

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

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**MEETING ACTION MINUTES**

**DATE:** February 28, 2018

**LOCATION:** Legislative Building, Room 3137  
401 North Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701

Grant Sawyer Office Building, Room 4401  
555 East Washington Avenue  
Las Vegas, NV 89101

Great Basin College, McMullen Hall, Room 110  
1500 College Parkway  
Elko, NV

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

**SECRETARY:** Connie Lucido, Chief, Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination, and Management (State Grant Office)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

| <b>Voting Members</b>  | <b>Non-Voting Members</b>   |
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| <i>John Ritter, Chairman, Focus Property Group</i><br><i>Kathi Thomas-Gibson, Vice Chair, City of Las Vegas</i><br><i>Zanny Marsh, Member, American Red Cross of Northern Nevada</i><br><i>David Parks, Member, Senator</i><br><i>Ellen Spiegel, Member, Assembly Member</i> | <i>Connie Lucido, Secretary, State Grant Office,</i><br><i>Jim Wells, Member, Governor's Finance Office</i> |
| <b>Absent</b>  |   |
| <i>None</i>  |   |
| <b>Staff Present</b>   |   |
| <i>Wayne Howle, Attorney General's Office</i><br><i>JoVon Sotak, State Grant Office</i><br><i>Elizabeth Ashby, State Grant Office</i>  |   |

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Ritter called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

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

All members were present, with Vice Chair Kathi Thomas-Gibson attending via conference call and webcast. Jim Wells was not present for roll call, but joined the meeting shortly thereafter at 1:03 p.m.

## **3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- A. At Chair's discretion, public comments were limited to 3 minutes per speaker.
- B. No public comment in Carson City, Las Vegas, or Elko.

## **4. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION – APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 1, 2017 MEETING**

- A. Secretary Lucido presented a request to include two documents submitted by the Guinn Center to be reflected in the Nov. 1 minutes: (1) a graph, "Federal Grants Received by Nevada: FFY 1998—FFY 2017," and (2) a 12-page report, "The Role of Grant Funding in Nevada's 2017-2019 Budget."
- B. Wayne Howle, Chief Deputy of the Attorney General's office, directed the documents' inclusion in the minutes is appropriate so long as the record reflects that the documents are being added to the minutes.
- C. There being no comments or additional corrections to previous meeting minutes, Council member Zanny Marsh moved that the minutes be accepted with the inclusion of the documents presented by Secretary Lucido. Seconded by Vice Chair Thomas-Gibson. Assembly member Spiegel abstained from the vote as she was not present for the meeting. Senator Parks noted that though not physically present for the meeting, he attended via webcast and will be voting. Motion passed unanimously.

## **5. DISCUSSION OF ACTION ITEMS**

- A. Election of Secretary
  - Secretary Lucido confirmed she would continue to serve as Council Secretary if it pleased the Council.
  - There being no comments or discussion, Chairman Ritter called for a motion to elect Connie Lucido as Council Secretary. So moved by both Assembly member Spiegel and Vice Chair Thomas-Gibson. Motion passed unanimously.
- B. Update of Grant Office activities

- Secretary Connie Lucido, Chief of the State Grant Office, assisted by JoVon Sotak also of the State Grant Office, provided a [PowerPoint presentation](#) of the Grant Office's quarterly activities, including an update on the grant management system, the office's increased focus on reporting and transparency, and its activities related to capacity building.
- Secretary Lucido explained the statewide grant management system contract is still on hold and the Grant Office is awaiting a hearing, which was re-scheduled from January 2018 to March 2018.
- Chairman Ritter asked why the hearing had been rescheduled.
- Secretary Lucido explained that a motion took the hearing off the docket. Wayne Howle confirmed and added that a quest for discovery slowed the proceedings.
- Chairman Ritter noted his frustration with the delays as the Council has been working for several years to get the grant system in place. Chairman Ritter asked Mr. Howle if he thought there would be additional delays.
- Mr. Howle thought the hearing would proceed in March and commented that the state's attorney, Jeff Menicucci, is anxious to have this heard and decided.
- Chairman Ritter asked how long the Grant Office has been collecting grant-related data.
- Secretary Lucido explained that a new tracker was implemented December 1, 2017, and described the prior how this differed from previous data collected.
- Chairman Ritter expressed interest in seeing how the data tracks throughout the year. Secretary Lucido noted the Grant Office's excitement and explained that month-over-month and year-to-date data, as well as survey results data, will be added in forthcoming reports.
- Chairman Ritter asked if the grant management system would help to facilitate partner development. Secretary Lucido confirmed the Grant Office would be able to see opportunities users have flagged for interest and to coordinate through shared workspace.
- Council member Marsh congratulated Secretary Lucido on addressing the questions that were raised at the Council's last meeting and providing information about capacity building. She asked about the dates of the proposed statewide grant conference.
- JoVon Sotak of the State Grant Office answered that the Washoe Regional Grants Group was in the very early planning stages and that the date would be determined by cost, space availability, and the priorities identified by a 2016 grant conference survey sent by the State Grant Office.

- Council member Marsh expressed concern about a grant workshop or grant conference being held in spring during grants season.
- Secretary Lucido clarified that the Southern Nevada Strong at Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada was hosting the March 2018 grant workshop, not the Grant Office.

*C. Reading of Council correspondence and survey results*

- JoVon Sotak of the State Grant Office explained the addition of Council correspondence and theme-specific surveys as an outcome of Chairman Ritter's suggestion during the last Council meeting. The Grant Office did not receive any correspondence to the Council.
- Ms. Sotak provided a [PowerPoint presentation](#) of the capacity building survey results.
- Vice Chair Thomas-Gibson asked if the survey responses could be broken out by district.
- Ms. Sotak confirmed the data is available and needed further analysis.
- Assembly member Spiegel asked for examples to the Interim Finance Committee (IFC) process changes mentioned in question 12.
- Ms. Sotak answered that the survey responses were brief and only mentioned the changes and provided an explanation of the changes previously proposed to the IFC process.
- Secretary Lucido provided an update on the solution to the current IFC process, which is to pilot provisional approval of a grant application and hold after approval until the grant has been awarded; the Grant Office has not yet identified a test case.
- Chairman Ritter commented that questions 3 and 8 mirror each other, which he thought inconsistent.
- Ms. Sotak explained the intent of the survey of design.
- Chairman Ritter commented that a disproportionate number of responses came from northern Nevada and Washoe County and asked if that was because the Grant Office has more contacts in northern Nevada or some other reason.
- Ms. Sotak explained the composition of the distribution list and named the southern Nevada partners who amplified the survey.
- Chairman Ritter commented that this further supports discussions about as much outreach as possible in the south so that agencies and organizations understand that the Grant Office exists to support agencies throughout the state.

*D. Introduction of Grants Director Gillian Block, Office of Senator Catherine Cortez-Masto*

- JoVon Sotak of the State Grant Office introduced Gillian Block.

- Gillian Block explained the activities and functions of her office and the services they offer to constituents, as well possible Federal grant policy changes.

## 6. PRESENTATIONS

### A. Patricia Sanborn, State Coordinator, Office of Safe and Respectful Learning Environment, Department of Education

- [Presented](#) on behalf of Director Christy McGill on the staffing and social capital impact of federal grants and possible solutions to maximize Nevada's social capital.
- Chairman Ritter asked how proposed interagency council would be comprised and who would have access to it.
- Ms. Sanborn replied that hasn't yet been fully explored, and explained that discussions revealed the need for a flexible, single meeting where people can come together to work.
- Secretary Lucido added that Ms. Sanborn was referring to requirements in federal grant awards to compose committees and council in an open meeting forum. She explained how agencies create new committees with the same people and clarified the purpose of the Grant Office, which does not assist with implementation
- Chairman Ritter asked how this issue could be addressed if open meeting law is a federal grant requirement.
- Ms. Sanborn clarified federal requirements.
- Chairman Ritter asked to clarify the solution to determine what actions can the Council take to help.
- Ms. Sanborn clarified the proposed solution of a state-sanctioned interagency council and provided details.
- Vice Chair Thomas-Gibson asked if the proposed council would be either completing an application or be an advisory body to an entity wanting to complete an application.
- Ms. Sanborn answered the council would be an advisory board for carrying on the work after the grant has been received.
- Vice Chair Thomas-Gibson asked for additional detail because different coalitions already exist to provide this function in subject-specific areas.
- Ms. Sanborn explained why she was not proposing to create coalitions and proposed to discuss the interagency council further.
- Julia Peek of the Department of Health and Human Services approached and observed that if the Grant Office created, maintained, and socialized a list of current advisory bodies, their missions, and who participates, grant

seekers may be able to utilize a current advisory body with a purpose similar to the grant's purpose, instead of creating a new advisory body.

- Secretary Lucido agreed the idea was worth exploring.
- Vice Chair Thomas-Gibson offered to work together with Secretary Lucido to pull together a list. She suggested that support for creating a competitive grant application with an evaluation component is a greater priority than an advisory body.
- Chairman Ritter summarized the proposed solution.
- Ms. Sanborn confirmed the chairman's summary was accurate.
- Secretary Lucido asked Ms. Sanborn to what "shared training systems" in her presentation referred.
- Ms. Sanborn replied that departments who have scheduled training allow other departments access to that training so that everyone is operating with the same level of knowledge.
- Senator Parks remarked that he was reminded of the Ryan White AIDS Care grants, which had an advisory committee. He advised against creating an impediment that slows things down or redirects funds from where they ought to go.
- Secretary Lucido stated that compiling a list of advisory bodies is a good idea and that she and her staff will work with Vice Chair Thomas-Gibson and departments to create the list.
- Chairman Ritter commented that this agenda item is a reminder that agencies, including local agencies and philanthropic organizations, are overworked and underpaid, so anything that can be done to improve efficiencies makes sense.

*B. Judy Andréson, Executive Director, Elko Family Resource Center*

- [Presented](#) on how capacity building in the rurals differs and provided an exploration of solutions to increase capacity and federal grant funding in the rurals.
- Chairman Ritter indicated the Committee has several more agenda items and was running out of time, so asked Ms. Andréson to wrap her presentation.
- Ms. Andréson closed with the ask that the state consider a servant leadership model to build capacity in the rurals.
- Chairman Ritter asked for comments and questions, and hearing none, thanked Ms. Andréson and advised her the Council would review the balance of her presentation.

C. Matt Johnson, Nevada State Program Director, Corporation for National & Community Service

- [Presented](#) on the National Service Family grant programs, including AmeriCorps VISTA as a capacity building resource for grant funding in Nevada.
- Chairman Ritter asked Secretary Lucido if the Grant Office was aware of AmeriCorps VISTA and if it works as a capacity building resource for agencies and organizations.
- Secretary Lucido replied the Grant Office is aware of AmeriCorps VISTA and described how her office is determining the best solution to the issues mentioned in Mr. Johnson's presentation.
- Chairman Ritter asked if the human resources problem was specific to state agencies.
- Council member Jim Wells mentioned that the Governor's Office of Energy and the Department of Veteran Services have previously used and discontinued using VISTA volunteers due to a problem related to the payment of social security.
- Vice Chair Thomas-Gibson shared that the City of Las Vegas actively uses AmeriCorps VISTA and has seen the program build capacity. She said the city had some issues categorizing VISTA members and created a structure to accommodate these non-traditional volunteers.
- Assembly member Spiegel asked if was possible for AmeriCorps VISTA workers to work for the state as part of a public-private partnership.
- Mr. Johnson recognized public-private partnership as a potential solution, noting examples from other states where a private non-profit sponsors a VISTA program and then places VISTA members in government agencies.
- Senator Parks mentioned that he's served on the board of several nonprofits that have had great services provided by AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers. He stated one of the homelessness nonprofits currently has two VISTA positions and credited the City of Las Vegas.

**7. INFORMATION ONLY – MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

None

**8. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION – FUTURE MEETING DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS**

- A. Secretary Lucido shared that next meeting is May 2 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. She stated that the topic is sustainability of funding and that the Grant Office is open to suggestions for presenters or survey questions.

## **9. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- A. Rae Lathrop – Regional Planning Manager of Southern Nevada Strong, Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada. Ms. Lathrop described Southern Nevada Strong’s regional plan and the May 2017 strategic framework, “Improving Southern Nevada’s Grant Capacity and Competitiveness.” Ms. Lathrop echoed the importance of the Grant Office’s efforts to connect nonprofits to state agencies and then share that connectivity throughout the whole state. As an AmeriCorps VISTA alum, Ms. Lathrop encouraged everyone to learn more about the program. She also mentioned the March 26 capacity building event will be one of four events in southern Nevada to build technical skills and leadership development.
- B. Mikes Dickson – Nevada Community Foundation. Mr. Dickson shared that nonprofits and local governments have expressed a need for opportunities to build grant-related technical skills and to increase coordination, which both require staff to accomplish. He advocated for centralizing services to increase efficiencies with only a few positions and for using technology to increase the reach of information, especially to rural areas. Mr. Dickson addressed Assembly member Spiegel’s question regarding IFC by referring her to Assembly Bill 81, which he described.
- Chairman Ritter directed new Council members to the 2017 annual report which summarizes the outcomes of the Council’s 2016 recommendations and outlines the 2018 meeting topics and schedule.
- C. Michelle Gitmed – Reno Police Department. Ms. Gitmed wanted the Council to be aware of five-month delay of Justice Administration Grant funds to Nevada’s law enforcement organizations due to an issue with sanctuary cities.
- Chairman Ritter asked if the entire country or only Nevada is affected.
  - Ms. Gitmed confirmed the entire country is affected.

## **10. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION – ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.