

**Volunteer Tennessee**  
**Quarterly Commission Meeting Minutes**  
Cheekwood, Nashville, TN and Virtual Meeting  
July 17, 2020

Members in Attendance: Chairing: Tina Hodges\* (virtually) (proxy for S. Palmer), Justin Crowe\* (virtually), PJ Davis\* (virtually), Stephanie Davis\*, Bobby Graves (TDM), Michael Hogan (TDS&HS), Rick Kriesky\*, Buddy Lea (TDF&A) (virtually), Heidi Leming (TBR) (virtually), Greg Lyles\* (virtually), Kane Reeves\* (virtually), Donovan Robertson\* (virtually), Nancy Schelin (TDEC), Jason Scott\* (virtually), Terry Silver\* (virtually), Tracy Van de Vate\* (virtually), Amy Walter\*, Betty White\* (virtually), Eileen Wollam\* (virtually)

Members not in Attendance: Brittany Debit-Barker\* (TDOE), Marjahna Hart (TDCS), Ethan Harvill\*, Andrea Hill\*, Lee Moten\*, Carol Oglesby (UT-C), Sara Palmer\* (proxy), Wanda Perry\*, VACANT (CNCS, TDoH, TDHS, TDLWD, TDMHSAS)

Staff: Shannon Duke, Neelam Gupta, Monica Hodges, Stephanie Houghton, Jim Snell, Daniel Sparkman

Quorum Count: 15 of 25 (13 is quorum). (\*) indicates voting member.

Tina Hodges called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m. Tina thanked Amy Walter for hosting the in-person meeting at Cheekwood. Amy gave an overview of Cheekwood and the Chihuly exhibit. Tina called for a roll call, and each person introduced themselves.

Tina then asked everyone to review the minutes from the last meeting. Tina called for a motion to approve the May 15, 2020 meeting minutes. Kane Reeves made a motion, and Eileen Wollam seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Tina called on Donovan Robertson to give a report out on Friends of Volunteer Tennessee. Donovan told the board Stephanie Davis has assumed roll as treasurer for Friends.

Tina called on Jim Snell to give the Director's Report. Volunteer Tennessee staff are working from home for foreseeable future. The Tennessee Serves volunteer portal is active, and we have partnered with Volunteer Centers across the state. We are waiting to do the official launch of the portal with the First Lady, Maria Lee. We did not get continued funding for the Volunteer Generation Fund grant, which was about \$300,000 per year. The majority of that grant money went to Volunteer Centers subgrants for education, economic development, and environmental activities. The Corporation for National and Community Service [CNCS] is in the process of re-branding. The agency will be rebranded as AmeriCorps. Senior Corps would become AmeriCorps Seniors. The House is taking up appropriations for fiscal year 2021, and it has completed a bill markup that would increase CNCS by \$50 million - AmeriCorps and Senior Corps by \$18 million each and \$2 million additional for State Service Commissions. The Senate has introduced the Cultivating Opportunity and Response to the Pandemic by Service or CORPS Act which would provide \$14-\$19 billion over 3 years to respond to COVID-19 issues. This would increase AmeriCorps living allowance to 175% of poverty line, AmeriCorps education award to twice amount of a Pell grant, and exclude AmeriCorps living allowance from income tax. It would also give \$250,000 for Volunteer Generation Fund to every state. Match requirements would be waived, and it would allow State Service Commissions to do

direct placement of AmeriCorps members. Senator Marsha Blackburn has signed on as a co-sponsor of the bill. The VICTORY Act has a more modest increase of 55,000 AmeriCorps members per year and puts priority on projects around COVID contact tracing. It would allow commissions to use CNCS funds for other things during an emergency. The CORPS Act has a lot of momentum and bipartisan support. Senator Lamar Alexander is supportive but has not co-sponsored. There are postcards to thank Senator Blackburn here, and the template will be sent to those at home.

Tina explained that there would not be separate committee meetings. Instead, the full board would discuss key issues for each committee. Tina called on Eileen to lead the Board Development Committee discussion. Eileen noted that the committee has a goal of updating the board handbook. Stephanie Houghton is creating a resource page on the Volunteer Tennessee website. The committee met with Stephanie, and she is helping to reorganize the Board handbook into a single PDF file. Eileen asked for input on whether the annual Board Retreat should be in person or not. We have not received Board appointments for 2020 from the Governor's Office. The Board then discussed options for the retreat. Jim offered to send out a Survey Monkey poll to the Board on having the retreat in person or virtually.

Tina called on Kane Reeves to lead the Foundations of Service Committee discussion. Kane state that the committee is focused on the Governor's Volunteer Stars Awards [GVSA] and the Awards of Excellence. Shannon and Stephanie have talked to the committee about coordinating county outreach for GVSA. The committee needs more people to help with calls to counties about GVSA participation. The committee also needs judges for GVSA non-profit categories and editors for awardee biographies. The Award of Excellence application is open until September, and the GVSA is open until November. Board members who offered to assist: Donovan and Friends of Volunteer TN, Terry and Eileen on editing, Tina, and Amy. Shannon will follow up to coordinate.

Tina called on Donovan Robertson to lead the Strategic Partnerships Committee discussion. The committee is putting together a template for a day of giving for regional sessions. It will be a step-by-step guide for conducting a day of service. The committee continues to review board participation in giving, and Board members who have not contributed will get an email in the upcoming weeks. The committee also continues to do outreach for sponsors. Stephanie Houghton provided a report on Tennessee Conference on Volunteerism and Service-Learning and GVSA numbers from the February 2020 events. The conference had good registration: 162 registered, with 54 comped registrations. Including speakers, presenters, and exhibitors, the total was about 257 over the three days of the conference. There were 70 counties that participated in GVSA, with 115 individual honorees, and 367 people attended the awards.

Tina called on Michael Hogan to lead the Grants Committee discussion. The 2020 Commission Support Grant budget needed revision due to the loss of the Volunteer Generation Fund grant. Michael asked Jim to provide additional details. Jim explained that future costs of the statewide volunteer portal needed to be incorporated in the Commission Support Grant as a result of the loss of VGF funding. This required a move of funds into Memberships line item from the Volunteer Center and service-learning sub-grants line item in the Commission Support Grant budget. Also, the State FY21 appropriation was slightly higher than expected, which allowed a reduction of the conference match burden. Tina called for a motion to approve the 2020 Commission Support Grant budget revision as presented. Eileen made a motion to approve, and PJ Davis seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

