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**MEETING MINUTES
NORTH DAKOTA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
STATE COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE
JANUARY 7, 2004**

Meeting Date, Time & Place: January 7, 2004, 9:30 a.m., Bismarck State College, 1500 Edwards Avenue, Room 216, Bismarck, ND 58501.

Members Present

Bismarck: Al Lukes, Cathi Christopherson, Andy Rendon (on behalf of Dr. David Gipp), Wayne Kutzer, Rosella Grant, Dr. Donna Thigpen, Leo Cummings, Helen Funk (on behalf of Carol Olson), Max Laird, Sharon Buhr, John Pohlman, Jim Hirsch.

Grand Forks: Lisa Ringstad.

Members Absent

Gloria Maragos, Carol Olson, Jim Dahlen, Dr. David Gipp, Dave Massey.

Guests Present

Cheryll McDowall, Keith Engbrecht, Mary Kay Kelsch, Ruth Lacher, Jill Splonskowski.

Opening Remarks & Introductions: The Chair, Al Lukes provided a welcome to everyone. The Chair proceeded with asking members and guests to introduce themselves.

Administrative Announcements: Al Lukes requests that two additional items be placed on today's agenda. The first being a Grants Committee Report to be given by Max Laird, and a 2004-2005 Formula Application Timeline.

Approval of Agenda: Al Lukes asks for approval of the agenda as presented.

Motion: Rosella Grant made a motion to approve the agenda. Leo Cummings seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: Al Lukes asks for approval of the September 10, 2003, minutes.

Motion: Max Laird moved for approval of the September 10, 2003, minutes. Rosella Grant seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Al Lukes gave members a few comments. He began by stating that the Commission is functioning well despite the Corporation's reduction of slots. The Corporation for National and Community Service has recently restored slots to the Commission. A letter was sent to Congressmen Byron Dorgan and Kent Conrad and we received positive input to restore funding to North Dakota. Al Lukes also mentioned that David Eisner is now the new CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. Al then discussed the success of the Learn & Serve Conference in Fall 2003 and hopes the Commission will host another Conference in Fall 2004.

Chair's Report

Administrative Budget

Jim Hirsch reported that the administrative budget requested for 2004 is \$146,162. Our non-federal match requirement started at 5%, and will increase by 5% each year of operation until we reach 50%. The non-federal match is being provided by leveraging State General Fund salaries within the Division. Because of a continuing appropriation, we received only partial funding for the administrative budget.

Professional Development Assistance and Training Budget

The PDAT funds are specifically for staff and fringe benefits as well as staff training and development. The PDAT budget request for 2004 is \$85,000. PDAT may be reduced if the federal appropriation is not at a level high enough to support state requests.

Cheryll McDowall outlined the PDAT plan which entails progress reporting measures associated with the plan. It provides training in sustainability, member development, supervision, and civic responsibility. Trainers are paid by the Corporation for National and Community Service, but locally, we as a Commission pay travel and meeting expenses for project staff and training events.

Disability Budget and Plan

The Disability Plan allowed North Dakota to use \$25,000 in funding in 2003. The program was supported with a part-time position. Because of a late award notice and start of the program, the full award was not used.

A plan has been developed for promotion of disability inclusion in AmeriCorps Programs. We do not have plan approval for 2004 at this time, but we are hoping that once we receive approval we can begin the marketing process. Some of the funds could be shifted to make sites more accessible.

John Pohlman mentioned that the Disability Plan helps eliminate the thought that people with disabilities are clients. Instead it focuses on the fact that they are now active volunteers in the community.

Commission Policy

Jim Hirsch outlined one of the Administrative Standards of the Commission which requires the establishment of a Risk-Based Monitoring Policy. The Policy would monitor both compliance reviews and site visits. Those reviews and site visits would be conducted once annually. High risk or new sub-grantees would be monitored more closely than other projects. In addition, monthly desk monitoring would be submitted electronically which will be completed by Cheryl McDowall, the Program Officer. Fifty percent (50%) of the Program Officer's time is spent on the above-mentioned reporting requirements. Normally an audit takes one full day to evaluate. Any corrective action would take place within 10 days after the monitoring report and site visit. Jim Hirsch asks the Commission to make a motion to approve this Policy.

Motion: Max Laird made a motion that the Commission establish a process whereby after approval of policies they sunset after two (2) years from the date of passage. Leo Cummings seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Discussion begins on the Policy title as to whether it should be called a "Risk-Based Monitoring Policy" or simply "Monitoring Policy".

Motion: Max Laird made a motion to approve the Monitoring Policy. Rosella Grant seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Motion: Max Laird then moved that the Commission form a Sub-Committee of three (3) Commission members. The Committee would be titled the Grantee Monitoring Committee and it would be appointed by the Chair for the purpose of monitoring grantees for all compliance and approvment issues. Donna Thigpen seconded the motion.

Before the motion carried, there is some discussion on the naming of Sub-Committee Members. Members agree that we should delay the naming of members for another 3 months until research on federal rules and regulations can be completed.

Motion: Max Laird moved to table action on this item until the successive meeting. Donna Thigpen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Homeland Security Activities in ND

Keith Engbrecht from the American Red Cross gave a presentation on homeland security issues. Their mission is to help prevent, prepare, and respond to disasters and other life-threatening emergencies. They have over 1 million volunteers. North Dakota has 8 functioning chapters. They have developed quadrant chapters in North Dakota to serve counties who don't have their own chapters and discuss the qualities and statistics of some of the counties served by local chapters. They operate under a Five-Year Strategic Plan and members are engaged as volunteers and blood donors. The ARC is integrated at the federal level through Congress, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defense, and the Department of Health and Human Services. They also work with several agencies locally such as Emergency Management, the Department of Health, Local Citizen Corps Councils, and local Public Health Departments.

Items developed by the American Red Cross since the September 11, 2001, attacks include: "Together We Prepare" and information correlated to the Homeland Security Advisory system. They provide hazard preparedness through disaster planning, disaster education, health and safety training, and to act as a liaison with organizations involved in disaster.

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Conflict of Interest Policy Training

Mary Kay Kelsch from the Attorney General's office in Bismarck explained to members some of the state and federal guidelines relating to the Conflict of Interest Policy. The federal Conflict of Interest Policy specifics that a member cannot help a grantee prepare a grant and cannot take part in any discussions relating to the grant. There cannot be any oversight, evaluation, suspension, or termination of that grant award. This rule applies to all members, officers, directors, trustees, full-time volunteers, or employees within one (1) year of the application. The exception to the rule is that if for some reason too many people have to recuse themselves and the Commission cannot develop a quorum, you can pick enough people to develop a quorum. The recused members would then need to be reported to the Corporation.

Mary Kay also discussed statutes identified in the North Dakota Century Code which deal with the State's Conflict of Interest Policy. Some violations of this law include:

- 1) Bribery
- 2) Trading in public office for political endorsement
- 3) Trading in special influence
- 4) Disclosure of confidential information
- 5) Speculating or wagering
- 6) Nepotism

Mary Kay Kelsch stressed that the primary duty as a Commission member is to serve with the Commission's best interest in mind as far as grants, federal dollars, policies, and procedures according to federal guidelines.

Unified State Plan

Jim Hirsch outlined the Unified Plan Development Project Plan. The Commission is required under the Administrative Standards to develop a Unified State Plan. Jim Hirsch reviewed the recommended timeline for the Unified State Plan. Key partners include the State Commission on National and Community Service, the Department of Public Instruction, the State Director for the Corporation, and the Department of Human Services. There would be an initial meeting with those individuals in January 2004 to discuss the plan and how to achieve buy-in for moving forward. In February, we would look at the possibility of securing a facilitator/writer for the plan. In March 2004 we would identify sites and an agenda for the community and public information meetings. News releases and invitations would be sent out. In April 2004, the public information meetings would be held, and in May 2004 a report would be developed. The report would be reviewed with State Partners and development would begin on mission statements, goals, objectives, and community priorities which would be brought to the full Commission in June 2004. We would then obtain public input on the draft and ratify the Unified State Plan in August 2004. Federal Law requires that we have a Unified State Plan completed by the end of 2004.

Motion: Max Laird moved that the Executive Director be authorized to finalize the draft of the Unified State Plan and move forward. Cathi Christopherson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Learn & Serve Update

Cheryll McDowall presented an update on the Learn & Serve Conference as well as some examples of activities associated with Learn & Serve. About 80 people attended the Learn & Serve Conference held in Bismarck on November 12-13, 2003. There was a lot of interest and attendees included teachers, volunteers, national directors, business people, non-profit organizational heads, national directors, etc. We had very positive feedback after the Conference concluded. The cost of the Learn & Serve Conference was approximately \$3,000. The Conference was hosted in conjunction with the Department of Public Instruction. The Department of Public Instruction has received \$47,000 in grants this year, but to date there has not been a replacement found for the Program Director (Rosey Sand).

Discussion began on the Department of Public Instruction's \$2,500 grants and FTE position cuts. Jim Hirsch stated that the Governor did recently approve an FTE for the Program Officer position for the Commission.

CNCS Project Update

John Pohlman updated the Commission on the Corporation for National and Community Service by briefly outlining monthly reports and distributing county maps in relation to the service provided by CNCS' National Senior Service Corps', Foster Grandparent Program,

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, and the Senior Companion Program, in each. Seventy-nine percent (79%) of all ND counties have some NSSC service and many have all 3.

Grants Committee Report

Max Laird provided the Commission with an update on the Grants Committee. They met on December 22, 2003. The Commission was re-instated \$114,500 of formula allocations for positions that previously remained inoperative. The Grants Committee engaged in an RFP Process whereby they received 8 applications and 5 programs were recommended to the Commission. Two (2) programs were already in place and three (3) programs were new. Shortly after the applications were approved for funding, we were notified that the Corporation would not be able to fund those applications. We were on hold until December 2003 until we were authorized to disburse those funds.

Motion: Max Laird made a motion for the Commission to approve the Cooperstown Community Activities Authority be given two (2) 450 hour partial slots and that the Red River Valley Watershed Project and the Council on Abused Women's Services share the remaining 21 slots as equally as possible. Rosella Grant seconded the motion.

Before the motion carries, Leo Cummings opposed the idea of filling up our slots as-is and leaving no room for expansion or new grants in the future.

Jim Hirsch explains that even though we fill up our slots, it does not necessarily mean that we fill up the 20 FTE's and that additional slots could be provided. Next year, we cannot assume that those FTE slots will be available to us. The current funding is still less than 50% of the \$500,000 that North Dakota is authorized.

Max Laird believes that we need to move ahead with the 21 slots we are offered assuming some risk, and hope that we will continue to receive \$500,000 from the Corporation in the future.

Leo Cummings feels that we need to use set-aside funds for planning grants which could compete on a national level instead.

Motion carries by a majority vote (Leo Cummings opposed the motion).

Next, Max Laird reviewed the 2004-2005 Formula Application Timeline with members.

Motion: Max Laird moved that the commission adopt and approve the Timeline for the 2004-2005 Formula Applications.

Before the motion carries, there is discussion as to the legal notice timeframe. Jim Hirsch suggested that we move the legal notice, e-mail distribution, and newspaper ad deadline date to January 22, 2004, instead of March 10, 2004.

Donna Thigpen seconded the motion to include the modified Timeline. Motion carried.

Commission Planning & Discussion

Al Lukes mentioned that our next State Commission meeting will be held on April 7, 2004. Al Lukes asks members for their opinion about the use of the Interactive Video Network. Donna Thigpen offered meetings rooms at Bismarck State College if in-person meetings are so desired in the future.

Adjournment:

Al Lukes asks for a motion for adjournment.

Motion: Rosella Grant made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sharon Buhr seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the State Commission on National and Community Service will be held on April 7, 2004, in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Action Plans:

- ✚ Start development process of the Unified State Plan (identify facilitator/writer and public information meeting site/agenda in addition to sending out a news release and invitations).**
- ✚ Post and send out all legal notices, e-mail distributions, and newspaper ads prior to January 22, 2004, for Formula Applications.**