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**MEETING MINUTES  
NORTH DAKOTA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
STATE COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE  
SEPTEMBER 13, 2006**

**Meeting Date, Time & Place:** September 13, 2006, 9:30 a.m., North Dakota Department of Commerce, 1600 East Century Avenue, Suite 2, Bismarck, North Dakota 58503.

**Members Present:** Helen Funk (on behalf of Carol Olson), Charles Axtman, Dave Massey, Debbie Painte (on behalf of Dr. David Gipp), Jackie Velk (via phone), Jim Dahlen, Leo Cummings, Lisa Ringstad, Rosella Grant, Deb Schiefelbein (on behalf of John Pohlman), and Jim Hirsch.

**Members Absent:** Bruce Walker, Carol Olson, Dr. David Gipp, Gloria Maragos, Lee Lampert, Dr. Sharon Hart, T. J. Russell, Wayne Kutzer, John Pohlman.

**Guests Present:** Cornelius Grant, Jerry Houn, Kira Weiss, Linda Trolliey, Mark Wagner, Scott Davy, and Jill Splonskowski.

**Opening Remarks & Introductions:** Rosella Grant provided a welcome and members/guests introduced themselves around the room.

**Administrative Announcements:** None.

**Approval of Agenda:** Rosella Grant asked for approval of the September 13, 2006, agenda.

**Motion: Charles Axtman moved to approve the September 13, 2006, agenda. Dave Massey seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

**Approval of Minutes:** Rosella Grant asked for a motion to approve the April 19, 2006, minutes.

**Motion: Dave Massey moved to approve the April 19, 2006, minutes. Debbie Painte seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

## **Chair's Report**

### Medora Retreat:

Rosella Grant and Dave Massey outlined some of the benefits for members who attended the Retreat and both believe the outcome was very positive.

## **2006 Budgets**

### Administration, PDAT, & Disability:

Jim Hirsch reported on the status of the Administrative, PDAT, and Disability Budgets as of May 2006. The Administrative budget balance is \$41,971, the PDAT balance is \$59,417, and the Disability Budget balance is \$19,667. The reports will be revised to reflect percentage spent rather than percentage available in the future as requested by Jim Dahlen.

## **Corporation on National & Community Service**

Kira Weiss mentioned that carry-over funds have caused a dramatic cut in funding (\$40,000,000) which has recently been restored on the Senate side. The Corporation for National & Community Service is trying to correct some of the issues with the "pause" that occurred by implementing a relaxed fill policy, relaxing the slot version rule, slot transfer issues between programs, and member recruitment and retention expectations. WBRS and e-Grants will be combined into one single program by December 31, 2006, and extensive web-based training will be provided. Kira Weiss suggested that North Dakota continue to be aggressive in the competitive funding application process. If federal cuts are implemented in the House, the cut would be \$153,366 and a reduction of 46 AmeriCorps members in North Dakota.

## **State Service Plan**

Jim Hirsch outlined the major areas of the draft State Service Plan prepared for adoption by members. The Plan includes an Introduction to Learn & Serve, AmeriCorps, and Senior Corps, a Strategic Plan Needs Assessment, North Dakota Focus Area, Special Initiatives, and Corporation Technical Support.

Jim Hirsch reviewed the major goals, organizing pillars, initiative strategies for volunteers, eight areas for continuous improvement, and 4 major outcome goals as well as updates to the draft Plan.

The North Dakota State Service Plan incorporates the Pillars, Principles and Platform developed during the Joint Retreat in Medora. The primary focus areas for the state Commission will be continued expansion of quality AmeriCorps projects and expansion of volunteerism and civic engagement across the state.

A copy of the State Service Plan was sent out with the meeting packets. Changes were made in the goals to specifically tie benchmarks to those identified by the Corporation for National and Community Service in their "Volunteering in America – State Trends" Report.

Rosella Grant asked for a motion to approve the draft State Service Plan.

**Motion: Dave Massey moved to approve the draft State Service Plan with recommended grammar changes. Leo Cummings seconded the motion.**

Before the motion carries, Deb Schiefelbein recommends that page 4 of the Plan specify that RSVP age is 55 and older, Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions must be at least 60 and older.

Jim Hirsch recommended that a Resolution be developed by Kaye Knudson and presented to members at the January 10, 2007, State Commission meeting to approve the age discrepancy in the Plan.

**Motion carried.**

### **Learn & Serve Update**

Dave Massey reported that the Learn & Serve project has received a \$41,738 grant for the coming year at Valley City State University with the possibility of expansion. There are more than 650 students and over 70 volunteers involved in the Valley City grant.

### **Foster Grandparent Program**

Kaye Knudson brought along several pieces of information regarding the Foster Grandparent Program which included: a newsletter, service outcomes, success stories, and statistics of the program. There is currently a shortage in Foster Grandparents and Kaye Knudson is actively recruiting volunteers across western North Dakota. She has 66 volunteers serving at least 15 hours per week/1044 hours per year working one-on-one with children. The stipend is \$2.65 per hour with benefits of meals, health insurance, transportation, and mileage.

Karen Hillman from the Grand Forks Foster Grandparent Program reported that their program has been in existence for over 40 years, and she's been working very diligently over the last 2 years to expand their services.

## **AmeriCorps\*State Subgrantee Reports**

Jerry Houn recently conducted financial and programmatic reviews for all 6 subgrantees except Western Wellness Foundation Inc. which will be completed closer to the end of their contract date of September 30, 2006. All fiscal reviews were clean except for Western Wellness which has reported about \$42,000 more in match than they have supporting documentation for in the 2004-2005 contract. A letter with a deadline requiring Western Wellness Foundation Inc. to provide match documentation will be sent out shortly. If Western Wellness Foundation Inc. cannot provide documentation, they would be considered to have disallowed costs.

In Western Wellness Foundation, Inc.'s 2005-2006 contract, there are also match issues which need to be resolved. Claims for Western Wellness's reimbursement were withheld in June and July and a claim for August has not yet been made to date. If the documentation or match funds cannot be supplied to the Commission, the State Commission would work with the Attorney General's Office to pursue debt collection against Western Wellness Foundation Inc. for over \$20,000.

After member discussion, it is recommended that State Commission staff revise the Program Monitoring & Debt Collection Policies and bring those recommendations back to the Commission for approval at the January 10, 2007, meeting based upon the issues with Western Wellness Foundation, Inc. If the funds are not recovered from Western Wellness Foundation, Inc., the State Commission would request a waiver from the Corporation for the \$20,000+ debt. If Western Wellness Foundation, Inc. has further questions or concerns, the State Commission Executive Committee will convene a meeting to discuss the issues of match and disallowed costs.

The following 6 contracts will be issued for 2006-2007 effective October 1, 2006:

- 1) Cooperstown Community Activities Authority
- 2) Fargo-Moorhead Family YMCA
- 3) Grand Forks Public School District #1
- 4) Jamestown Public School District #1
- 5) ND Council on Abused Women's Services
- 6) YouthWorks

## **PDAT Training Events**

### Band Night Parade:

Jerry Houn explained that AmeriCorps members marched in the Band Night Parade in Bismarck on Friday, May 12, 2006. A ½ day training called "Life After AmeriCorps" was held on Saturday, May 13, 2006 for members. The Band Night Parade/training event is again being planned for in May 2007.

### Cross-Stream Training Event:

The existing AmeriCorps projects were brought together with Senior Corps members in Bismarck in June 2006 for a Cross-Stream Training Event. The training demonstrates that all projects are partnering and working together. The event is also planned for again in June/July 2007.

### **2007-2008 RFP Schedule**

#### Calendar of Events:

Jerry Houn will conduct town hall meetings in Grand Forks, Fargo, Minot, and Bismarck in October/November 2006. Depending on the interest at the town hall meetings, a grant writing course will be available for the potential applicants in late December/early January in Bismarck and Fargo. In late February 2007, the applicants will need to be submitted for review by the Peer Review and Grants Committee. By April 2007, the Grants Committee will have made their determination for projects to fund and will request funding approval from the full State Commission during the April 18, 2007, meeting.

### **Grants Committee Report**

Jim Hirsch reminded members that the Grants Committee should review the recommendations contained in the State Service Plan and identify which goals are being followed-up on.

### **Rough Rider Industries**

Mark Wagner from Rough Rider Industries explained that they serve 3 locations: Bismarck, Carson, and Jamestown. They assist prison inmates with a paid work experience making high quality furniture for the following customer base:

- State Agencies
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Schools
- Hospitals
- Retailers/Wholesalers
- Nursing Homes
- Federal/County/City Agencies
- Churches
- Tribal Agencies
- Certified Private Sector Partnerships

The inmate work program has provided a wide variety of products and services over the last 90 years. Rough Rider Industries began operations in 1975. The site factories product signs, office furniture, upholstery, fitness equipment, they refurbish panel systems, and make baby toys/furniture. All security costs are absorbed by Rough Rider Industries and they are not state funded. Rough Rider Industries operates under a PIE System.

Prison inmates are kept active throughout the day gaining soft skills, hard skills, a paid work experience to help cover expenses (child support, fines, restitution costs, taxes, and institution costs). This experience also teaches the inmates responsibility, work skills, interpersonal skills, hope, discipline, fairness, success, and how to survive when released from prison. Rough Rider Industries has 125-150 jobs in 40 skill areas with 29 employees. Applicants must have good behavior, a GED, and be in compliance with requirements in order to participate. Security measures are extremely high to account for and provide safety in the factories. Salaries and operating expenses are covered by the proceeds of the products sold.

Scott Davy showed members 3 PowerPoints showcasing the history of Rough Rider Industries, their mission statement, and interviews of several inmates proclaiming the positive benefits of working at Rough Rider Industries.

### **Commission Planning & Discussion**

Jim Hirsch suggests that the Business Congress support areas of need in the skilled trades and housing areas as identified by Rough Rider Industries.

Rosella Grant asked for a motion to have Jim Hirsch draft a Resolution of Support for Rough Rider Industries for approval and finalization by the State Commission members which will be sent out for comment electronically.

**Motion: Charles Axtman moved to approve that a draft Resolution of Support be sent out electronically by Jim Hirsch for member vote. Lisa Ringstad seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

Rosella Grant asked that she be moved to one end of the other of the table for Chairing future meetings for visual advantages. Rosella Grant would also like to see lunch served earlier (i.e. 11:45 a.m.).

Jim Hirsch mentioned that the yearly Workforce Development Council/State Commission Joint Retreat will be held in June 2007 in either Fargo, Bismarck, or Medora.

### **Adjournment**

Rosella Grant asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Motion: Charles Axtman moved to adjourn the meeting. Lisa Ringstad seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

The meeting was adjourned.

### **Action Plans:**

- ✚ Budgets will be revised to reflect percentage spent rather than percentage available.**

- + Kaye Knudson to provide a Resolution on the RSVP/Foster Grandparents/Senior Companions age discrepancy at the January 10, 2007, State Commission meeting.**
- + State Commission staff will revise the Program Monitoring & Debt Collection Policies for recommendation and approval at the January 10, 2007, State Commission meeting.**
- + Grants Committee will review the recommendations contained in the State Service Plan and identify which goals are being followed-up on.**
- + Jim Hirsch to draft a Resolution of Support for Rough Rider Industries for approval and finalization by the State Commission members which will be sent out for comment electronically.**
- + Lunch will be served at 11:45 a.m. and the Chairperson will be placed at the end of the table for visual purposes at future meetings.**