

Governor's Advisory Board on Services and Volunteerism

April 9, 2019; 10:30 AM – 4:00 PM

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

815 E. Grace Street

Richmond, VA 23219

Board Members Present: Lily Beres, Jessica Bowser, Elizabeth Childress Burneson, Vanessa Diamond, Terry Frye, Ashley Hall, Tyee Davenport Mallory, Julie Strandlie, James Underwood, Steven Valdez, Leslie Van Horn, Leah Dozier Walker, and Sheila Williamson-Branch

Board Members Absent: John Chapman, Omari Faulkner, Mark Fero, Zachary Leonsis, Gina Lovett Lewis, and Seema Sethi

VDSS Staff Present: Gail Harris, Roxanne Saunders, Kimberly Brown, Joy Wade, Gail Doyle, and Jae-Young Choe

CNCS Representatives Present: Tynetta Darden, Kellie Mattingly

The Board Meeting was called to order at 10:48 AM by the Board Chair, Vanessa Diamond.

Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

The floor was opened for the adoption of the minutes from the meeting on February 28, 2019 by Vanessa Diamond. The motion to adopt the minutes was made, James Underwood seconded, and all approved. (Julie Strandlie abstained due to minutes indicating incorrectly her attendance.)

The floor was opened for approval of the agenda. The motion to adopt the agenda was made, seconded, and approved.

Introduction

Vanessa Diamond opened the floor to Gail Harris who informed the committee that Joy Wade would be leaving her position as AmeriCorps Program Officer with the Virginia Office on Volunteerism and Community Service to accept a position with the Family Services Division at the Virginia Department of Social Services. She commended and thanked Joy for her important role and work for the Virginia State Commission for AmeriCorps. Gail also announced that the AmeriCorps Program Manager position has been newly filled by Roxanne Saunders. All welcomed her to the position.

Chair Vanessa Diamond motioned for the committee to break up into subcommittees at 10:55 a.m.

Presentation: Virginia is for Learners

At 12:10 p.m. the subcommittees reconvened and floor was open to Leah Walker who presented on the Profile of a Virginia Graduate implementation. Next month will see the launch for the Virginia is for Learners campaign. Stickers, pens, and post-its are some of the items being used to promote the campaign. One of the new offices formed in October with the reorganization of the Department of Education was the Office of Equity and Community Engagement. They will serve as liaison to various boards (including the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism), tribes, and other entities. Focused on increasing equity, the Commonwealth will shape its approach to education in order to lead the way and raise the bar; prepare graduates for college, career, and life readiness; maximize potential of all students; and make accreditation reforms, which includes addressing chronic

absenteeism. Early childhood education and teacher retention will also be addressed, including a proposal to extend the teaching license from five to ten years and the approval of four-year teacher prep programs. The five C's is a model to deepen learning within the Commonwealth: Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Creative thinking, Communication, and Citizenship skills.

Leah pointed out racial and ethnicity disparities as barriers to equity within the Commonwealth, which most negatively affect ELLs (English language learners), minority students, low-income students, and those with disabilities. The student to teacher ration regarding diversity in Virginia is among the worse in the nation. Virginia also ranks the worse from school to prison pipeline.

Leah concluded with presenting a hashtag to raise awareness to the campaign that aims to advance equity for students in Virginia: #EdEquityVA and #VAis4Learners. The new website with new resources for families and stakeholders and toolkits for school divisions launches in May of 2019:

www.VirginiasForLearners.virginia.gov

Action: Executive Session

At 1:23pm Vanessa Diamond requested that the Board move into Executive Session for consideration of 2019/20 AmeriCorps funding recommendations.

In accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Vanessa read the following statement:

"We have notification from CNCS that Formula Funding applications from State Commissions will be due for submission on or before June 20, 2019. Based on recently announced CNCS funding of Competitive Applications and the Program Committee's structured review process for Formula funding, the Program Committee is able today to present a proposed Funding Plan for 2019/20 that reflects the actions and ranking developed by the review team. The Formula recommendations will not be finalized for several weeks and then will be submitted to CNCS for final approval.

Given that we are still working to evaluate and finalize investment of Virginia's 2019/20 Formula allocation, this funding information is not yet ready to be shared. Doing so would jeopardize Virginia's relationship with its funder, the Corporation for National and Community Service, and with potential subgrantees. Public discussion of terms and conditions may adversely affect our position in negotiating contracts. "

"I will soon ask for a motion and subsequent action, reflecting the requirements and intent of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, to close this meeting while we consider the 2019-20 Funding Plan. Once we close the meeting, only issues pertinent to funding recommendations may be discussed. Following the closed portion of the meeting, we will reconvene in open session. At that time, I will ask if any member of this body believes that there was a departure from the discussion requirements. If anyone believes that there was a departure from the requirements, he or she must state so, and indicate the substance of that departure. Next, we will record a roll call vote in which each of us certifies that to the best of our knowledge that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements AND only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting by the public body. This vote will be included in the minutes of the open meeting.

Before I call for the motion, what questions do you have about the process?"

Vanessa Diamond asked if there were any questions and then called for motion. Leah Walker made the motion: *"I move that the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism convene in closed sessions to discuss the results of the procurement processes for investing public funds in AmeriCorps*

programming opportunities pursuant to the investment of public funds exemption at Section 2.2-3711(A)(6) of the Code of Virginia, and the possible award of public contracts involving the expenditure of public funds and discussion of the terms or scope of such contracts, pursuant to the award of contracts using public funds exemption at Section 2.2-3711(A)(29).” James Underwood seconded, and all were in favor.

At the conclusion of the Executive Session discussion, Vanessa moved and the Board approved to conclude the closed session and convene in open session.

Vanessa stated: *“Consistent with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, we will conduct a roll call affirmation in which each of us is asked to certify the appropriateness of the content of the closed session. Prior to that, however, I now ask whether any member of this body believes that there was a departure from the requirements of the FOIA. If so, please share that information now, and identify the substance of that departure.*

Thank you. We will proceed with a roll call.

The question here is for you to certify that to the best of your knowledge

(1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements AND

(2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting by the public body.”

When Jae-Young calls your name, please answer “I so certify.” The roll call proceeded and all members so certified.

Vanessa requested a motion to approve the funding recommendations brought forward by the Program Committee:

The Governor’s Advisory Board concurs with and supports the Program Committee’s recommended Funding Plan for 2019/20 distribution of formula funds from CNCS as presented. The Board recognizes that adjustments will be necessary based on final available funds. The Board will receive a report of the final distribution of funds when contracts are finalized. The motion was approved by all.

Ashley Hall resumed with program updates and reported that background checks were all complete.

Outreach & Communications Committee Report

Steven Valdez reported that the joint Outreach & Communications Committee discussed and recommended that the two committees remain a joint committee permanently. Julie Strandlie added that the Governor’s Volunteerism Awards were also discussed and that the winners appear in a brochure that will be distributed at the Governor’s Mansion that same evening. Logistics involving the event were also discussed. For future award nomination processes, Leslie Van Horn suggested narrowing the award categories and number of nominees to review.

Volunteerism conference now has 335 registrants, nearing the goal of 400. While early bird registration is closed, the Board was encouraged to continue promoting the conference. Ideas for more exhibitors and conference giveaways were also requested.

Guiding Principles 2020

Gail Harris reported that next January will see the end of the 3-year process for Formula grants; therefore no applicant would be a continuation. Everyone reapplies, new or returning, with the submittal of a new application. Gail reviewed the guiding principles and asked for discussion and additions. The Guiding Principles that the Board endorsed for 2020 are as follows:

- Focus area emphasis:
 - +Education
 - +Economic
 - +Healthy Futures: especially the opioid epidemic.

- Aim for a portfolio of 10 – 12 programs that are larger and stronger
- Allow flexibility for the number of MSY for new programs. Start smaller and grow.
- Support the development of strong intermediaries
- Virginia should continue on a 3-year funding cycle where ALL programs, new and returning, compete at the same time with the same criteria.
- Programs should have a reasonable expectation of continued funding in years 2 and 3 if they meet high expectations for compliance, service delivery outcomes, and member experience.
- Funds should be directed, whenever possible, to communities that can document high needs (i.e. high poverty rates, academic under achievement) supported by reliable data.
- Areas of the State that *do* have high needs and are not served by AmeriCorps, should be targeted for outreach and program development.
- Following the six years of funding, to be considered for continued funding a program would need to have initiated some substantial change such as expansion, implementation of an innovative approach, or movement to an intermediary status.
- Strong programs would also be encouraged to compete for CNCS competitive grants **
Recognize that competitive funding won't work for all programs..
- Level of risk should drive level of monitoring.
- Because we believe there are high priority unmet needs in Virginia that can best be met through AmeriCorps, we will actively pursue additional funding while taking staff capacity and the size of our portfolio into consideration.
- We should recognize that the field of volunteerism is part of our mission. We should develop, over time, the expertise and capacity in the field so we can educate, advocate for, and assist individuals and organizations in promoting and developing effective volunteerism and service programs which include AmeriCorps and other National Service programs.

During discussion several members emphasized the challenge of rural areas. Special recruitment emphasis will be placed on trying to find strong rural intermediaries. Steven Valdez added and endorsed the idea of targeting university-affiliated programs in rural areas and Southwest Virginia.

Election of Officers for 2019/20

Vanessa Diamond led a discussion about board members for the following year and ideas on recruiting new members that represent underrepresented areas within the Commonwealth. Recommendations are to be sent to Gail Harris. The challenges of recruiting members from rural areas were also discussed in regards to the commute, etc.

Vanessa called for nominations for Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Ashley Hall nominated Julie Strandlie for Chair, and Steven Valdez joined her to be among the nominees. After a vote among the Board, Vanessa announced that Julie Strandlie had been elected as the new Chair for 2019/20. For the Vice Chair slot, Steven Valdez was nominated and subsequently elected Vice Chair.

CNCS State Office update:

Gail Harris reported that the Virginia CNCS staff are currently shutting down their office in Richmond as part of the CNCS transformation. In the future all staff are to telecommute until the Philadelphia regional office opens.

VA Commission Director's report:

Gail updated the Board on certain staff activities. As for recent trainings for AmeriCorps programs, Kimberly Brown reported that the State Commission office has worked with the Department of Criminal Justice Services and the Department of Behavioral Health to provide mental health first aid training which provides a certificate upon completion. Gail Doyle added that various trainings on public speaking skills have been offered by popular demand among members. *Life after AmeriCorps* training continues to guide members in pursuing a career beyond service and turning service into jobs. There have been training sessions across the state offered to members. The Program Directors' training event is coming up in July.

Closing and Adjournment

Vanessa Diamond adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Prepared by Jae-Young Choe

Submitted by Gail Harris

REVISED AND APPROVED 11/14/2019