



March 2025 Commission Meeting

Wednesday, March 19th, 2025

3:00pm-4:30pm

Locations

Virtual Meeting via Webex:

<https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/j.php?MTID=m3072d755d73a53d42e8f143d7e273d68>

In-Person Meeting at:

Chicago: 401 South Clinton Street Chicago, IL 60607 -- 7th floor executive conference room

Springfield: 100 S Grand Ave E Springfield, IL 62762 -- 3rd floor executive conference room

Agenda

1. Call to Order – Andres J. Fernandez, Executive Director
 2. Roll Call
 - a. **Commissioners Present Virtually:** Catherine Leonis, Gwendolyn Moss, Erica Thieman, Crystal Young, Howard Latham
 - b. **Commissioners Present In-Person:** Benjamin Kagan, Rosie Drumgoole, Laura Stukel, Amy Rueff
 - c. **IDHS Staff Present:** Cory Blissett, Andres J. Fernandez, Barbara Hobrock
 - d. **Guests Present:** N/A
 3. Approval of the Minutes
 - a. Did not meet quorum and will approve minutes at the next meeting.
 4. Subcommittee Restructuring – Andres J. Fernandez
 - a. Two commissioners (chair and co-chair) and a staff member on each subcommittee.
 - b. Inclusion of virtual option for subcommittee meetings in the bylaws.
 - c. Andres will send out an email to board to identify any interest in subcommittees.
 - d. Each Chair and Co-Chair of a subcommittee should be voting members.
 - e. Four committees – Executive, Relational, Programmatic, Operational:
 - i. **Executive**
 1. Oversight of subcommittees and board.
 2. Comprised of Commission Chair, Vice-Chair, Chair and Co-Chair of each subcommittee, and staff.
 - ii. **Relational**
 1. Chair and Co-Chair of subcommittee and a member of staff.
 2. Celebrating volunteerism and good will to others.
 3. Building relationships with stakeholders.
 4. Oversight of volunteer recognition and public relations.
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iii. Programmatic

1. Chair and Co-Chair of subcommittee and one member of staff.
2. Help with approval of grantees.
3. Identify funding priorities.
4. Oversight of AmeriCorps programming.

iv. Operational

1. Chair and Co-chair of subcommittee and one member of staff.
2. Goal is to help improve processes and help address barriers to create efficient and effective grantmaking.
3. Oversight of governance and public policy.

5. Serve Illinois Executive Director Update - Andres Fernandez

- a. Budget Address
 - i. The Governor's Budget Address did not impact AmeriCorps programming.
- b. Executive Orders
 - i. Staff have been working with the AmeriCorps Portfolio Manager to ensure Executive Order compliance. Also working with the Governor's Office to draft language and correspond with our federal partners.
- c. Retreat Dates for Strategic Plan
 - i. Proposing May 21st, 2025, in Bloomington, IL.
 - ii. Andres will work with commissioners to finalize the date, time, and location.
- d. Welcome Dr. Erica Thieman to the board.

6. Programmatic Update – Andres J. Fernandez

- a. AmeriCorps Program
 - i. We successfully scored and moved forward 9 new competitive applications to AmeriCorps. We expect to hear back from AmeriCorps on their final decisions around mid-April.
 - ii. The team is working closely with their programs to provide support and gain feedback on continued improvement going into the next program year.
 - iii. Programs celebrated Martin Luther King Day with events throughout the state. We are working to post some of the stories and pictures to social media.
 - iv. Staff work closely with the AmeriCorps Portfolio Manager weekly regarding questions and concerns that arise.
 - v. The AmeriCorps Team has been working to update all forms and discussing plans for the Annual Meeting to prepare for Program Year 2025-2026.
- b. National Service Program
 - i. Volunteer Generation Fund and Teaching Civics for Justice Illinois
 1. Participants
 - a. 101 Participants Enrolled in the Pilot Cohort.
 - b. 90 Participants completed all requirements.
 - c. 89.1% of the educators who enrolled completed the program.
 2. Program Incentives
 - a. Teaching Civics for Justice swag items
 - b. \$1250.00 Stipend
 - c. Twenty-four (24) Professional Development Hours



- d. A Micro credential to their Professional Educator License.
 - c. Volunteer Program
 - i. Disaster Response
 - 1. In early January, winter storm Blair hit Southern Illinois, covering the area with heavy ice and snow, and causing property damage due to fallen trees and branches. IDHS-Serve Illinois, Illinois VOADS, and IEMA, partnered with Mayor Carolin Harvey, the City of Carbondale, and NAACP-Carbondale Branch 3002-B to connect residents in need of tree, branch, and debris removal from their yards with willing volunteers. Over 50 volunteers signed up, including individuals from Labor Local 737, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, and Lutheran Southern Early Response Team. On Saturday, January 26, 2025, over 13 volunteers from Labor Local 737 assisted 11 homes in Carbondale. On Saturday, January Saturday 8, 2025, Mayor Harvey hosted a rally for 12 volunteers, including SIU-C students and the Lutheran Southern Early Response Team, at the Rock Hill Baptist Church. Homes were in Herrin, Royalton, Carbondale, Murphysboro, and Makanda. These efforts saved residents almost \$8,000.00! It is because of these amazing efforts that IDHS-Serve Illinois Executive Director, Andres Fernandez, Volunteer Programs Manager, Jacob Jenkins, Upstate Volunteer Programs Coordinator, Cecilia Maciel Martinez, and Downstate Volunteer Program Manager, Anthony Wanless, recognized volunteers in person after their service with the Office of the Governors Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service Certificate of Appreciation on Monday, February 10, 2025.
 - ii. Governor's Volunteer Service Awards
 - 1. Twenty outstanding volunteers from across Illinois have been selected as winners of the 2025 Governor's Volunteer Service Awards. We hope to see commissioners at the official ceremony on Thursday, April 24, 2025, at the South Shore Cultural Center in Chicago. The official invitation will be shared with all commissioners. We hope to see you there!
 - iii. Illinois National Service Summit
 - 1. The 2025 Illinois National Service Summit will be on Monday, May 19, 2025, at the Crowne Plaza West Loop in Chicago. The official save the date and registration is out now! We hope to see you there.
 - iv. National Volunteer Month Recognitions
 - 1. The Volunteer Team has a goal of visiting organizations across Illinois hosting projects in honor of nationally observed months. For Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, the Volunteer Team visited Family Services RSVP in Champaign, NAACP-Carbondale in Carbondale, Arc of the Quad Cities in Rock Island, and Helping Hands Shelter-
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Homeless United for Change in Springfield, to recognize volunteers taking part in various projects advancing Dr. King's vision of the Beloved Community. In February in honor of Black History Month, the Volunteer Team will be visiting Springfield to recognize Juneteenth Inc.'s Black Business Panel and Decatur for the Inc Spot LTD, Black Chamber of Commerce of Illinois, and Greater Decatur Black Chamber of Commerce 7th Annual Black History Gala. We will be visiting various projects in Chicago and Rockford for Women's History Month in March.

7. Volunteer Spotlight – Andres J. Fernandez
 - a. Reminder to nominate outstanding volunteers so we may highlight them on social media.
 8. Committee Reports
 - a. No reports – still restructuring committees.
 9. Public Comment
 - a. No members from the public present.
 10. 2025 Meeting Dates
 - a. Tentatively decided on May 21st for an in-person commissioner meeting and strategic planning session.
 - b. Andres will confirm with commissioners.
 - c. The event will be a half day, stay over, then a full day.
 - d. Tentatively set for Bloomington, IL.
 11. Adjourn
 - a. Benjamin Kagan motioned to adjourn the meeting.
 - b. Amy Rueff and Laura Stukel seconded.
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