor available at the event if possible.
 - ii. Once applications close, the committee will need representatives to review and score the applications, which has already been streamlined this year so it should be a smooth process. This year will also include applications specifically focused toward COVID-19 service and response. We will also recognize our medical volunteers at this event as well with Dawn Davis.
- f. State Service and Strategic Plans – Natalie Furlett & Nisan Chavkin
- i. The plan was ratified right before COVID-19 hit last year. We will use the retreat to look at our benchmarks and check in on our progress. If anyone has questions before October, please send them to Chavkin and Furlett.
 - ii. It is important to note that historically, the State Service and Strategic Plans have been separate documents, but this version is now combined. Committees, please make sure to review the plan to make sure that their work is reflected in it.
 - iii. A chair for this committee is open as well if anyone is interested in the role. Reach out to either Furlett or Nisan if you have an interest or any questions.
- g. AmeriCorps – Laura Davis
- i. Review and Revision: The future of Illinois AmeriCorps grant process. Pendergrass noted the committee has met and taken a look at the grant application timeline. In the past, the NOFO has come from the AmeriCorps agency around early fall. It has been posted and the competitive and formula applications have run at the same time. We have discussed separating the formula and competitive processes. We think this would be a more streamlined process, as having two separate processes is the model that most states use as well. This would alleviate a lot of stress for staff and will help us better make funding decisions additionally.
 - ii. The committee is also trying to develop models for new applicants with specific criteria. We also have a previous scoring tool and monitoring sheet for a helpful reference.
 - iii. National Service Opening Day (Karen & Senyah). We will have open registration at 9am and booths available first thing in the morning. The event itself will start likely at 11am. We will include different sessions for members as well, including personal and professional development, and specific sessions for program directors as well. Afterwards, we will walk down to the Old State Capitol to say the pledge. We will have giveaway bags and food at the event itself. Normally, we have about 1000 people, but the crowd may be reduced this year. We will also be giving out 3 awards,

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for outstanding member, program director, and AmeriCorps staff. We will also recognize Michelle Hanneken.

6. Serve Illinois Foundation Update – Brandon Bodor
 - i. The foundation is working on getting more board members recruited. We have two possible members, Nate Hutchinson and Aaron Levine.
 - ii. We will have more information available at a later date. In partnership with the Serve Illinois and the Shultz Family Foundation, we have submitted a grant for a funding opportunity as well. If we receive it, we will be able to support our AmeriCorps sites in the area of recruitment and retention, specifically people of color and those who identify as male.
 - iii. The Serve Illinois Foundation role is changing. Currently, it serves as a fiscal agent for the commission, but it will no longer be in that role that after this year.
7. Executive Director Report – Ayoka Samuels & Serve Illinois Staff
 - a. Staffing Updates; Temporary Worker Support. We have new staffing updates. Daniel Tessema is joining us as an AmeriCorps Program Officer who will be reporting to Karen Pendergrass. He will officially start September 1st. We also have Jacob Jenkins joining us as our Training Coordinator, who will report directly to Michelle Hanneken. We still have one more vacancy available, which is the Volunteer Services Manager, who will report to Ayoka Samuels. We will have more information to come.
 - b. DHS Transition Update
 - i. Medical volunteerism (DPH) and Community Emergency Response Teams (IEMA). We will fully transition by January 1st. The programs above will (CERTS and Medical Volunteerism) transition to the listed departments.
 - ii. In terms of staffing, all staff will transition except for Dawn Davis. Our Springfield and Chicago office will remain and we will include an onboarding process with DHS for staff. Our grant agreements, agency, technology, etc. will be affected and switched over.
 - c. 9/11 National Service Day in Chicago at Navy Pier
 - i. This is a paid opportunity for service for team leaders specifically. They will be paid \$150.00 for the day, and the event needs 20 leaders. A volunteer registration form will be released this week.
 - d. Calendar of Events (Senyah Haynes)
 - i. National Days of Service.
 1. 9/11 Remembrance Day- This year is the 20th Anniversary.
 2. Veteran’s Day/Week
 3. AmeriCorps Week (March 2022)
 4. Global Youth Service Day (TBD, Alternative Date)
 - ii. National Service Opening Day will be October 14th, 2021. A registration form will be sent out electronically soon. We would like for all of our VISTA, AmeriCorps Seniors, NCCC, and National Direct members to be at the event.
 - e. New Commissioner Update
 - i. We have two new commissioners officially joining our team, welcome Alison Angeloni and Ashli Nelson.
 - f. Volunteerism and Volunteer Service Centers (conferences, recruitment portal)
 - i. We are looking to focus on a resurgence of our volunteer centers and conferences.
 1. Volunteer Connectors of Illinois
 2. Volunteer Service Centers
 3. Online Volunteer Management System (on Serve Illinois website)

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8. New Business
 - a. No new business at this time.
9. Old Business
 - a. Guidance & Response: Education Awards & Living Allowance. We have an update in terms of our AmeriCorps agencies surrounding their claims and concerns of the education award from our May 13th board meeting. The AmeriCorps agency has made a determination that they are not in a position to provide the education award to the members who made the proposal. The education award comes directly from the AmeriCorps agency, not Serve Illinois.
 - b. The agencies in question received a letter directly from AmeriCorps detailing the terms. They also received a letter from Samuels noting that any agency that was involved in this situation will have to work with the State of Illinois Court of Claims if they wish to move forward with their claims. As it stands now, none of the agencies have taken it to the Illinois Court of Claims.
10. Public Comment
 - a. No public available for public comment.
11. Adjourn
 - a. Furlett asked if anyone would like to motion to adjourn the meeting. Christensen motions, Clark seconds. The meeting adjourned at 11:47pm.

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