

AmeriCorps Cape Cod Advisory Board

Innovation Room, Barnstable County Complex

Meeting Minutes: Friday, April 27th, 2018

9:00 AM

Attendance: Nancy Church, Nina Coleman, Hillary Greenberg Lemos, Rachel Hutchinson, Michael Lach, Brian Sharpe, Phil Burt, Heather McElroy, Lauren McKean, Steve McKenna, Jessica Whritenour, Mike Lach, Ryan Burch, Ron Beaty, Daniel Schell, Katie LeVander, Alex Smith, Cole Starr, Andrew Platt. Also present: Jack Yunits, County Administrator.

Welcome and Introductions

Everyone went around and introduced themselves, as this was Brian Sharpe's first meeting as a new board member.

Old Business

Dan stated there was no old business to discuss.

Communication and Updates from Program

House Updates

Cole stated that everything has been going well at the Bourne house. Springtime weather has greatly improved morale, everyone is getting out to accomplish weekend projects.

Katie stated the same was true for the LeHac house (in Wellfleet). Members are very much being driven by weekend service projects.

Alex states much was the same for the Wells house (in Wellfleet – FireCorps). They are entering prescribed burn season. They burned at Penikese Island the Sunday prior. They will be travelling to Martha's Vinyard to burn later in May, covered by the State DCR for costs. The sun being out has improved morale.

Specialist Update

Andrew discussed the status of Year 19 Individual Placements. Site Visits have been completed for all placements. Members are doing generally well. There are a couple of members who struggle to stay engaged in an office setting, and those members tend to be on their phones a lot. Hillary spoke up and said she wasn't sure if it was a generational thing, but members seem to not understand how using their phone makes them appear. Dan suggested member office etiquette trained should be expanded. Hillary said she had a professional group come in and provide trainings to their office staff, and it is something we could look at using.

Andrew discussed the member's disaster response activities during the major storm activity in March. Members were deployed to shelters twice in two weeks, for 48-72-hour stints. They performed admirably despite very difficult circumstances. There were many issues on a regional level with the storm response, and the program really shined through as a bright spot, and in many ways the response would not have worked without AmeriCorps.

Andrew discussed the signature events that the members had just completed the week prior. Members had a National Volunteer Week, where they completed projects with local volunteer groups, including at a Community Garden in Brewster, owned by Brewster Conservation Trust. That Saturday, they completed Canal Clean Up, and had over 200 volunteers turn out. It was a sunny day, which increased the number of people who came out.

Coordinator Update

Dan began his update by stating he got unofficial word from the Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA) that ACC's competitive grant for the next three years has been approved. He stated he should get official word by May 15th.

Dan stated the members had their Mid-Year retreat in February at the YMCA Camp, Camp Burgess, in Sandwich. A professional from Salve Regina came to hold a resume workshop for members. There was also a panel of service partners who discussed Life After AmeriCorps with the members. Ryan Burch, Ad Board member, was on the panel. The members final retreat will be in June at Camp Greenough, a Boy Scout camp in Yarmouth. That will be a more relaxed retreat, focusing on reflection of the year.

Members had their mid-year evaluations over the previous few months.

Dan discussed member recruitment, which began in March. So far, 6 members have been accepted for next year, of 24 slots. Recruitment is expected to pick up in the coming months; that and next year's training will be a big focus for the staff. Andrew stated that he is working on getting S130/190 Wildland Firefighting training for all members next year, to continue the prescribed fire service projects the FireCorps has done in the past. He is also hoping to train all members in basic chainsaw use, since it has become such a major part of service projects. Dan stated he would like to get the members shorebird monitoring training.

Dan discussed that the County Commissioners are reviewing the policies for all County Boards. There may be new requirements for Advisory Board members. Ron Beaty stated it might be required for all members to get sworn in.

Dan gave an update on the program's housing search. Kat Garafoli from Dennis Conservation Trust has been a big partner in helping the program acquire new housing to replace the Bourne house. Both Ron Beaty and Jack Yunits, County Administrator, have been helping in the process. Dan stated the Brewster Fire Hall option is still being looked at, but has hit a significant snag as the Town is concerned about liability housing the members there. A town building committee is being formed to determine the best use for that (and other) buildings. Even if it becomes available, it might take more time than the program has.

Dan discussed the Town of Barnstable housing options. They have houses the members could use (three of them), but they have a zoning law restricting the non-related number of adults to 4, requiring this to be a multi-home option.

Jack Yunits gave an update on the Bourne House. After the State Auditor came, the County did a title search on all properties, and discovered the Bourne house is on a postage stamp lot retained by the County after the rest of the land was

leased to the nearby assisted living facility on the same parcel. To make the house fire code compliant, the program would need upper level fire escapes, but there is no land around the house to allow that, per Jack. Gosnold was evicted from the house across the street, and that house could be available as a backup, and hold maybe up to 8 members. It already has fire escapes and exit lights. Jack also met with the Colonel at Joint Base Cape Cod. They likely cannot get around the payment requirements, and so it likely isn't an option. Using both the old Gosnold house and a few members at the Bourne house might be the backup plan. Sean/REPC is trying to get more support for us, and stated members need to be Cape wide for disaster response.

Andrew mentioned the Wells house at the Seashore, that the FireCorps currently uses, will likely not be available, as Dave Crary, Fire Management Officer for the Seashore, will likely be retaining it for NPS Fire to use for temporary housing for Fire seasonals.

Dan gave an update on the LeHac fire upgrades, including a new vestibule to separate the first and second floors, new lighting and updated inspection schedules. A second-floor fire escape will be going in over the next couple of months.

Dan discussed the creation of a Friends and Alumni of AmeriCorps Cape Cod Facebook group that has been used for job sharing and program support. He also discussed a desire to start looking at grants and opportunities to purchase new vehicles for the program, as the old "Tick Truck" is starting to wear down. The newer F150 is in good shape. Also looking for 12 passenger vans for easy member transport.

The program is still seeking an AmeriCorps Disaster Response Team (A-DRT) designation for the members to be deployable nationally to disasters. A conversation with Mary McIssac and the County finance department is needed to discuss how reimbursement would work.

Program Calendar

April 27 Ad Board Meeting
June 6-8 Member Development Retreat
June 29 Ad Board Meeting
July 26 Member Graduation
September 3 Year 20 Members Arrive

Other Business/Board Member Updates

Lauren McKean suggested Jack, Dan, and Andrew set up a time to meet the new Cape Cod National Seashore Superintendent, Brian Carlstrom.

Brian Carlson, Ad Board member, is leaving the Cape for a new Job, per Dan. Ad Board members suggested possible replacements, including Tim Famulare, Conservation Agent of Provincetown, and Kelly Harper and Emily Beebe, employees of the Town of Truro. Dan will reach out to them to see if they are interested, and a formal vote will be held at the next Advisory Board meeting in July.

Adjourn

The Advisory Board then split up into groups, and were dismissed to review the Individual Placement Proposals submitted for Year 20. Each proposal was discussed, and the groups filled out an online form for each, scoring the proposal and either suggesting it as a placement for Year 20 or rejecting it.