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Meeting Minutes

Hawai'i Commission for National and Community Service

Date: Thursday, May 14, 2026

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Place: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

AGENDA

Serve Hawai'i With Aloha

I. Call to Order

Chair Alan Clinton called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

II. Introductions

Commission Members present: Chair Alan Clinton, Elwyn Watkins, Diane Peters-Nguyen, Kymberly Sparlin, Karen Mukai, Kylie Alarcon, Sandra Larsen, and Ray Galas; Julie Nash, Deputy Regional Administrator, AmeriCorps Western Region (substitute for Raga Nadella).

Commission Members excused: Anne Marie (Mahealani) Matsuzaki, Suzette Robinson and Anne Nakakura

Commission staff present: Keala Monaco and Maelynn Puchalski

Guest present: Sylvia Hussey from Papa Ola Lōkahi joined 11:45am

III. Public Comments on Agenda Items

No written comments were received and no individual signed up for oral testimony.

IV. Approval of Minutes of the November 5, 2025 Meeting

Ray noted that the draft minutes omitted recognition of his appointment as Chair of the newly established Military and Armed Services Committee. This committee is expected to be formally adopted as part of the HCNCS Bylaws following counsel review.

Motion made by Diane and seconded by Elwyn to approve the minutes as amended to include the above clarification.

All members present voted in the affirmative.

V. Approval of Subapplications for Program Year 2026-27 Funding

Maelynn informed having two continuation and two planning grant applications where the Selection and Review Committee were given score sheets and will provide recommendations. Keala summarized AmeriCorps change in the grant making process and clarified no change in eligibility. The Commission already received its \$931,000 federal allocation. While we await further guidance on the mechanics of reporting the awarded programs, the Commission will move forward with their decision on which applications to approve.

- a. Maelynn presented that Papahana Kuaola requests \$107,970 for 11 members who will improve the ecological imbalance on conservation lands and provide environmental education on Oahu. This is a continuation for their 5th year of funding and submits their progress reports timely and consistently attends meetings.

Sandra motioned for approval and it was seconded by Diane.

All members present voted in the affirmative.

- b. Maelynn presented that Teach for America – Hawai'i requests \$106,000 for 106 members who serve in low income and under resourced schools on Oahu and Hawai'i Island. \$1,000 per member used exclusively for training (members are salaried by the Department of Education). They have been an AmeriCorps program for many years and this is a continuation application for year 2 of 3. They have been consistently compliant with grant requirements.

Elwyn motioned for approval and it was seconded by Karen.

All members present voted in the affirmative with the exception of Kymberly, who abstained.

- c. Papa Ola Lōkahi is requesting \$74,630 for a planning grant to design a community-centric AmeriCorps program that will deploy members to address the long-term health, financial, and organizational impacts of natural disasters in Hawai'i. They are a statewide Native Hawaiian health nonprofit, established in 1988 under the Native Hawaiian Health care Improvement Act.

Diane motioned for approval and it was seconded by Kymberly.

All members present voted in the affirmative.

- d. 'Ewalu Industries is requesting \$49,762 for a planning grant to design an AmeriCorps program that will deploy members to address the interconnected challenges of limited youth career pathways and restricted communications capacity among rural community organizations on Hawai'i Island. This organization is focused on youth leadership development building on economic resilience on the island of Hawai'i. They were previously awarded but declined to accept due to unforeseen circumstances that prevented them continuing.

Sandra motioned for approval and it was seconded by Diane.

All members present voted in the affirmative.

VI. Committee Assignments

Keala led discussion of committee structure indicating the current bylaws is in need of updating and the currently listed eight committees may not be relevant or can be restructured.

It was agreed that a future in-person meeting will be scheduled with legal counsel present to provide guidance on procedure for updating the Bylaws.

Diane proposed consolidating committees given the small board and staff size such as combining Review and Selection Committee and Evaluation Committee and Program Committee into a Grant Committee which she is willing to serve on.

Expressions of interest:

- Anne Nakakura: Finance Committee
- Ray Galas: Chair, Military and Armed Services Committee
- Diane Peters-Nguyen: Grant Committee, newly formed
- Karen Mukai: Grant Committee
- Elwyn Watkins: Bylaws Committee
- Kymberly Sparlin: Youth Voice Committee
- Kylie Alarcon: Youth Voice Committee
- Sandra Larson: Grant Committee or as needed

Julie Nash noted that Raga Nadella, in her ex officio role, may participate in committees if schedule permits.

VII. Executive Director Updates

Julie provided AmeriCorps State and National updates. She noted that additional information on the grant-making process is forthcoming, but expressed appreciation that the Commission is continuing with its application and award decision timeline. She shared that Cash Position Surveys are being sent to commissions on a random basis; while not mandatory, they support the agency's accountability efforts and help assess effectiveness in serving commissions. Julie also reported that grantees may be randomly selected to provide data validating the eligibility of a sample of education award recipients. She clarified that updates to education awards may not immediately appear in eGrants, but will be reflected in members' and alumni's personal accounts. This is a known system issue that is expected to be resolved. She also announced that AmeriCorps NCCC is accepting applications for the fall cycle, with teams serving in disaster recovery, infrastructure, conservation, and rural/urban development.

Keala noted Hawai'i has previously hosted NCCC teams at Camp Erdman and that the Commission previously hosted a meeting for a disaster response group supporting the Lahaina wildfire recovery.

Keala also shared plans to meet with the directors of the Hawai'i Senior and Foster Grandparent programs. She hopes to coordinate a cross-stream meeting with Raga or another AmeriCorps representative, similar to the previous convening that included VISTAs, Commission staff, and program directors. She also expressed interest in organizing a member-focused gathering, potentially incorporating First Aid or other beneficial training, pending conversations with Senior Corps programs to assess numbers.

VIII. Adjournment

Chair Alan adjourned the meeting at 11:59 a.m.