

Corporation for National and Community Service
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
June 28, 2005

The Board of Directors convened in Washington, D.C. at the Corporation for National and Community Service. The following members of the Corporation's Board were present:

Stephen Goldsmith, Chair
Cynthia Burleson
Mark Gearan (by telephone)
Dorothy Johnson
Carol Kinsley
Jacob Lew
Mimi Mager
William Schambra
Leona White Hat
Donna Williams

Juanita Doty participated at the invitation of the Board of Directors.

OFFICIAL ACTIONS

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting held on February 8, 2005.
(Transcript, 9-10)

The Board approved regulations for the AmeriCorps grants program. (Transcript, 27-36)

Chairman's Opening Remarks

Chairman Stephen Goldsmith opened the meeting by noting the positive progress being made by the Corporation in all areas. He complimented the process used to consider changes to the AmeriCorps rules. He praised the Corporation's improvement in executing grant awards in a timely fashion. He noted the positive progress the Board has made in developing a set of metrics to monitor the Corporation's performance.

The President's fiscal year 2006 budget reflects confidence in the improved management of the agency, and early indications for the 2006 appropriation are favorable in the House of Representatives.

Chairman Goldsmith noted that the Board is revising the agency's strategic plan at a time when interest in service among Americans is very high. Using Federal resources efficiently, providing a high-quality experience for participants, achieving results for communities, and expanding opportunities to serve will be key elements.

SUMMARY OF BOARD DISCUSSIONS

Strategy, Management, and Governance Committee Report

Jacob Lew reported that the Corporation is making good progress in approving and making grants while strengthening its risk-based grants monitoring program. A director of award oversight and monitoring was recently hired. The Corporation has significantly improved the timeliness of responses to Inspector General audits.

The financial management team is performing well or showing improvement on a range of government-wide metrics. An external review of the National Service Trust liability recently concluded that the methodology in place is reliable and accurate.

The Corporation has identified several cost-effectiveness measures that are projected to save between two and three million dollars annually. Also in process is a management dashboard with operational metrics for use by the Board using information culled from a data warehouse now under development. The committee looks forward to refining the metrics to make them an effective management tool.

Outreach/Field Communications Committee Report

Cynthia Burleson reported on behalf of committee chair Henry Lozano. She recognized the leadership of former committee chair Juanita Doty whose term recently expired. Ms. Burleson reported that there is general consensus that the outreach around the strategic plan is proceeding well. She summarized a briefing by David Caprara regarding the Corporation's efforts to serve more than 7,000 children of prisoners and to collaborate with the Departments of Justice and Labor to support a national ex-offender re-entry initiative. The committee looks forward to the national conference on service and

volunteering, to be held in Washington D.C. August 4-6. Ms. Burleson praised efforts to provide training and technical assistance to state commissions in support of outreach to faith-based and other community organizations. The Corporation has secured donations from State Farm Companies Foundation, Polo Ralph Lauren Foundation, CVS Corporation, and America Online Inc. (AOL). Ms. Burleson noted that the recent professional corps grant process went very well as a result of an intensive and focused outreach strategy, including involvement by Chairman Goldsmith in the area of health care professionals. Later this year the Corporation will roll out a comprehensive public awareness campaign to increase volunteering among Baby Boomers.

Juanita Doty thanked CEO David Eisner and her Board colleagues, urging continued outreach to grantees and participants.

Program Committee

Donna Williams reported on a survey now underway in partnership with the U.S. Census on youth volunteering and civic engagement, with results expected later in the summer. The Corporation has, for the first time, compiled an annual calendar of funding announcements. The committee is reviewing how the Board can most effectively engage in the grantmaking process, with increasing emphasis on setting strategy prior to drafting funding announcements.

Chief Executive Officer's Report

David Eisner praised Corporation staff for their work on strategic planning while continuing their normal operational responsibilities. He introduced new Chief Human Capital Officer Ray Limon. The Corporation is focused on building alignment between areas of the Board's strategic focus including engaging Baby Boomers, increasing volunteering, promoting greater involvement among educational institutions, and all of the Corporation's programs. Mr. Eisner reported that he had personally conducted extensive outreach with field staff concerning the Corporation's strategic plan, and he praised the level of commitment and dedication among all the staff. Current work is focused on planning for fiscal year 2006 while developing the 2007 budget in light of the objectives to be expressed in the strategic plan. Mr. Eisner remarked on the sense of momentum around national service and its value in tackling community challenges. He noted the upcoming national conference in August as well as the White House Conference on Aging in October. Mr. Eisner indicated he is looking forward to working with AmeriCorps programs in implementing the soon-to-be released regulations. Also, the National Academy of Public Administration plans to issue a report in September with suggestions on how to improve Corporation management and operations. Mr. Eisner ended by expressing his continued commitment to sharing information about legislative developments as soon as it becomes available.

Rulemaking Committee

Dottie Johnson read into the record a resolution approving the AmeriCorps grants final rule as cleared by the Office of Management and Budget, as follows:

Whereas, the Board of Directors has directed the Corporation to undertake rulemaking to establish regulations on significant issues concerning the AmeriCorps grants program, including sustainability and the limitation on the Federal share of program costs, consistent with any applicable directives from Congress; and

Whereas, the Corporation has undertaken an extensive rulemaking process, including public outreach prior to issuing a notice of proposed rulemaking in August of 2004; and

Whereas, the Corporation has fully and fairly considered the public comments submitted in response to the notice of proposed rulemaking; and

Whereas, the Office of Management and Budget has cleared the final rule submitted by the Corporation;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves the AmeriCorps grants final rule as cleared by the Office of Management and Budget and directs the Chief Executive Officer to publish the final rule in the Federal Register.

Ms. Johnson provided background for the resolution, dating back to September 2003 when the Board directed the Corporation to undertake rulemaking to address the issues raised by Congress, including sustainability and the limitation on Federal program costs. Thereafter a committee, initially chaired by Alan Solomont before his term expired and joined by Ms. Johnson and Mark Gearan, took the lead on the Board's behalf during extensive public outreach and comment spanning more than one year. Ms. Johnson related that the process was now coming to a close, with OMB having just cleared the final rule, and with the resolution now before the Board to vote on the final rule. She explained that the text of the final rule, if approved by the Board, would be available to the public within a week. Ms. Johnson closed by expressing her belief that the final rule will go a long way making the AmeriCorps program stronger, more effective, and well-positioned for continued growth.

Carol Kinsley praised the committee's work in navigating the issues raised by the field and by Congress. Jack Lew said that, while joining the Board late in the process, he was impressed by the wide-ranging consultation and bipartisan cooperation, with particular praise for the cooperative work of Dottie Johnson and Alan Solomon. He noted that the final rule reflects a desire to avoid a "one size fits all" approach by meeting the needs of quite divergent programs. He looked forward to an ongoing effort to work together as a board and with the field to improve program operations.

The Board, including Mark Gearan who participated by telephone, voted unanimously to approve the resolution.

Recognition of Juanita Doty

Chairman Goldsmith presented Juanita Doty with a plaque expressing the Board's respect and gratitude for Ms. Doty's service, in particular for her being a champion for faith and community-based initiatives, diversity, and inclusion. Ms. Doty thanked her colleagues and noted that she will be serving as a senior advisor for outreach with the National Institutes of Health, National Institute for Child Health and Human Development on a newly-launched 21-year National Children's Study.

Public Comment

Nelda Brown, director of SEANet, an organization that assists state education agencies in their management of Learn and Serve America K-12 school-based programs, expressed the organization's desire to work with the Corporation and its Board to make sure that the Learn and Serve program is better positioned in current and future deliberations regarding funding. Ms. Brown informed the board that one of the leading states in service-learning had recently reduced the one service-learning position in the state government from full- to part-time; this illustrates the difficult position that the Learn and Serve America program faces across the country in the face of proposed budget cuts.

Betty Ruth, a leader in the Senior Corps community, praised Juanita Doty as a spokesperson for the Corporation and urged the Corporation to ensure representation from the Southern states on the Board. Ms. Ruth also inquired about the scope of an upcoming public service campaign to encourage Baby Boomers to serve. Tess Scannell, Director of Senior Corps, explained that the Corporation was developing a recruitment campaign to increase the participation of Baby Boomers in all of the Corporation's programs.

Jonathan Williams, Director of the Office of Civil Rights and Inclusiveness, thanked Juanita Doty for her support of his efforts to establish the new office.

Adjournment

Chairman Goldsmith adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.