

Governor's Advisory Board on Services and Volunteerism

September 26, 2023, 1:00 - 2:30 pm
Community Foundation for a Greater Richmond
3409 Moore Street, Richmond, VA 23230

Board Members Present: Vanessa Diamond, Cynthia Downs-Taylor, Peppy Linden, Kimberly Luckabaugh, Sam Parham, Joy Parker, Dominick Rascona, Jamie Seagraves, Julie Strandlie, Sheila Williamson-Branch, Clifford Yee

Board Members Absent: Naila Alam, Mark Fero, Clovia Lawrence, Enid Mpumwire Machayo, Adria Merritt, NaQuetta Mitchell, Reagan Polarek

Ex-Officios Present: Sara Vanderploeg (AmeriCorps), Carol Ayars (AmeriCorps Seniors)

Serve Virginia Commission Present: Kathy Spangler, Samantha Lukasiewicz, Analise Gammel, Alex Vanik, Jae-Young Choe, Sarah Lawson

AmeriCorps Leadership: Sonali Nijhawan, Mary Hyde, Jennifer Bastress Tahmasebi, Andrea Robles, Sara Vanderploeg, Huda Hamdan

The Board Meeting was called to order at 1:06 PM by Board Chair Clifford Yee.

Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

The meeting was opened for approval of the agenda. Joy Parker motioned to adopt the agenda, Julie Strandlie seconded, and all were in favor. Chair Clifford Yee called for the adoption of minutes from May 18, 2023. The motion to adopt the minutes was made by Peppy Linden, Kimberly Luckabaugh seconded, and all were in favor.

Chair's Remarks

Chair Clifford Yee highlighted some major accomplishments resulting from AmeriCorps Commission Support Grant-American Rescue Plan funding. The new brand "Serve Virginia" was launched with a new website and awareness and recruitment campaign. The Virginia Community Engagement Index (VCEI) was implemented and has been building capacity with the launch of the Central Region project and planning grant initiative. The Commission has been partnering with the Virginia Service Foundation in the implementation of the 9/11 and MLK national days of service mini grant program. Also, a new pipeline is in development for potential AmeriCorps grant programs.

The annual Volunteerism Summit took place earlier in the year in May, and the 2023 Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Award event will take place in November. A dynamic AmeriCorps State and National portfolio includes formula, competitive, and public health AmeriCorps programs. Site visits took place with 2 Members of Congress and 4 Members of the General Assembly as well as two events with AmeriCorps leadership.

The Commission's VISTA capacity building project expanded and saw 9 National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) projects across Virginia. Last year, the Corporation for National and Community Service provided 10.8 million dollars in federal funding support through all streams

of AmeriCorps service programs and 5.1 million dollars in additional outside resources was generated to support for these programs for a total investment of nearly 16 million dollars. This represents nearly 3,000 members serving in over 400 locations across the Commonwealth last year to tackle significant challenges our communities face. As the new year begins, the Chair encouraged Governor's Advisory Board members to engage in activities such as making site visits to AmeriCorps programs, serving on a grant making or award selection panel, and promoting Serve Virginia projects to their networks to advance the State Service Plan.

AmeriCorps Formula Funding Plan

Vice Chair Sheila Williamson-Branch provided a summary of the AmeriCorps Competitive funding programs this year: \$1,226,206 in Public Health AmeriCorps has been accepted on behalf of three applicants supporting 78 members, and \$782,827 in Competitive funding has been accepted on behalf of two applicants and will support 102 members.

The Commission presented a proposed Funding Plan for program year 2023-2024 that reflects the actions and ranking developed by the review panel which included members of this board and the AmeriCorps Committee. The Executive Committee authorized the AmeriCorps Committee to provisionally approve the proposal by the Executive Committee during their May 5th meeting. The AmeriCorps Committee met on May 15th and took the following actions:

- 1) Per Article 5- Section 3 of our bylaws, the Board considered and acted upon grant applications for funds provided by AmeriCorps through Serve Virginia as required,
- 2) Per the Executive Committee authorization, the AmeriCorps Committee provided provisional approval of these recommendations which the full board must officially ratify.

Serve Virginia is in full compliance with AmeriCorps and state procurement requirements for all aspects of the FY23 AmeriCorps Formula Request for Applications (RFA) and review process. The FY23 AmeriCorps Formula allocation for Virginia is \$4,573,963. There are also funds available through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) to support Cash Match Replacement to 11 programs. The Formula application review panel reviewed 12 applications: 3 Planning grants which are intended to prepare organizations to submit an operational proposal and 9 Operational proposals.

The funding priorities for the 2023-2024 Formula portfolio included: 1) Creating a funding placeholder in the amount of \$1,096,393. A placeholder, up to 24% of the FY 23 Formula allocation, is allowable under AmeriCorps guidelines. This enables the Commission to reserve a portion of unallocated funds for later awards; 2) Focus on balancing the requests for AmeriCorps members with past performance to reduce the administrative challenges associated with mid-year member slot conversions; and 3) To prioritize allocation of Formula ARP dollars, which will expire on 12/31/2024, through \$606,926 in cash match replacement. This will provide maximum match relief to support organizations as they recover from the pandemic.

The Formula awards for the Board's consideration total 3,477,570 million.

Chair Clifford Yee opened the floor to approve the recommended Formula awards and placeholder funding. The motion was moved by Kimberly Luckabaugh, Cynthia Downs-Taylor seconded, and all were in favor to approve the funding recommendations.

Election of Officers

Chair Clifford Yee called for former Chair Julie Strandlie to administer the election process. Ms. Strandlie reported that during the nomination process, Clifford Yee accepted the nomination as

Chair and Sheila Williamson-Branch accepted the nomination as Vice Chair. There being no additional nominations, Ms. Strandlie entertained a motion to elect Clifford Yee as Chair and Sheila Williamson-Branch as Vice Chair by acclamation. The motion was moved by Vanessa Diamond, seconded by Sam Parham, and all were in favor.

Roundtable with AmeriCorps Leadership

The Chair welcomed members of the AmeriCorps leadership team. The AmeriCorps Roundtable offered an opportunity to discuss the Commission's priorities going into the third year of the State Service Plan and ideas for the next phase. Strategies were discussed to 1) build a stronger culture of service, volunteerism, and civic engagement; 2) build a more representative, integrated, and aligned network of partners; and 3) build a more robust resource and support infrastructure.

Serve Virginia Update

Kathy Spangler, Director of Serve Virginia reported that Samantha Lukasiewicz was selected through a nationally competitive search to serve as the new AmeriCorps Manager effective September 11. She has most recently served as Senior Program and Compliance Officer and is also one of four AmeriCorps alums on the Commission team along with Analise Gammel, Alex Vanik, and Sasha Bronder.

The Commission also welcomed to the team a new fulltime Communications Specialist, Sarah Lawson. Sarah previously worked at Virginia Humanities and brings strong writing and communication skills to the team.

There are 14 members of this Board with terms expiring at the end of June 2024, four of which are not eligible for additional consecutive terms. The remaining are eligible to apply for re-appointment. The potential loss of 14 members of the board could put the continuity of work at risk. If a board member is not going to apply for reappointment or is rotating off, the Commission requests that they begin working to help identify a qualified individual to fill their seat. Also needed are recommendations for potential board members of the Virginia Service Foundation and potential funders for the Commission's work.

Public Comments and Adjournment

Chair Clifford Yee opened the floor for any public comments, of which there were none.

The next meeting will also be in-person on November 13, 2023, at the Patrick Henry Building. It will be a joint board meeting with the Virginia Service Foundation to discuss shared projects and will be immediately followed by the Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Award event at the Executive Mansion.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:33 p.m.

Prepared by Jae-Young Choe
Submitted by Kathy Spangler