

Volunteer Tennessee
Quarterly Commission Meeting Minutes
Cheekwood, Nashville, TN and Virtual Meeting via MS Teams
July 22, 2022

Members in Attendance: Chairing: Amy Walter* (proxy – Hill, Reeves, Robertson, Silver, White), George Bove*, Sonda Finley* (virtually), Amy Gilliland*, Katie Goforth*, Andrea Hill* (virtually, needed to leave early), Holly Jones* (virtually), Rick Kriesky* (virtually), Buddy Lea (TDF&A), Greg Lyles*, Patrick Maloney*, Lee Moten*, Cameron Sanford*, Nancy Schelin (TDEC), Leon Shields* (virtually), Tracy Van de Vate* (virtually), Eileen Wollam* (virtually), Jessica Youngblom (TDMHSAS)

Members not in Attendance: Tobi Amosun (TDoH), Suzanne Carr (TDHS), Stephanie Davis*, Terry Frank*, Marjahna Hart (TDCS), Michael Hogan (TDS&HS), Caroline Ledlie (AmeriCorps), Heidi Leming (TBR), Kane Reeves* (proxy), Donovan Robertson*, Terry Silver*, Betty White*, VACANT (TDOE, TDLWD, TDM, UT-C)

Staff: Shannon Duke, Latiyfa Fields, Neelam Gupta, Gordon Harless, Jim Snell, Don Sowers, Candace Taylor

Guest: Debbie Sowers

Quorum Count: 15 (19 with proxies) of 22 appointed (12 is quorum). (*) indicates voting member.

Amy Walter welcomed the Board, went over general housekeeping, and gave a brief of Cheekwood. Amy called the hybrid meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. and gave opening remarks.

Amy asked everyone to review the minutes from the May 20, 2022, meeting. George Bove made a motion, and Greg Lyles seconded. Jim Snell called the roll, and the motion passed unanimously.

Jim gave the Director's report, beginning with an introduction of two new staff, Latiyfa Fields and Gordon Harless, the new AmeriCorps Program Managers. Jim shared the AmeriCorps award letter issues (August 1st), expressing the gravity of the delays, due to a federal switch from the DUNS number to the Unique Entity Identifier. He shared the backlog that has occurred with agencies across the region. He let the board know of the start date distinctions for the Volunteer Tennessee programs and the due diligence of the Regional AmeriCorps Office. He then concluded his director's report.

Amy Walter called for introductions, and then called on Buddy Lea to do a Grants Committee update. Buddy shared that the board had already approved 2022-23 AmeriCorps Formula funding, but there was an opportunity to increase funding for some programs. Buddy called on Jim to provide context. Jim asked the board to complete Conflict of Interest forms, and if there were conflicts, he asked those individuals to recuse themselves. If members who had a conflict attended virtually, he asked that they recuse by muting themselves. He then went on to confirm those with conflicts included: Katie Goforth, Nancy Schelin, and Patrick Mahoney. These three members recused themselves before the discussion began.

Buddy gave a quick thanks to Jim for his hybrid meeting facilitation prowess. Jim went on to review the 2022-23 AmeriCorps Formula funding revision to the May commission funding approval. Two programs have opted out of funding (Appalachian Resource Conservation and Development Council and AIM Center). AIM asked to defer funding to 2023-2024. The Grants Committee recommended against this, and the staff agreed. The recommendation is to not defer the AIM funding but require the submission of a new application as a new applicant for the following funding year. Buddy added context for the AIM decision. AIM decided to forgo the funds due to organizational changes. Volunteer Tennessee has never deferred funding, and the Grants Committee did not want to set a precedent. Greg Lyles noted that, in the May meeting, Relay Graduate School of Education and Teach for America - Memphis were offered no funds and asked for clarification. Jim noted that the AmeriCorps Agency offered AmeriCorps members to both programs in the National Competitive funding process, but they did not offer funds to administer the programs. Volunteer Tennessee offered the two programs them an option to continue move to the Formula funding process, which they both accepted. Amy Gilliland noted a visit to Appalachian Resource Conservation and Development Council and asked for more information about their decision to not go forward. Jim shared that the agency determined that AmeriCorps was not a good fit for them at this time. Jim noted, there is more carry-over funds from the American Rescue Plan funding, and VT will have roughly 1.5-2 million in additional funding. Amy Walter then called on the board to a vote. George Bove made a motion to accept the revised Formula funding, and Eileen Wollam seconded. Jim called the roll, and the motion passed unanimously.

Buddy then reviewed revisions to the 2022 Commission Investment Fund Budget. Jim noted that virtual meetings will take the place of several items originally budgeted as in-person. Buddy stating the Grants Committee views the budget as being an investment in furthering program and commission staff development. Amy Walter then called on the board to a vote. George Bove made a motion, and Amy Gilliland seconded. Jim called the roll, and the motion passed unanimously.

Amy Walter called on Jim to review the State Service Plan process. He asked the board to think about whether the mission, vision, committee structure are still feasible. This would be revisited at a later date. Jim gave background information on the State Service Plan timeline, including holding listening session of Tennessee community members, and several board meetings from 2020-2022. He stressed the importance of the breakout groups to develop clearly defined outputs and outcomes. Amy Walter asked if there were any baseline data for the community needs areas. Jim responded that there weren't any for food, many for education, and some for economic opportunity. For DEI and emergency preparedness the programs incorporating these issue areas, their mission was not focused here. He noted that these data points could be pulled from outside sources, but the education pieces could be pulled in-house. Buddy asked who would be completing the activities listed in the logic model. Jim answered that, in the context of the commission meeting, the focus would be on activity outputs and outcomes for the commission members. Separately there would be activity outcomes and outputs for Volunteer Tennessee's programs. Amy Walter noted that if a change of focus occurs, the commission would need to be cognizant of the funding associated with the focus areas. Jim went on to discuss the need for measurable and achievable goals and to review the current document to assess feasibility. Jim concluded, and the commission moved to group breakout discussions.

After the breakout sessions concluded, Amy reconvened the meeting and asked for breakout group report-outs:

Breakout Group 1 (Reporter: Patrick Mahoney)

Food Desserts + Food Insecurities

- Output: Increased training opportunity, Increased # of resources to websites
- Outcomes: Increased awareness for community members and increased training opportunities for AmeriCorps Members

Education + Recruitment

- Activity: In-state tuition for AmeriCorps Members and Sharing stories on social media from AmeriCorps members
- Output: This will lead to an % increase in member enrollment by 2024, and an increase the following year

Economic Opportunity

- Not Discussed

Diversity Equity and Inclusion

- Output: Members serving should reflect the communities they serve by xx%

Emergency Awareness

- Output: Increase community emergency response training opportunities by xx%

Breakout Group 2 (Reporter: Nancy Schelin)

Group 2 decided to focus on 6 focus areas that could be used across each issue area. Group 2 addressed 1 focus area specifically.

Marketing + Advertisement

- Activity: Utilization of Volunteer TN Portal, creation of videos by a popular influencer and past AmeriCorps Members
- Output – Increased marketing will lead to a xx% increase in new service members and an xx% increase in accessibility for AmeriCorps program staff

Partnership/Corporate Social Responsibility

- Output – greater partnerships will have a xx% increase in awareness of the programs
- Outcome – (1) this will lead to a greater community knowledge around the AmeriCorps program and (2) increase the amount of serving members by xx% and participating programs by xx% and board members by xx%

Advocacy

- Activity - Support for a non-taxable Segal award
- Output – This would lead to an xx% increase in members applying as it increases the attractiveness of service.
- Outcome – Not solidified

Commitment or Connections (Board Role) – Each board member will commit to supporting the success of a minimum of one identified issue area

Workforce

- Activity: Build robust partnerships with universities
- Output: This increases awareness around the AmeriCorps program by xx%
- Outcome: AMC members enrolled via the VT-TN University partnerships increase by xx% by 2024 and a larger increase by xx% by 2025

Note: Baseline data was reported as a need for SMART outputs

Breakout Group 3 (Reporter: Eileen Wollam)

Food Desserts

- Outputs: (1) By the end of 2024 awardees should be up by 25% and 40% by 2025, (2) By 2024 20% of programs will address food insecurity and this will increase to 25% in 2025
- Outcomes: (1) Dedicate % of future funding to food insecurity programs and increase awareness within communities around food deserts/insecurities (2) Increase Corporate Social Responsibility participation/Board members – how can we increase our level of expertise

Education Gaps

- Outputs: (1) Teachers will continue to work 3 years after the AmeriCorps service year (2) Promote service stories and the impact of partner agencies that address education issues (3) Highlight opportunities for education gaps on the TN Serves portal (4) 100% of

AmeriCorps programs that focus on education will meet or exceed their established academic goals and performance measures

- Outcomes: More dedicated teachers in the workforce to decrease the education gap among underprivileged students

Employment/ Workforce Development

- Outputs: (1) Priority to applicants that address workforce development (ex. Teacher training of life skills training) (2) Programs should support resume building, internships, interview skills, etc., for both AmeriCorps members, volunteers, and/or community recipients
- Outcomes: (1) 10% of volunteer opportunities across all avenues result in employment (2) Life after AmeriCorps, all programs to develop a career supportive pathway for service members by 2025

Diversity Equity and Inclusion

- DEI/Civic Workshops available at board retreat (possible) at the Conference for continued education

Breakout Group 4 (Reporter: Jessica Youngblom)

Group 4 identified activities for the majority of the issue areas discussed to better fit the listed outcomes and outputs.

Emergency

- Activity 1: Host a minimum of 3 emergency trainings annually – 1 in each grant division
 - (Already Developed) Outputs – At least 25 individuals attend each of the emergency training's
 - (Already Developed) Outcome – Increased knowledge and emergency preparedness
- Activity 2: Include an emergency preparedness tip in each newsletter
- Output: Increase in click rate by 5% in the newsletter
- Output: Greater knowledge of emergency awareness across the TN community by xx%

Diversity and Inclusion

- Activity 1 – Host 3 Annual DEI Trainings
 - Outputs: (1) Increased awareness of gaps and opportunities (2) DEI trainings will be provided to 100% of Volunteer Tennessee programs, volunteers, and VT Staff
 - Outcome: Through pre and post-test there is an identifiable increased knowledge of DEI
- Activity 2: Insure printed and online materials are provided in different languages and for different modes of communication
 - Outputs: (1) Subgrantees will have assessments and other printed materials in other languages, and offer modes of communication that will be monitored by VT staff (2) There will be a decrease in barriers as it related to non-English speakers or individuals with English as a 2nd language

- Outcomes: Increase diversity of AmeriCorps members by % each year

Economic Opportunities and Workforce Development

- Activity 1: Marketing job opportunities on social media for AmeriCorps members and staff
 - Outputs: (1) Provided more access to job opportunities for members post AmeriCorps service and VT Staff
 - Outcome: By year 3 there will be an increase of 5% of AmeriCorps members who obtained a job post service (this will be identified by year 3)

Food Desserts

- Outputs: (1) Award of excellence will promote increased youth community involvement
(2) A minimum of 1 program will be focused on food insecurities in rural communities
- No Outcomes Discussed

Amy Walter asked if there were any final questions and called on Jim for wrap-up. Jim reminded members to complete the evaluation and travel forms for those in-person. Amy Walter then called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Buddy Lea motioned to adjourn, and Eileen Wollam seconded. Amy adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

Approved: _____ Date: _____
Secretary

Meeting minutes prepared by: Latiyfa Fields