



**Approved (5/23/19)**

**SerVermont Commission Meeting  
7 March 2019**

12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Waterbury State Office Complex, Cherry A Conference Room

**Members in Attendance:** Guy Isabelle, Megan McKeever, Christy Gallese, Eileen Smart (sat on Maine Commission - filling in for Sharon in New Hampshire), Dan Noyes, Lee White (ex-officio)

**Members in Attendance Via Phone:** Bob McCabe, Jason Gosselin, Doug Kievit-Kylar

**Staff in Attendance:** Philip Kolling, Sharon Hearne, Robyn Baylor

**Agenda**

- Welcome
- Minutes
- Public Comment
- Partners and Plans
- New Data
- BREAK
- Governor's Service Awards Discussion
- Upcoming events
- Adjourn

Appended are the following items:

- Program Monitoring Policy DRAFT – for approval
- VT State Service Plan 19-22 – for discussion / approval
- Management Decision for OIG 18-13 – for discussion
- H-0193 As Introduced – for review / discussion
- CNCS Transformation and Sustainability Final – for discussion

**12:00 pm Welcome, Introductions**

Phil welcomed everyone and lead round-table introductions (who are you and what constituency do you represent?).

**12:20 pm Approval of Minutes**

Phil opened discussion and sought approval of Meeting Minutes for January 2019. Guy made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Christy seconded the motion and the minutes were given unanimous approval.

**12:30 pm Public Comment Period**

None noted.



**12:45 pm Partners and Plans: Activities and Updates**

Phil began the the discussion of Partners & Plans (Activities & Updates) by noting the following:

**AmeriCorps Program Staff Changes:**

- LEAP in the NEK Coordinator is now Program Director
- Vermont Youth Development Corps has a new Assistant Director
- Vermont Youth Conservation Corps has designated a new person as Program Director

Sharon addressed the training needs of new staff and indicated that she is prepared to provide this as needed.

**VYCC Monitoring:**

- Have shared report with staff
- Establishing corrective action plan and timeline
- Many changes made already
- Meeting with them next week to review

VYCC monitoring results have been shared and a corrective actions plan is being developed. The program has already made significant changes and progress is positive.

Subsequent to the VHCB audit four members' education awards were determined to be disallowed (owing to an unallowable for-profit activity). Guy voiced concern that the members NOT be held responsible for such a technicality and Phil reported that VHCB intended to cover the members' cost of the withdrawn education awards.

**ReSource Monitoring:**

- Finding based upon A-133 Audit
- Corrective Action Plan in Place
- Documentation provide to Internal Audit Group

**CEDO Monitoring:**

- Internal Audit Group has not issued the report at this time.
- Paused per IG instruction
- IG visited – no findings have been issued, work continues.

**DRAFT Monitoring Policy:**

The current monitoring policy was deemed to be overly prescriptive with monitoring months clearly specified. In the proposed update to the policy the monitoring schedule was made more generic and thus made less predictable. Christie asked if the policy gained greater legitimacy with board adoption. Phil said that it would. Thus, Guy made a motion that the monitoring policy be adopted as updated. Lee seconded the motion and the motion was given unanimous approval.

**VISTA Update:**

Robyn reported that recruitment has remained an ongoing challenge but, to date, NO applicants/recruits have been lost to date. Program applications are due to CNCS tomorrow (3/8/19). Roby is hoping to bring on more sites working on the opioid epidemic..but this has proven challenging. Well-resourced organizations are already geared up or gearing up to address this need. State government was interested, but there were too many beaureaucratic hurdles to overcome. Thirty-five letters of intent have been received and 33 VIST applications were received for 26 slots. Vermont is eligible for 38 slots, but...will consider applying for an amendment for additional slots. Robyn explained how she would like to make the application process more competitive in the future. Bob asked how many AmeriCorps/VISTA members stay in Vermont post-service.



Robyn guessed that the number was around 2 out of 3 members choose to stay in Vermont and that this represented approximately 50/50 Vermonters and Out-of-Staters.

H.193

2019



**Establish  
SerVermont in  
statute vs.  
executive order**

Stability



**State College Ed  
Award match**



**In state tuition  
for those  
serving**

#### BILL AS INTRODUCED

- . 1 H.193
- . 2 Introduced by Representatives Noyes of Wolcott, Colston of Winooski, Hill of
- . 3 Wolcott, Masland of Thetford, and Troiano of Stannard
- . 4 Referred to Committee on
- . 5 Date:
- . 6 Subject: Commerce and trade; workforce development
- . 7 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to provide a
- . 8 State education award that matches the Segal AmeriCorps education award to a
- . 9 student who provided his or her AmeriCorps service in Vermont and is
- . 10 enrolled at a Vermont postsecondary institution.

Dan offered an update on progress made on moving H.193 toward passage in the Vermont Statehouse. The bill was presented to the appropriations committee...and was "favorably received". Subsequently, the bill was assigned to the Commerce & Economic Development Committee. It may be helpful for commissioners, on their personal time, to reach out to members of the committee to voice their support. On the senate side Senator Westman has already expressed that the bill seemed to suggest a "good investment" in Vermont. CNCS can tell us how much Federal money goes to Vermont institutions of higher learning. Best guess is, approximately \$61K/year with \$1.4M education awards total.

Dan also spoke briefly regarding an ANR program to get AmeriCorps members training to service autos of low-income Vermonters to ensure that they are running as cleanly and efficiently as possible.

Should any of this gain traction, the bill will combine:

- Establishing SerVermont in statute vs. executive order
- State College Ed Award match
- In state tuition for those serving

Phil initiated discussion of the Management Decisions on OIG Report 18-13, Agreed-Upon Procedures for CNCS Grants Awarded to SerVermont with the following:

**Audit:**

- Two findings:
  - Noncompliant National Service Criminal History Checks (\$201,868)
  - Unallowable For-Profit Activities (\$11,570)
- Questioned \$213,438 total:
  - \$122,551 in federal
  - \$38,746 in match,
  - \$51,912 in Ed Awards
  - \$229 in interest

**Final Disallowances:**

- NSCHC Noncompliance: \$21,500
  - SerVermont: \$1,000
  - Lyndon State College: \$15,000
  - VT Housing and Conservation Board: \$5,500
- Prohibited Activities: \$0
- No Education Awards are disallowed under either finding.

**Remaining Actions:**

- Final revisions of NSCHC policies and procedures – which are changing with CNCS policy

Phil noted how it was that SerVermont and the two partners must yet update their policies regarding criminal history checks. Phil went on to explain that there were errors in a process NOT that ineligible criminally dangerous individuals were allowed to serve.

**Final Takeaways:**

- Systems, policies and procedures largely work.
- NSCHC is where almost 100% of our risk lies.
- Lots of unnecessary work (prepare organizations for large questioned costs that CNCS already had a policy for addressing).
- Didn't get resolved lightly.

Phil began his discussion of the **CNCS Transformation and Sustainability Plan** by explaining how SerVermont could be supportive of the plan's goals (see below) and is willing to engage in a conversation with CNCS regarding the yet unspecified details of the plan.

**CNCS Transformation and Sustainability Plan Goals:**

1. Strengthen core business functions
2. Strengthen and align grants management and monitoring to improve efficiencies and maximize effectiveness
3. Prioritize evidence-based interventions
4. Simplify and streamline the application process
5. Simplify the CNCS brand
6. Align workforces and workplaces to better serve our customers, meet evolving needs, and ensure efficient use of taxpayer dollars

**CNCS Transformation and Sustainability Plan Position:**

- Supportive of the high-level goals
  - Need details
  - Need to understand impacts on national service in VT
- New house legislation to stop parts of plan

Some support and skepticism of plan

### **CNCS Transformation and Sustainability Plan:**

- CEO has asked for our support of the plan
- It is important for us to know that we will be engaged in the development and execution of the plan, and not just receive updates once it is a done deal.
- Want to be able to confirm or alleviate concerns of the field.
- What are the impacts on the ground?

### **Specific Details Needed:**

- The ongoing relationship with the AmeriCorps State and National team in developing and refining policies to further strengthen AmeriCorps programming
- The role of portfolio managers and the compliance office in supporting and monitoring commissions
- How the regional structure will ensure that local program development in underserved, rural and economically depressed areas will not be adversely impacted
- The role commissions can play in supporting all streams of national service in their states – from referral to program development to training/technical assistance to administrative responsibility

Phil noted that the truly BIG ISSUE brought up by the plan was the following (and for the following reasons):

### **Regionalization:**

- Part of Goal 6.
- Mentioned regional structure with no details.
- Locations announced.
- Position located there announced.
- What the positions do and how commissions interact with the office is unclear.
- Unsure what the impact on national service programs in VT will be.
- Have been many unintended consequences of quickly announced plans so far.

As result of the decision to regionalize, all positions are being posted April 1st, everyone will be RIFed and must then reapply for the newly posted redescribed positions. The question was posed, "How will a regional office serve us (SerVermont) better than a state office?" ACT submitted 122 suggestions, of which 88 CNCS said they had adopted.

### **SerVermont Position on the CNCS Transformation and Sustainability Plan:**

- Still support the broad goals.
- Concern about impacts on program on the ground, to VT, and unintended consequences.
- Want to be involved in assisting CNCS in finding solutions.
- Don't have enough information or specifics, or understanding of CNCS leadership's vision to be "for" or "against" the plan.
- Should avoid resisting change for fear of change.

### **CNCS Transformation and Sustainability Plan Actions:**

- Stay aligned with ASC.
- Take a position when it becomes prudent to do so.
- Communicate our position with stakeholders: AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, State Office
- Work with CNCS when opportunity allows.

Phil began his introduction to the discussion on the Vermont State Service Plan with the following:

### **Vermont State Service Plan:**

- 2019-2021 Plan
- Lots of change and questions about the structure and future of national service
- Cautious optimism
- Ensure strength of what we have

- Quality over quantity
- Very broad public facing goals
  - Develop specific strategies, goals and targets internally with staff and board
- Adopt the big goals now, then approve work plan and targets developed by a smaller group.
  - Anyone can be part of that but not everyone has to be.

The **Vermont State Service Plan** was updated, taking into account recommendations from the input activity at the Annual Meeting. Unanswered was how the **CNCS Transformation and Sustainability Plan** would impact upon the **Vermont State Service Plan**. It was also noted that the plan yet lacks metrics useful in measuring progress toward success. Dan mentioned how it was that he hoped the plan would more directly address SeniorCorps by offering goals specific to this program. It was discussed how CNCS preferred that there be a Senior Supplement to the **Vermont State Service Plan**. This said, it was largely agreed that the plan should speak for ALL Vermonters.

Guy made a motion to adopt the **Vermont State Service Plan** with recommended changes and follow up with more details that result in an internal document complete with metrics to measure progress toward achieving goals and measurable results. Christine seconded the motion and when put to a vote, was given unanimous approval.

**3:15 pm            New Data**

Phil described how knowing how people ended up last year gives a heads-up as to who may need assistance this year. Thus he offered the following:

**2018 MSY/Slot Enrollment Wrap Up  
Final for 2017-2018 Program Year**

	2018							Slot
	MSY Awd.	MSY Enr.	MSY Unf.	% MSY enr	Slot Awd.	Slots Fill	Slots Unf	Enrollment
VHCB	30.29	27.5	2.79	91%	36	29	7	81%
LEAP	17.79	12.03	5.76	68%	36	16	20	44%
VYDC	28.44	19.1	9.34	67%	45	21	24	47%
CEDO	15.06	5.29	9.77	35%	24	9	15	38%
ECO	24	23.5	0.5	98%	25	24	1	96%
ReSOURCE	14.65	11.69	2.96	80%	32	18	14	56%
VYCC	17.37	1	16.37	6%	40	1	39	3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>147.6</b>	<b>100.11</b>			<b>238</b>	<b>118</b>		
		67.83%				49.58%		

**Year to Year Comparison**

March 2019

	2018							Slot
	MSY Awd.	MSY Enr.	MSY Unf.	% MSY enr	Slot Awd.	Slots Fill	Slots Unf	Enrollment
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## March 2018

	Slot Awd.	Slots Fill	% Slots	MSY Award	MSY Enrolled	% MSY
VHCB	39	31	79%	30.01	27	90%
LEAP	36	13	36%	18.56	10.53	57%
VYDC	44	22	50%	28.63	20.5	72%
CEDO	20	12	60%	15	7	47%
ECO	24	24	100%	24	24	100%
ReSource	32	19	59%	13.52	10.38	77%
VYCC	40	2	5%	17.37	2	12%

### Vermont Governor's Service Awards 2019:

Phil began discussion of the Vermont Governor's Service Awards by offering the following:

- 8 categories
- 9-16 awards
- Mostly national service
- Open nominations
- Selection committee of board members
  - Hard time saying “no” to any service
- Held in various locations and formats

He followed up with the following questions for commissioners to discuss:

- What do we want to achieve through them?
  - Objective
  - Strategy
- When do we hold them?
- How do we administer them?
  - Nomination / Selection
- How do we “sustain” the event throughout the year?

There was wide-ranging discussion which helped to stress the importance many commissioners the awards had for recipients, their family and friends, and others. With regard to the resources needed to sustain the program Guy suggested that a contractor could do this or, by hiring a communications person the work could be kept internal. It was questioned what resources the Governor's Office could bring to bear. It was decided that Phil (and Christine? Dan?) would seek to engage the Governor in discussing his vision and what (if any) resources he could free up to ensure an annual Governor's Service Award Ceremony.

### Upcoming Events:

- March 11 – 15 - AmeriCorps Week
- March 14 – Competitive clarification for new applicants
- April 1 – Competitive announcements
- April 2 – National Service Recognition Day
- May 14-16 – AmeriCorps Conference
- May 23 – Commission Meeting – AmeriCorps Funding Decisions

### 2019 Meeting Schedule:

- March 7, Noon – 4 PM
- May 23, Noon – 4 PM
- October 24, Noon – 4 PM
- December?, At conference

4:00 PM

Adjourn

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'DK-Kylar', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Doug Kievit-Kylar  
Secretary

Appended are the following items:

**Program Monitoring Policy DRAFT**  
**VT State Service Plan 19-22**  
**Management Decision for OIG 18-13**  
**H-0193 As Introduced**  
**CNCS Transformation and Sustainability Final**