

**Corporation for National and Community Service
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
September 9, 1999**

The Board of Directors convened at the Overseas Private Investment Corporation in Washington, D.C. The following members of the Corporation's Board were present:

Thomas Ehrlich
Dorothy Johnson
Carol Kinsley
Art Naparstek

The following persons were present and invited to participate by the Board:

Bob Rogers
Les Lenkowsky
Chris Gallagher

OFFICIAL ACTIONS

The Board approved the minutes of the Board's meeting on March 8, 1999. (Transcript, 6).

The Board approved reports from the Management and Budget Committee, the Planning and Evaluation Committee, and the Communications Committee (Transcript, 120).

SUMMARY OF BOARD DISCUSSIONS

Introductory Remarks

Tom Ehrlich, in his capacity as Acting Chair for the purposes of the meeting, called the meeting to order. He administered the oath of office to Arthur Naparstek.

Report of the CEO

Harris Wofford, Chief Executive Officer, discussed three priorities for the Corporation: (1) improving financial management; (2) strengthening grantee and subgrantee organizations; and (3) increasing public understanding of the potential of service as a strategy for solving our country's problems.

Management and Budget Committee Report

Tom Ehrlich discussed the committee's focus on strengthening management and noted the importance of consulting with staff and with Congress. He reported that the committee had been briefed on each audit report awaiting final action.

Chris Gallagher explained that the Board as a whole was reviewing the outstanding audit reports and had directed the Corporation's management that resolution of audit findings was one of the Board's highest priorities. He spoke of the productive direct reporting relationship he had enjoyed with Luise Jordan, the Corporation's Inspector General, and reported that Dorothy Johnson had also met with the Inspector General the previous day.

Les Lenkowsky asked about the status of an audit report concerning the Acorn Housing Corporation. Ms. Jordan stated that the audit had been outstanding at the time her office submitted its semiannual report in March 1999, but was now closed.

Dorothy Johnson expressed her appreciation to the Inspector General and assured that she joined the rest of the Board members in taking audit-related concerns extremely seriously.

Chris Gallagher recounted the Corporation's progress in improving its financial management systems, with the goal of having a fully auditable statement. He reviewed Year 2000 compliance, record-keeping at the National Service Trust, increasing the capacity of States to monitor their subgrants, and the installation of a new financial management system for the Corporation. He referred to progress in implementing the Corporation's action plan to correct all the material weaknesses identified by the Inspector General and to carry out other management-directed priorities. He spoke of creating a single grants management program. He described a process underway to improve the capacity of State Commissions through measurable performance standards, a step crucial to devolving more authority to States in the administration of national service programs.

Dorothy Johnson reiterated the seriousness with which she and the rest of the Board members took these issues and reported that she and Bob Rogers had met the previous evening with Representative Hoekstra to discuss these same matters.

Bob Rogers added that he had met with Senator Bond earlier in the day to discuss the Corporation's progress in improving its financial management systems. He singled out the potential for dramatic improvement through the new web-based reporting system to facilitate monitoring at both the grantee and subgrantee level. He emphasized to both Representative Hoekstra and Senator Bond that the Board was actively engaged in the matters that have drawn the attention of Congress. He reported that he had been asked to testify the next week before Representative Hoekstra's oversight subcommittee and that he was pleased that the Board was directly involved in the Congressional oversight process.

Art Naparstek praised the progress made by Chris Gallagher in fostering improvements in the Corporation's management over the past four years.

Dorothy Johnson added that, as a member of the Michigan State Commission, she sees first-hand how seriously the field is taking these same concerns. Mr. Wofford agreed that increasing the capacity of the nonprofit sector was crucial to the success of national service.

Bob Rogers described the development of a paper from the Board to the President concerning the Board's role in supporting the management of the Corporation. He also raised the possibility of convening leaders from government, business, and the nonprofit sector, to discuss the most effective structure for delivering national service.

Planning and Evaluation Committee Report

Les Lenkowsky reported on the committee's discussions on civic engagement and defining the essentials of citizenship. He noted that the Corporation's revised strategic plan is due in September 2000 and raised the issue of how extensive the revisions should be. The committee examined the connection between an individual's service experience and educational or other developmental goals, and how best to foster this kind of reflection.

Bill Bentley, director of the Department of Evaluation and Effective Practices, briefed the committee about ongoing evaluation activities, including one relating to materials on citizenship. Mr. Lenkowsky discussed the status of a longitudinal study of AmeriCorps participants that will help assess the long-term impact of service on those who participate. Now that the Office of Management and Budget has approved the questionnaires, implementation of the first three-year phase of the study has begun. Mr. Lenkowsky noted that the goal is to involve the grant-making community in this study because its findings will be of great value to the larger nonprofit world. The expectation

is that private groups will want to underwrite later phases of the study, as the Corporation's financial commitment at this point is only for the first phase.

Bill Bentley described his department's dissemination of effective practices to the national service field, including making them available on the Corporation's Web site. Marilyn Smith, Director of the Department of Service-Learning, distributed a Corporation summary of a lengthy study of K-12 service-learning conducted by Brandeis University.

Communications Committee Report

Art Naparstek reviewed the committee's discussions about how a comprehensive communications strategy might focus less on the various types of programs supported by the Corporation and more on the Corporation's role in promoting civic leadership and building a civil community.

Melinda Hudson, Director of the Office of Public Liaison, described several initiatives. First, the General Electric Fund has provided funds to support two teams of National Civilian Community Corps members during the summer hiatus between program years. These teams will respond to natural disasters across the country. Second, Habitat for Humanity International has signed on as a national sponsor of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service. Third, the YMCA, the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, and America's Promise have joined with the Corporation to devise a strategy to address the disparity in children's access to technology. Other supporters of this initiative are the Steven Case Foundation, Microsoft, Sun Microsystems, and the Northern Virginia Technology Council.

Mark Isaac, Director of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs, provided an update on appropriations and reauthorization.

Comments from Tom Jones, Habitat for Humanity

Mr. Jones expressed his appreciation for the collaborative efforts of the Corporation and Habitat for Humanity to build homes for low-income families. In September 2000, Habitat expects to complete its 100,000th home. Mr. Jones recounted that the efforts of AmeriCorps members convinced a previously-skeptical Millard Fuller, the founder of Habitat, that national service could help eliminate poverty housing. In the past year, 618 AmeriCorps members have served with Habitat through the National Civilian Community Corps, AmeriCorps State/National, and AmeriCorps VISTA, and now Habitat is developing a working relationship with R.S.V.P. volunteers. In one year, national service participants helped to build 400 Habitat homes. Mr. Jones described the important role that AmeriCorps members play in training and facilitating other Habitat volunteers. Many AmeriCorps members who complete their term of service are staying on as staff members for Habitat sites. Mr. Jones encouraged the Corporation to provide even greater support, as Habitat has affiliates all across the country that are requesting to have AmeriCorps members assigned to them.

Mr. Wofford noted that nearly 6,000 of 40,000 AmeriCorps positions are with faith-based organizations like Habitat for Humanity.

Comments from Shirley Sagawa

Shirley Sagawa, Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff to the First Lady, described the first-ever White House conference on philanthropy, scheduled for October 22. The conference will focus on individual giving and how best to sustain and expand this American tradition.

Report from the Department of Service-Learning

Brad Lewis reported on the President's Student Service Awards, which recognizes students and young people from five years of age through college who perform outstanding service in their communities. In the past year, the Corporation has made more than 13,000 awards, in collaboration with the American Institute for Public Service, Youth Service of America, and the Points of Light Foundation.

Katherine Delo described the President's Student Service Scholarships, in its third year of operation, which provides scholarships to high school juniors and seniors who perform outstanding service in their communities. 4,000 individuals are expected to receive a scholarship in 1999. The Boys and Girls Clubs of America have provided \$ 1 million in matching funds to support scholarships at local clubhouses across the country.

Kathy Kretman reported on the recent selection of 70 Leader Schools, followed by a Congressional reception attended by 230 representatives of the schools.

Report from General Andrew Chambers on the NCCC's 5th Anniversary

General Chambers recounted that 5,000 NCCC Corpsmembers and team leaders have graduated the NCCC program, operating 500 teams, completing more than 2,000 projects, and serving more than 8.5 million hours. This past year, the NCCC has expanded its efforts in disaster relief, in conjunction with FEMA and the American Red Cross. Other recent projects have included the Special Olympics, a signature project with the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, and ongoing projects with Habitat for Humanity and others.

Report on Senior Corps initiative with national nonprofit organizations

Tom Endres, Director of the National Senior Service Corps, described a recent initiative involving several national nonprofit organizations, including Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America; Catholic Charities, U.S.A.; the Child Welfare League of America; Generations United; Lutheran Services of America; Points of Light Foundation; Save the Children Federation; and Volunteers of America.

Adjournment

Mr. Ehrlich adjourned the meeting.