

**STATE OF NEVADA  
ADVISORY COUNCIL ON FEDERAL ASSISTANCE**

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**MEETING ACTION MINUTES**

**DATE:** February 17th, 2016

**LOCATION:** 209 E. Musser, Blasdel Building, Carson City; Grant Sawyer Building, Suite 1400 Las Vegas

**CHAIRMAN:** John Ritter, FOCUS Property Group

**SECRETARY:** Sheila Lambert, Chief, Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination, and Management (State Grants Office)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** John Ritter, Chairman and CEO, FOCUS Property Group  
Derek Armstrong, Assemblyman  
Pete Goicoechea, Senator  
Tim Burch, Director, Clark County Social Services  
Jim Wells, Director, Governor's Finance Office  
Sheila Lambert, Chief, State Grants Office  
Zanny Marsh, Executive Director, American Red Cross Northern NV Chapter

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Patrick Cates, Director of Administration  
Shane Chesney, Deputy Attorney General  
Eric Mager, State Grants Office  
Connie Lucido, State Grants Office  
Erin Hasty, State Grants Office  
Charise Witt, Department of Public Safety  
Elaina Mule, United Way of Southern Nevada

**1. CALL TO ORDER -**

a. Chairman Ritter called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**2. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS -**

a. Sheila Lambert called roll and all members were present except for Jim Wells, Director of the Governor's Finance Office, who was present at 11:00 a.m.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT-**

None.

**4. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION- APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

- a. Assemblyman Armstrong noted on page two (2), he was referred to as “Chairman.”
- b. Chairman Ritter stated he wanted it reflected stronger in the record that IFC approval on awarded grants can take between 4-6 months, resulting in work not being performed on the grant until it is approved and causing delays, making the state less competitive and putting future funding in question.
- c. A motion was made by Chairman Ritter to approve the minutes with the suggested changes. Ms. Marsh seconded. Motion was passed unanimously.

**5. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION- APPROVAL OF BY-LAWS –**

- a. Changes were proposed to:
  - i. Article II, Section 1 (3) (a)- strikeout “process” and replace with “NRS and/or NAC”, and add the term “activities of state offices.”
  - ii. Article II, Section 1 (3) (e)- begin the sentence with “Establish.”
  - iii. Article IV, Section 4 (3) (c)- remove this section since the Secretary is a non-voting member.
  - iv. Article IV, Section 8- add “recommended for” removal by the Chair for inactivity or conflict of interest.
  - v. Article V, Section 2- change from four to three for quorum.
- b. Discussion was centered on whether the Council could directly submit BDRs, but it was ultimately decided, per SB214, that it can only make recommendations for legislative action or forward a request to a partner who could submit a BDR on its behalf. Chairman Ritter suggested developing recommendations to Governor and Legislature.
- c. Discussion centered on whether attendance should be a mandatory requirement. Chairman Ritter stated he would like for all members to make a firm commitment to the Council, because the topic is so important. Ms. Lambert stated there was language in the original draft to that effect, but it was cut because the Council could only recommend removal to the Governor or to the Assembly or Senate Leader since these are the appointing bodies. Chairman Ritter stated he would like it in the record that he expects this Council to be action based to make changes, and therefore expects regular attendance at meetings.
- d. Tim Burch made a motion to approve the by-laws with the suggested changes. Zanny Marsh seconded. Motion was passed unanimously.

**6. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION- DISCUSSION OF ITEMS TO BE PROPOSED TO LEGISLATURE –**

- a. Item A- Provide recommended revisions for Legislature on current practices in obtaining authority for federal grant awards.

- i. Ms. Lambert explained current NRS allowed for some flexibility in hastening the process of awarded grants appearing before the IFC. Ms. Lambert said it could be possible to assign the Governor's Finance Office (GFO) a certain time period to submit complete work programs to IFC, instead of the current practice GFO does of batching the work programs, rather than sending them individually. She stated this would be low-hanging fruit, and could be implemented right away. Brief discussion occurred, and Ms. Lambert clarified if it was the Council's request for Ms. Lambert to work with Mr. Wells on setting a timeline for GFO to submit complete work programs to the IFC. Chairman Ritter agreed.
  - ii. Discussion also centered on the likelihood of approval of state agencies only appearing once before the IFC per each funding opportunity if no changes were made to state general fund. Ms. Lambert stated that currently, each fiscal year, a grant has to go before the IFC for approval, even if there are no changes made to state general fund. She stated about 80% of the work programs are for this purpose, resulting in duplicative work. The Council thought it could be possible to engage in discussions to change policy to exempt approved grants if there were no changes.
  - iii. Ms. Lambert presented a report on what other states have done in allowing grant authority. She stated all of the states had more flexibility: some were allowed to let the Governor approve the funding if the legislature was off. Discussion centered on the idea of having a subcommittee of the IFC, who could meet once a month to hear applications from state agencies. Ms. Lambert said the State Grant Office could draft a sample of this change.
  - iv. Ms. Lambert suggested a three pronged approach: 45 day timeline; draft language for carryover (no cost grants); and change NRS.
  - v. Ms. Lambert made a motion to utilize three pronged approach. Ms. Marsh made a motion to instruct the State Grants Office to work with GFO to create an internal procedure to speed up utilizing the three pronged approach. Senator Goicoechea seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- b. Item B- Provide overview of other state practices relating to budgeting matching fund requirements for federal discretionary grants.
- i. Ms. Lambert presented research the State Grant Office had found in examining what other states have done in contributing matching funds. Ms. Lambert stated Oregon had some of their lottery earnings go toward matching funds, some states pulled 5% from every state agency and some had revolving accounts. The Council asked for more specific information and Ms. Lambert said the State Grant Office could pull together a report of about 10 state programs to provide to Council members within 10 days.

- ii. Senator Goicoechea asked Ms. Lambert if she could provide a general report on what the state currently spends in match. Mr. Wells said the GFO is requiring state agencies to provide these numbers in their budget requests and reports, and by September, he could have a report to the penny of how much is spent. Ms. Lambert stated the Grants Office could provide a rough estimate by next meeting.
  - iii. Chairman Ritter stated he wanted to ask the legislature for a sum of money to serve as a pilot project for matching funds. There was discussion as to whether the legislature can set aside a matching fund account of around \$20,000,000 for the next biennium since state agencies currently have budgetary constraints and are limited in providing match fund requirements on grants. Chairman Ritter suggested that we possibly start off with asking for an initial amount as a pilot program to illustrate the financial benefit the state would realize with a matching fund account and determine if this is a feasible option. The Council agreed they would like to see what other states have provided in order to determine what amount they may request from the Nevada Legislature.
  - iv. Chairman Ritter made a motion to have grants office provide a list of ten states and how they fund matching requirements along with an analysis of current match funds by the state and what we need to spend in order to be competitive and Mr. Burch seconded. Motion was passed unanimously.
- c. Item C- Provide overview of the Request for Information and Technology Investment Request (TIR) for statewide grant management system.
- i. Ms. Lambert presented a draft of the TIR in soliciting information for a statewide grants management system, which would streamline communication and alleviate duplication. Ms. Lambert stated it would hopefully allow counties and other partners to view the database so all partners were informed. Ms. Lambert stated that the development of a grant management system could save the state 15% due to the ability to process funds more timely, so savings justifies the cost of the system. The Council asked if it would be brought back to the next meeting for approval. Ms. Lambert asked if the State Grants Office could have permission to move forward, with the promise of soliciting comments from further partners, since the next meeting was two months away, and the proposal was close to being finished. Ms. Lambert stated she would continue engaging with partners, and hoped to have the proposal out within 30 days. The Council agreed they were excited by this proposal because it could allow for increased revenue and increased communication.

- ii. A motion was made by Mr. Burch and seconded by Ms. Marsh to move forward with getting community feedback and finalizing RF. Motion was passed unanimously.

**7. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION- FUTURE MEETING DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS**

- a. Chairman Ritter stated he would like to discuss a vision plan of where the state would like to be in five (5) years he can share this with the members of the community when he tries to earn their support. Ms. Lambert said the Grants Office has a Strategic Plan and will be happy to bring it to the next meeting for discussion.
- b. Discussion and recommendation of other state budgets in matching funds.
- c. Discussion of high-level funding numbers of what Nevada is providing in match contributions currently.
- d. Discussion of drafted procedure for grant authority- long term and short term fixes.
- e. A future meeting date of April 13, 2016, was agreed upon.

**8. PUBLIC COMMENT-**

None.

**9. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION- ADJOURNMENT**