

## **DC Commission on National and Community Service**

Commission Meeting Minutes  
Monday, January 11, 2016; 6:30 pm  
Serve DC Office, Reeves Center, Suite 101

### **Call to Order**

Chair Love called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

### **Roll Call**

Justine Love  
Brandon Andrews  
Mathew McCollough  
Danielle Reyes  
Alayna Buckner  
Gail Oliver  
Saran White  
Dwight Deneal  
Dyonicia Brown  
Joshua Johnson  
Marlene Zakai  
Lars Etzkorn  
Edward Jones  
Peter Sacco

### **Welcome and Introductions of New Staff**

Delano Hunter, the Director of Serve DC, introduced himself and gave an overview of his background. He said that the Mayor had tasked Serve DC with leveraging the skills of the commission.

Sareeta Spriggs, the Deputy Director of Serve DC, introduced herself and gave an overview of her background.

### **Reading of Past Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Etzkorn made a motion to approve the October 2015 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Deneal, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 10-0-0).

### **MLK Day Preparations**

Mr. Hunter said that Serve DC had approximately twelve MLK Day of Service events that they were helping to recruit volunteers for. He said that this included larger events with the Student

Conservation Association and City Year. He added that Serve DC was also helping to recruit attendees for the MLK Day Parade in Ward 8.

Mr. Hunter said that Serve DC was also looking to relaunch NeighborGood, the office's online volunteer opportunity portal. He said that the portal might include a new web interface provided by Cities of Service.

Commissioner White asked if the MLK Day of Service events that Serve DC was recruiting for were posted on All for Good. Mr. Hunter said that the events were not. He added that the events would be sent out to the public the next day.

Commissioner Zakai recommended that Serve DC check with Commissioner Amy Cohen, the Director of GW's Center for Civic Engagement and Public Service, to see if Serve DC and GW could collaborate on organizing MLK Day of Service projects.

### **DC Resident Snow Team**

Khadija Ismail, the Executive Assistant for Serve DC, said that the office had recruited over 1,800 volunteers from all eight wards of the city to volunteer for the DC Resident Snow Team.

Mr. Hunter said that Serve DC had 2,000 shovels in the office that would be distributed to snow team volunteers within the next few weeks.

Ms. Spriggs said that Serve DC would also be launching an app that would allow for snow team volunteers and DC residents to report addresses that need shoveling.

Chair Love asked if she could be sent a flyer that she could distribute to her neighbors on how to request shoveling services.

### **World Aids Day**

Mr. Hunter said that Serve DC partnered with the Mayor's Offices of LGBTQ Affairs, Latino Affairs, and Women's Policy and Initiatives to collect 736 pounds of food to distribute to multiple organizations for World Aids Day.

### **Emergency Preparedness Cluster**

Mr. Hunter said that Serve DC had partnered with the DC Fire and EMS Department to train 5,000 residents in compression-only CPR.

### **Volunteer Response Training in Times of Disasters**

Mr. Hunter said that more than forty people attended Serve DC's recent training on volunteer response in times of disasters.

## **Committee Updates**

### **Volunteer Recognition Committee**

Commissioner Andrews asked if the Mayor's Office had picked a date for the 2016 Mayor's Community Service Awards. Mr. Hunter said that he did not know if a date had been chosen yet.

Commissioner White suggested that the 2016 Mayor's Community Service Awards could be scheduled during the same week as the Mayor's Day of Recognition for National Service.

### **Grant Updates**

Pamela Weinberg, the AmeriCorps Program Director for Serve DC, said that the commission's Executive Committee would have five days to review the grant recommendations for the 2016-2017 State Competitive AmeriCorps Grants and to approve them. She distributed the rankings for the four competitive grant applications that Serve DC received. She said that three of the applications had been recommended to move into the competitive portfolio, and that one application was not recommended to move forward.

Commissioner Andrews wondered if the lower barrier to entry created by having the submission of a logic model as the first step in the grant process had encouraged more organizations to apply. Ms. Weinberg said that she did think the step had encouraged more organizations to apply. She added that the lower barrier to entry might have also encouraged some organizations with weaker applications to apply.

Commissioner McCollough encouraged his fellow commissioners to become more involved in the grant review process. He added that the scores of Fedcap, one of the applicants, were low across the board because of the poor reviews that were given by multiple individuals involved in the review process.

Ms. Weinberg said that Serve DC's strategy for the formula grant process was to work with smaller, more locally based organizations that may have weaker applications with the hope that they will eventually be able to advance to the competitive grant process.

Chair Love asked if it would be helpful to ask current grant recipients to mentor new applicants during the grant process. Ms. Weinberg said that she has been working on setting up those mentorships.

Commissioner Buckner recommended that Serve DC continue to use logic model submissions and other methods in order to remove applicants who are not ready to submit a full application before they have to go through all of the work to submit a full application.

Commissioner McCollough made a motion to accept the recommendations for the 2016-2017 State Competitive AmeriCorps Grants. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Etkorn.

Commissioner Brown asked if the commission should be concerned about City Year's relatively lower scores in comparison to the other two organizations that were recommended to move forward. Ms. Weinberg said the City Year's scores were lower because on the smaller amount of students being served by the organization in comparison to the large amount of AmeriCorps members that City Year was asking for.

Ms. Weinberg said that Reading Partners, the highest scorer for the competitive grants process, was a locally-based organization. Commissioner Andrews suggested that Serve DC highlight Reading Partners as an example of a strong, locally-based applicant.

Commissioner Reyes suggested, in addition to moving forward with the motion on the table, to have the commission's Programming and Evaluation Committee create a response to the Corporation for National and Community Service that goes over the current issues that Serve DC is experiencing with the grants process.

The final motion was voted on and passed (VOTES: 6-0-3).

### **New Business and Announcements**

Mr. Hunter said that his team was reviewing the strategic plan for Serve DC that was created during the office's previous administration. He said that his team would be making some tweaks to plan and then would be releasing it to the commissioners.

Commissioner Oliver suggested that Serve DC find additional ways to reach out to DC's faith communities.

Commissioner McCollough suggested that the priorities in Serve DC's strategic plan should balance the priorities of the Mayor's Office with the priorities of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Commissioner Etzkorn asked about the reappointment process for commissioners. Mr. Hunter said that there was currently a list of commissioner reappointments in front of the Mayor's Office but that he did not have an update on the status of the reappointments. Commissioner Zakai said that it would be helpful for the commission to receive a list of all the current commissioners and their respective appointment dates.

### **Adjournment**

Chair Love adjourned the meeting at 8:10 pm.