

**Corporation for National and Community Service**  
**Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting**  
**February 8, 2006**

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

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

**OFFICIAL ACTIONS**

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting held on September 21, 2005. (Transcript, 12).

The Board approved the annual program plan for fiscal year 2007. (Transcript 46-53).

## **Board of Directors Letter to Eli Segal**

Alan Solomont read into the record the following letter, signed by Members of the Board, to former CEO Eli Segal:

*Dear Eli:*

*The Board of the Corporation for National and Community Service, along with the Corporation's management and staff and the entire service community is thinking of you and rooting for you as you battle this terrible illness. Few Americans have done more for national and community service or have worked harder to foster an ethic of service than you have.*

*In 1993 President Clinton charged you with leading the effort to launch AmeriCorps and creating a Corporation for National and Community Service which would house, in addition to AmeriCorps, other service programs, including VISTA, NCCC, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America.*

*As the first CEO of the Corporation, you guided AmeriCorps in its formative years, and following your tenure as CEO you continued to lead the Corporation as the Board Chair. In 2001 President Clinton recognized your unique contribution by awarding you the Presidential Citizen's Medal. Since you left government service, you have continued to play a leadership role in the service movement, currently as Chairman of the Board of City Year. As Chairman of City Year's Clinton Democracy Fellows Program, you have begun to promote community service in other parts of the world. You are a leader and a role model as both a public servant and a private citizen.*

*President Bush exhorted us to be a nation of citizens, not spectators, and you have inspired that ideal as much as any American. You have always fought for what you believe in, and we know that now you are in the fight of your life. Please know that we of the Corporation as well as citizens across the country and around the world have you in our thoughts and prayers.*

*For you, Phyllis, and your family and friends, we will work hard every day to make you proud of the movement you helped to create. We know above all that is what you want and expect of us.*

## **Chairman's Opening Remarks**

Chairman Stephen Goldsmith noted that a significant surge in service, particularly among young adults, together with the Corporation's improved management, creates pressure on the budget to meet demand. He alluded to discussions with two state commission executive directors, Kristin McSwain of Massachusetts and Greg Webb of New Mexico, that underscored the importance of operating as sensitively and efficiently as possible,

especially in the areas of management, business process reengineering, and data systems. The Board is focused on establishing an effective set of metrics to measure the success of the staff and the outcomes of the field, including levels of customer satisfaction. The Board recognizes that there is great anxiety around the budget, with some programs more at risk than others, at a time when the Corporation is performing at a high level ranging from responding to Hurricane Katrina to marking the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday as a day of service to celebrating Black History Month.

### **Chief Executive Officer's Report**

CEO David Eisner reported that the Corporation's fiscal year 2007 budget is a strong budget proposal with a five percent reduction in funding that will still support approximately 75,000 AmeriCorps members, 500,000 Senior Corps volunteers, and more than one million Learn & Serve America students, with more than one million volunteers generated through Corporation programs. The budget environment required difficult decisions, including closing down the NCCC program, cutting \$3 million from Learn and Serve America, and consolidating the Corporation's service centers. Mr. Eisner recognized the real impact that these decisions will have, particularly on the NCCC staff, and he commended NCCC Director Merlene Mazyck for her strong management during this time. Until the appropriations process is complete, the Corporation will plan on two tracks to continue or close the NCCC. The Office of Human Capital will work to provide as much notice and support as possible to the 100-plus NCCC staff. For Learn and Serve America, the Corporation remains committed to achieving a 50 percent penetration of service-learning in K-12 schools as well as reaching an additional two million college students. The Corporation plans to release a specific plan to consolidate its five service centers in early March.

Mr. Eisner stated that the Corporation is providing an additional \$14 million in AmeriCorps grants to existing programs to respond to the Katrina hurricane recovery, supporting an additional 705 AmeriCorps members. Implementation of rulemaking is ongoing, with assurances that cost-efficiency will be appropriately balanced in evaluating applications so that lower cost programs are not unduly advantaged. The Corporation has approximately \$272 million to support AmeriCorps grants in fiscal year 2006, supporting just under 40,000 member service years or roughly 65,000 members. AmeriCorps is in a time of transition due to the departure of Rosie Mark as Director. COO Liz Seale has assumed those duties on an interim basis.

Mr. Eisner reported that Senior Corps is doing terrific work, particularly in connection with the White House Conference on Aging where the delegates adopted resolutions specific to civic engagement of older Americans and to the reauthorization of the Corporation. In addition, the Corporation has launched a Get Involved campaign focused on Baby Boomers. The Corporation has also been working closely with all of the associations representing Senior Corps project directors to address several long-standing issues, including the minimum age requirement and income eligibility.

Mr. Eisner stated that AmeriCorps VISTA supported more than 6,700 members serving 5,500 VISTA service years in fiscal year 2005. Plans are underway to celebrate the VISTA program's more than 40 year history.

Mr. Eisner reported that Learn and Serve America, in which 1.3 million students participated in 2005, recently celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a symposium and conference. A Learn and Service public service announcement has reached 15 million Americans since December. A Learn and Serve participant named Ja'Detrus Hamilton sat next to the First Lady at the President's State of the Union address. Learn and Serve has supported \$400,000 in supplemental funding earmarked to Hurricane Katrina relief. The selection process for this year's grants is expected to be highly competitive, approaching a ratio of 10 applicants for each grant. Through staff outreach, the number of colleges matching the AmeriCorps education award is up to 51.

Mr. Eisner stated that AmeriCorps NCCC is focusing on Hurricane Katrina relief efforts, with more than 1,100 NCCC members serving in the Gulf Coast. NCCC also received high marks in a recent customer service study, receiving one of the highest scores in the federal government. A program evaluation, including of the NCCC's campuses, is underway.

Mr. Eisner reported that, in total, more than 13,000 national service participants have responded to Hurricane Katrina, with an additional 75,000 Learn and Serve students involved. They are removing debris, supporting evacuees, mucking out buildings, installing tarps over roofs, and handling case management, call centers, and volunteer coordination. FEMA has supported many of these efforts through mission assignments at the local level in Louisiana, Mississippi, George, Texas, and Florida. COO Elizabeth Seale has built an effective Corporation-wide disaster response team. The Corporation will continue to strengthen the infrastructure needed to support the deployment of volunteers. \$4 million in Challenge Grants also were directed to support Hurricane Katrina relief efforts using Baby Boomer volunteers.

Mr. Eisner reported that the Corporation has made impressive strides in the area of human capital, having completed the first year of a new management appraisal system. The Corporation is currently implementing a new employee appraisal system, under which employees will be assessed in September. Internal communications have been strengthened, and cross-agency training policies are helping to get better results. Jonathan Williams, Director of the Office of Civil Rights and Inclusiveness, has done a strong job of providing support to the Diversity Advisory Council and moving forward on issues of diversity and inclusiveness.

Carol Kinsley urged that careful consideration be given to funding for Learn and Serve America given the strong student involvement and growing demand for service-learning programs.

Mark Gearan expressed disappointment in the budget reductions while praising the CEO's sensitivity to affected NCCC staff. He endorsed Ms. Kinsley's support for Learn and Serve America and the role it plays in fostering citizenship among young people.

## **SUMMARY OF BOARD DISCUSSIONS**

### **Strategy, Management, and Governance Committee Report**

Jacob Lew reported that the committee has given considerable thought to the budget, noting that there had been significant management improvements in the programs that were reduced or eliminated while understanding that constraints sometimes prevent full funding of all programs. He noted that individual members of the Board have different views on the budget and that there is an expectation that those views may be expressed over the course of the year.

Mr. Lew observed that the Corporation continues to make progress in management, including as reflected in a set of metrics used government-wide to measure financial management. The committee focused on two areas highlighted in the metrics as potential weaknesses, accounts payable in the VISTA program and percentage of payees receiving electronic payments. The committee stressed the importance of having a strong Corporation performance on all of the government-wide financial metrics, and engaged with the staff on ways to address the two areas identified.

Mr. Lew reported that the committee had an extended discussion on managing AmeriCorps positions, including the relative strengths of full-time and part-time service. The committee agreed that the principal objective should be to approve the best applications rather than to achieve a pre-set allocation between full- and part-time positions.

Mr. Lew praised Bill Schambra's work in leading the development of the Corporation's revised strategic plan.

Bill Schambra acknowledged the work of Bob Grimm, LaMonica Shelton, Susannah Washburn, and the office of Public Affairs, in producing the strategic plan, which is being released in conjunction with the Board meeting.

### **Outreach and Field Communications Committee**

Cynthia Burleson reported on behalf of committee chair Henry Lozano and Leona White Hat. Ms. Burleson announced that Allison Fritz has been named the new Director of the Faith-Based and Community Initiative, reporting directly to the CEO and the White Office on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

President Bush recently named 13 new members to the President's Council on Service and Civil Participation, which is housed at the Corporation. Several Council members

have participated in developing a radio PSA campaign to stress the importance of volunteering. The Board intends to collaborate with the Council in the months ahead.

Forty-three nonprofit organizations have signed on to support the Corporation's Baby Boomer strategic initiative. The Corporation is distributing a bilingual PSA to more than 12,000 media outlets, with the assistance of the National Association of Broadcasters and the National Cable Television Association. The PSA campaign features Senior Corps volunteers and AmeriCorps VISTA members speaking about their volunteer experiences.

The Corporation is producing an AmeriCorps VISTA legacy book for release in the spring to mark VISTA's more than 40 years history. The VISTA program is developing a communications plan focused on recruitment, alumni, and engaging other key stakeholders, as well as increasing the cost-share component of the program, over a two- to three-year period.

The Office of Public Affairs is managing the Corporation's relationship with AmeriCorps Alums, which was recently re-launched as a program of Hands On Network with 48 affiliates across the country. The Corporation is working on a memorandum of understanding to establish an effective working relationship with AmeriCorps Alums and to improve communications with AmeriCorps members and alumni.

### **Program Committee**

Donna Williams spoke on behalf of committee members Mimi Mager, Carol Kinsley, and Dorothy Johnson. The committee was recently briefed by the Corporation's General Counsel on the status of an on-going effort to strengthen practices around criminal history checks of national service participants, particularly those who have recurring access to children, elderly persons, and individuals with disabilities. The Corporation is drafting a proposed rule for clearance by OMB in the coming months. The Corporation is also proposing rules regarding implementation of the Civil Fraud Remedies Act and AmeriCorps professional corps applications.

The Corporation released a Youth Volunteer Study in December and more than 50 major newspapers covered the story. The committee discussed additional evaluation of Learn and Serve America that may be helpful. The committee reviewed customer service data, with NCCC recording very high scores. AmeriCorps showed dramatic gains in the grant review process. A study is underway comparing VISTA members with those who went to initial VISTA training but did not actually serve a term of service.

The committee spent considerable time in reviewing a draft annual plan in relation to the recently-approved strategic plan. Ms. Williams offered the following resolution:

*Whereas, by a resolution adopted on September 21, 2005, the Board of Directors delegated to the Chief Executive Officer authority to make grants and other forms of financial assistance as are necessary and appropriate to carry out the national service*

*laws, provided that the Chief Executive Officer acts in accordance with a board-approved annual grant-making and program plan, and reports implementation milestones to the Board on an ongoing basis, and*

*Whereas, the Chief Executive Officer has consulted with the Board in developing the Agency's annual priorities and goals for its grant-making and programming, and submitted it for the Board's approval, the Agency programmatic priorities and goals for fiscal year 2007 in relation to the Board's approved strategic plan,*

*Be It Resolved, that the Board hereby approves the annual grant-making and program plan for fiscal year 2007, as submitted by the Chief Executive Officer to the Board's Program Committee in advance of the Board meeting of this date, and*

*Be It Further Resolved, that the Board directs the Chief Executive Officer to report implementation milestones to the Board on an ongoing basis.*

Mr. Eisner clarified that the plan for fiscal year 2007 includes a contingency plan based on Congressional funding for the program, should that occur.

Mimi Mager joined earlier remarks made by several Board members expressing personal distress over some of the budget cuts proposed, and thanked the committee for its focusing the VISTA section on the program's anti-poverty and local capacity-building emphases.

Ms. Johnson stated that the plan will place the Board in a more appropriate role of overseeing implementation by management, with the expectation that the plan will be very useful as an accountability tool.

The Board approved the plan without objection.

Ms. Williams read into the record the following resolution:

*Whereas, Rosie Mauk served with distinction with the Corporation for National and Community Service as Director of AmeriCorps through December 2001 to January 2006, and*

*Whereas, Rosie Mauk brought to the Corporation valuable insight and sensitivity gained from decades of service with various nonprofit and community organizations, including her chairmanship of the Texas Commission of National and Community Service, and*

*Whereas, Rosie Mauk, during her tenure at the Corporation, worked diligently with the Board of Directors to help foster a culture of citizenship and service in America following the terrorist attack of September 11th, and*

*Whereas, Rosie Mauk greatly assisted the Board of Directors in ensuring a significant expansion of AmeriCorps over the past four years, and*

*Whereas, Rosie Mauk faithfully supported the efforts of the Board of Directors to carry out such important initiatives as rulemaking and development of the fifth year strategic plan, and*

*Whereas, Rosie Mauk has been consistent, constant, positive, and spirited champion of national service and of President Bush's call for all Americans to contribute to the well-being of their community through volunteering in service,*

*Be It Resolved, this 8th day of February, 2006, that the Board of Directors expresses its deep appreciation for Rosie Mauk's tireless efforts to support the Board, the President, and her fellow program directors, and wish her well in all of her pursuits and future undertakings.*

Ms. Mauk thanked the Board of Directors, paid tribute to Eli Segal who introduced her to AmeriCorps, and committed to continuing her support for service in other ways besides AmeriCorps.

## **Public Comment**

Shirley Sagawa spoke on behalf of Hands On Network, and as Co-Chair of the Steering Committee for AmeriCorps Alums. Hands On has more than 40 chapters, and recently merged with AmeriCorps Alums. Dan McCowan stated that, at half a million, the number of alums has reached a critical mass, with many serving as executive directors and programs officers, and in other leadership positions with nonprofit organizations, foundations, commissions on national and community service, and the Corporation itself. Alum are actively engaged in service in the Gulf Coast. Anne Richards reported that the number of chapters was growing and the Alums website is proving to be a powerful tool in connecting alums. Ms. Sagawa concluded by thanking the Corporation for its openness to greater collaboration.

Thomas Howard, former VISTA member, NCCC Corps member, and NCCC team leader, spoke in support of the NCCC experience as transformative for thousands of young Americans. He urged the Board to fight for continued funding for the NCCC.

Jennifer Kim of Volunteer Match congratulated the Corporation for its new public service campaign aimed at encouraging Baby Boomers to volunteer.

Marsha Meeks Kelly, Executive Director of the Mississippi State Commission, thanked the Corporation for its support in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. She invited the Board to visit the region to see first-hand the impact the Corporation's resources are having. She praised the work of the NCCC is responding quickly after Katrina hit. Ms. Meeks Kelly also spoke in support of continuing funding for the Presidential Freedom Scholarships, which support service by high school students.



Kristin McSwain, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Service Alliance, spoke on behalf of Voices for National Service, expressing disappointment at the budget's reductions to AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve, and NCCC.

Nelda Brown, Executive Director of the National Service Learning Partnership, spoke on behalf of Service Learning United. She urged increased funding for Learn and Serve America.

### **Adjournment**

Chairman Goldsmith adjourned the meeting at 12:49 p.m.