



## Community Advisory Council June Meeting Minutes

AuSable River Center, Roscommon, Tuesday, June 4, 2019

*Attendance: Jim Tucker, Terry Tody, Debra Looney, Rose Mary Nelson, Mert Brushaber, Alice Snyder, Persis Sopariwala (staff), Susan Bowen (staff).*

The meeting began at 10:30 a.m.

### Project Director's Report

- **Grant awarded for 2019/20** and allowed for the programs to be combined
  - Year-end reports are due July 31; staff is working to gather outcome surveys to compile
- **Currently Numbers:** there are 298 active volunteers, of which 16 do not have placements; and 71 Stations; 101 Sites; 183 Locations. On the back of the agenda was an update on outreach and new sites since the March meeting.
- **2020 funding:** Senate Appropriations Committee has \$1.14 billion in its budget for all senior corps programs (increase of \$55 million); House Appropriations Committee has \$51.8 million (increase of 1.4 million) that is for RSVP specific. In its proposed budget bill, the House sent a message that it didn't like the regionalization that CNCS has begun and has asked that CNCS cease its restructuring until it addresses the impact on stakeholders (individual programs). The Office of Inspector General has stated the reorganization creates heightened risks of fraud, waste, and mismanagement that will warrant particularly close oversight. The report does not have the force of law and CNCS does not have to follow, but it does send a strong message.
- **Mileage letters and response:** We have only received a couple of phone calls with questions about the mileage changes; most people are understanding, even if they don't like it.
- **Time sheets:** We need volunteer stations to help us spread the word that the time sheets are still important and need to be completed and turned in, even when someone is not going to receive mileage reimbursement. Staff is willing to work with stations to come up with easy ways for people to submit their time, such as group sign in sheets. It's important that all volunteer activity is reported. The information is used to convey the importance of volunteerism in helping communities. The more we show what is being done, the better educated Congress will be. This may impact the ability to see increases in funding, which could mean more mileage for volunteers. Alice suggested staff contact station supervisors and let them know if a volunteer is not submitting hours. In doing so, the stations will be able to be proactive.
- **Air National Guard:** Opportunity in mid-August to work with a group of ANG who will be training at the base (Combat Readiness Training Center) in Alpena. They are looking for a full day of volunteer opportunities for 20-30 people. We are putting together a list of several, such as packing commodity food boxes at the NEMCSA warehouse, Habitat for

Humanity, beach clean-up, assisting the live theaters with set building, etc. Alice requested Susan ask the unit leader if there are any groups at Camp Grayling that might be looking for opportunities.

- **Handbook and Policies:** Staff is working on updating the Volunteer Handbook and putting together a RSVP policies manual for staff. The first policy that has been written is for “graduating” volunteers. Letters went out to volunteers who hadn’t been reporting and a few responded immediately so it is working. Alice asked if these could be posted online when complete.

## Program Updates

*Susan reported for Rick:*

- National Recognition Day recap (April 2<sup>nd</sup>) – About 30 volunteers packed 1,300 commodity food boxes in 2 ½ hours. It was a great turnout. Also assisting were two AmeriCorps members.
- Oscoda Volunteer Appreciation Day (April 18<sup>th</sup>) – Persis and Rick attended and several of the RSVP volunteers in the area stopped by to see them.
- Final Pen Pal Program recap (April 30<sup>th</sup>) – This was put on by the Presque Isle District Library as an afterschool program teaching kids to write cursive. Because it only met once a month there was not consistent attendance. The children wrote letters that were answered by some RSVP volunteers. The program was not as successful as expected, but we would consider doing it again, with some changes.
- Alpena Veterans Coffee Hour recap (May 23<sup>rd</sup>) – the first event was attended by 25 veterans and active duty military. People were very receptive and many said they’d be back in June. Also, staff heard some people commenting about friends they were going to tell and/or bring next time.
- Michigan Community Engagement Fellowship Updates – Rick has been participating in the program and webinars. Some have been really good and others haven’t been relevant to the work we do.

*Persis:*

- Veterans Lunch and Learn Recap (April 27) – There was a great turnout for this with over 50 veterans and guests in attendance. The speaker was Heath Nemeth from the Roscommon County Veterans Services. He talked about benefits for veterans and their dependents. Comments from those in attendance were quite favorable, including one man who thanked Heath for the information because he was not aware he could get some assistance for his wife who is ill. The Experimental Aircraft group cooked a lunch of lasagna and everyone was able to take home leftovers.
- Michigan Community Action (MCA) Day at the Capitol (May 2) – Persis traveled to Lansing for a luncheon at the Capitol where five people were recognized for outstanding volunteer contributions. RSVP member Terry Tody was one of the honorees and had been nominated by Persis and the RSVP.
- New office / new phone number – Persis moved last week from the Roscommon office to an office within the Roscommon County COA. The monthly savings in rent is \$250. She has a separate entrance from the COA. The new phone number 989-202-4450; 1015 Short Dr. Ste. A, Prudenville 48651. The old number is being forwarded to the new number and will continue for 6-8 months.

- Friendly Visitor Program at Crawford COA – Persis and Heidi Powers (Senior Companion Program) have been working with Alice to develop a program where volunteers can go into homes to visit with seniors. They will be meeting with some potential volunteers later in the month and if any meet the income guidelines they may enroll in the Senior Companion Program, otherwise they will be RSVP members.

## **Old Business**

**Recognition Luncheon** – Two Recognition Luncheons will be held in September. The first is Tuesday, Sept. 17, and will be at Kirtland Community College, Grayling. The other is Thursday, Sept. 19, at the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Both events will start at 11:30 a.m. A “Save the Date” is in the June newsletter. Invitations will be sent in August.

**Bylaws and Advisory Council** – The bylaws were reviewed, discussed, and changes were suggested. One question raised was “why is there a need for bylaws now when we didn’t have any before?”. Susan explained that there had always been bylaws, but they weren’t followed. Updates had not been made since 1993 and with the expansion of the program into an additional nine counties the changes are needed. The expectation is that at some point in the future, there will be equal representation on the council for all counties; however, that change will be made gradual. As people end their terms they may be replaced by someone from another county. Currently, the counties represented are Crawford, Roscommon, and Ogemaw. Staff will seek members from the counties of Iosco, Alpena, and Cheboygan, as those counties have many active volunteers. As the make-up of the council changes, it may be necessary to rotate meeting sites so the same people are not driving a long distance each time. Susan will make the suggested changes and provide a copy to everyone before the next meeting.

## **New Business**

**2019 Meeting Schedule** – Instead of meeting on the fourth Thursday in the months we are scheduled, we will meet on the second Thursday of the month. The next meeting will be held Thursday, Aug. 8. The last meeting of the calendar year will be held Thursday, Oct. 10. Both meetings will be held at the AuSable River Center and will begin at 10:30 a.m.

## **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 12 p.m.