

# Nevada Commission on Mentoring

Meeting Minutes  
Friday, June 18, 2021  
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

*Meeting Location: Due to the COVID-19 response and in accordance with Governor Sisolak's Emergency Directive 006; Subsection 1, this meeting was conducted via Lifesize.*

## 1. Call to Order; Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Karl Catarata called the meeting to order on Friday, June 18, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.

## 2. Roll Call

Vice Chair Katie Membreno conducted a roll call. **Quorum was established** (7 Members present).

### **Commission Members Present:**

Karl Catarata  
Katie Membreno  
Dr. Michael Maxwell  
Michael Flores  
Dr. Douglas Garner  
Brigid Duffy  
Sebastian Cardenas

### **Commission Members Absent:**

Coleen Lawrence  
Dr. Beverly Givens

### **Others Present:**

Chris James, NDE Staff  
Gabby Lamarre, NDE Staff

## 3. Approval of Flexible Agenda (Information/Discussion/For Possible Action)

The Commission **did acquire quorum** and therefore we could vote on approval for any objective in this meeting.

**Motion:** Approve Flexible Agenda  
**By:** Katie Membreno  
**Second:** Douglas Garner  
**Vote:** Passed Unanimously

#### **4. Welcome and Introduction (Mission Statement)**

Chair Karl Catarata indicated that the Commission on Mentoring is the statewide Commission that focuses on mentoring outcomes and the mentoring landscape across the state of Nevada and is tasked with ensuring that mentoring is continually advocated for across the state.

Chair Catarata asked the Commissioners to quickly introduce themselves with first and last names, preferred pronouns, location, and occupation.

Sebastian Cardenas informed the Commission that he is a development coordinator at the Public Education Foundation, a NITEP (Nevada Institute on Teacher Education Preparation) fellow at the UNLV College of Education, and an Englestad fellow alumni.

Vice Chair Katie Membreno informed the Commission that her preferred pronouns are she/her, that she is a junior attending UNLV, and that she is the Vice Director for the A L I S I A Learning Corp, a mentoring organization in North Las Vegas.

Dr. Douglas Garner informed the Commission that he is a former educator with the Clark County School District and UNLV and is currently president and CEO of Dr. Douglas Garner Consulting.

Chris James, NDE, informed the Commission that he is the state coordinator who ensures that youth experiencing homelessness receive the educational services required under federal law.

Gabby Lamarre, NDE, informed the Commission that she is the Title I Director and Federal Liaison for the Nevada Department of Education. Ms. Lamarre indicated that she supports education for students in delinquent or neglect situations, detention facilities, and in correction facilities. Ms. Lamarre also supports the lowest performing schools across the state.

#### **5. Approval of NCOM May 21, 2021 Meeting Minutes (Information/Discussion/For Possible Action)**

<b>Motion:</b>	Approve Meeting Minutes
<b>By:</b>	Dr. Douglas Garner
<b>Second:</b>	Sebastian Cardenas
<b>Vote:</b>	Passed Unanimously

#### **6. Public Comment #1**

Chair Karl Catarata opened the floor to public comment.

Taylor Finelli thanked the Commission for allowing him time to speak as well as for all of its hard work and then informed the Commission that he is interested in joining. Mr. Finelli indicated that he is a computer engineering major at the UNLV Honors College and has some mentorship background. In high school, Mr. Finelli was the State President of Skills USA, a technical student organization that helps students to achieve their vocational goals through technical education. Mr. Finelli also worked with Mu Alpha Theta as a tutor to help students struggling with academics, predominately math, physics, and chemistry. Mr. Finelli further indicated that he is a volunteer with Hero School, an organization that mentors the homeless to help them realize their goals. Mr. Finelli also informed the Committee that he will be interviewing with Mathnasium in hopes of becoming a math tutor over the summer.

**7. Chair's report** (Information/Discussion/For Possible Action)

**a. Legislative Updates**

Chair Catarata informed the Commission that he had given a testimonial to the Senate Education Committee during the Nevada legislative session and that there were no updates and no follow-up needed as legislature has ended. Chair Catarata indicated that NCOM is currently working with legislators to identify a path moving forward and that he, as Chair, is watching for the next special session that may be called to order for the legislature, but nothing has arisen at this time.

Chair Karl Catarata further indicated that NCOM has heard from people still interested in the Commission on Mentoring, Trustee Lisa Guzman (phonetic), and Trustee Evelyn Morales-Garcia from the Clark County School District.

Chair Karl Catarata closed the Chair's report by informing the Commission that he met with Henderson City Mayor Debra March regarding NCOM, and further indicated that the purpose of this meeting and others like it is simply to connect and inform folks of the purpose and the charge of NCOM.

Dr. Douglas Garner thanked Chair Catarata for his testimony, indicating his understanding that it had gone well.

Former Chair Michael Maxwell explained that he is the former Chair of NCOM and is currently the Delegate Vice President for Acelero Learning Head Start in Clark County. Mr. Maxwell further described his background in education as well as in mentoring.

**8. NCOM Development updates** (Information/Discussion/For Possible Action)

**a. Application Period Discussion - Addition of NCOM Commission Members**

Chair Karl Catarata informed the Commission that NCOM is looking to add one additional Youth Commissioner and four adult Commissioners. Chair Catarata further indicated that he has spoken with Trustee Kurt Thigpen from the Washoe County School District regarding proposal of a new Commissioner for that area so that all counties across the state are represented. Chair Catarata explained that his intention is to ensure that the Commission contains equal voices across all counties for the four proposed positions. Chair Catarata did explain his awareness that only four positions will not encompass all of the counties. Chair Catarata next suggested creating an open, posted application period for those interested in joining the Commission and then discussing these applications at the next NCOM meeting.

**b. Application Period Discussion - Discussion on Addition of 2nd Youth Commissioner**

Chair Karl Catarata reminded the Commission of the discussion that had taken place at

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the last meeting regarding appointment of a second Youth Commissioner. Chair Catarata further noted that the graphic for this position still needs to be completed. Chair Catarata reminded the Commission of the possible intention of having someone representing K-12 as the next Youth Commissioner, explained to the Commission that this posting could be provided to principals in schools, and indicated the importance of equal distribution of the posting to all school districts and superintendents.

Dr. Douglas Garner asked about the open application time period.

Chair Karl Catarata indicated that the criteria prescribed by the legislature is indicative of the part of the state from which a new Commissioner should be appointed. Chair Catarata then suggested to the Commission to begin the tightened timeframe search by posting the position on Wednesday, June 23rd and then meeting as a working group cohort at the end of July, prior to the next NCOM meeting, to consider resumes and thus be able to vote at the July NCOM meeting.

Dr. Douglas Garner concurred with Chair Catarata's suggestion of having a short application window of 20-30 days.

Dr. Michael Maxwell also concurred with the suggestion of a short application window but questioned whether or not the Commission has the application and the process in line to quickly move forward with appointments once applications have been submitted.

Chair Karl Catarata suggested to the Commission that resumes be sent via email to the Chair and Vice Chair, who would then share the resumes with the Commission as well as work with NDE staff to ensure that the resume is added as an agenda item for the next meeting. Chair Catarata did indicate his concern with Commission members having enough time to hear a candidate's plans prior to voting. Chair Catarata indicated that he would like to have everything compiled by the 23rd of June and then open the application period between June 23rd and the end of July.

Dr. Michael Maxwell indicated his agreement that this system would work well and advised that as part of the application process, applicants speak before the Commission to explain their reasons for wanting to join.

Chair Karl Catarata concurred with Dr. Maxwell and further suggested tightening the timeframe and having potential candidates come before the Commission at the July meeting and vote at the August meeting, or schedule listening sessions of 15 to 30 minutes during the business week at which time all Commissioners will gather to listen to a potential candidate over Zoom or a phone call.

Dr. Michael Maxwell suggested collecting resumes between now and the next meeting, hearing the applicants during the public session of that meeting, and then voting on those applicants in the same meeting so that the new Commissioners will be in place on July 16.

Chair Karl Catarata indicated his openness to following Dr. Maxwell's suggestion.

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Vice Chair Katie Membreno indicated her openness to following Dr. Maxwell's suggestion.

Sebastian Cardenas indicated his openness to following Dr. Maxwell's suggestion.

Vice Chair Katie Membreno asked if the PDF version would be available during the application process and ahead of the NCOM meeting in July in order to inform potential future Commissioners of the extent of the commitment beforehand.

Chair Karl Catarata indicated that it was certainly possible to prep the PDF version on Monday and Tuesday, June 21 and 22, and have it out to Commissioners by day's end on June 22 in order to stay with the timeline of opening the application process on June 23. Chair Catarata further indicated that most of the duties and responsibilities are already outlined on the state's website and could just be copied and pasted into the PDF.

Vice Chair Membreno asked if the Commission would need to vote on the PDF document.

Dr. Michael Maxwell indicated that this is a decision that can be made by the executive leaders of the Commission without the need for a meeting or a vote of approval by the Commission.

Dr. Douglas Garner concurred with Dr. Maxwell that this is a logistical, clerical issue that does not require a vote.

Dr. Michael Maxwell suggested removing the word "youth" from Youth Commissioner indicating that everyone on the Commission is a Commissioner representing a group, an organization, or a community interest and none of the other Commissioners have the added moniker of whom they represent in their titles.

Dr. Douglas Garner concurred with Dr. Maxwell's suggestion and asked if removing "youth" from the title Youth Commissioner needed to be done via a motion given that it is written that way within the legislative paperwork.

Dr. Michael Maxwell indicated that it is in the bill, but that nothing states in the bill that the person must be referred to as the Youth Commissioner.

Chair Karl Catarata deferred to Commissioner Sebastian Cardenas, the current Youth Commissioner, for his preference regarding this issue.

Commissioner Sebastian Cardenas also concurred with the suggestion and thanked the doctors.

Chair Karl Catarata recapped the suggested process for the application period for new Commissioners:

- the application period would run from June 23 to July 16
- applicants would be heard at the July 16 NCOM meeting

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- A vote would be taken at the July 16 NCOM meeting to appoint new Commissioners from the pool of applicants.

Vice Chair Katie Membreno suggested leaving the word "youth" out of the application process but including the age range in which the Commission is looking for a Commissioner.

Dr. Michael Maxwell suggested that the Commission simply list the positions as noted in the legislation, such as Commissioners to represent School Districts and Commissioners to represent youth. Dr. Maxwell further indicated his belief that the Commission has a list of Commissioners' descriptions and that those descriptions could be listed in the application.

**Motion:** Approve an application phase for a dedicated search for NCOM Commissioners opening on June 23, 2021 and closing on July 16.  
**By:** Dr. Michael Maxwell  
**Second:** Dr. Douglas Garner  
**Vote:** Passed Unanimously

**c. Mentorship Discussion with Dr. Rene Cantu and Devin Ritholz**

Chair Karl Catarata discussed his meeting with Dr. Rene Cantu, Nevada State Board of Education, and Devin Ritholz, MGM. Chair Catarata indicated that the Dr. Cantu and Mr. Ritholz had met at Leadership of Las Vegas and expressed interest in hosting a mentorship annual conference as well as a desire to see more synergies with mentoring groups across the state of Nevada. In response, Chair Catarata referred Dr. Cantu and Mr. Ritholz to the My Brother's Keeper Alliance.

Vice Chair Katie Membreno explained that Dr. Cantu was the JAG (Jobs for Americas Graduates) coordinator for high school programs. Vice Chair Membreno further indicated that she and Chair Catarata will be following up with both Dr. Cantu and Mr. Ritholz and will continue to update the Commission on any pertinent information from those meetings.

Dr. Michael Maxwell explained that Dr. Cantu had spoken before the Commission approximately two years earlier and indicated his support of rekindling this particular connection.

**d. Discussion on Annual Conference**

Chair Karl Catarata explained to the Commission his hopes of bringing mentoring groups across the state to a mentoring conference and indicated his understanding that in terms of a large annual mentorship conference, there are details that will first need to be worked out. Chair Catarata further indicated that in the interest of time, a future strategy meeting could be planned regarding what Commissioners would like to see at the annual conference. Chair Catarata discussed the deliverables on which the Commission was intentionally focused for the mentoring conference: 1, to recognize mentorship organizations and the work they have done; 2, engaging MENTOR, the national affiliate, to provide workshops or best practices; 3, a strategy-synergy check-in, similar to My Brother's Keeper, which Chair Catarata suggested be a facilitator for

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the upcoming conference: 4, engaging stakeholders, such as elected officials, to meet groups all in one place for the specific day of the conference.

Dr. Douglas Garner suggested modeling the conference after My Brother's Keeper conferences. Dr. Garner further suggested that Commissioners participate in the upcoming Young Men's Conference to see how the conferences will be facilitated and incorporate the strategies of the upcoming conference and the past conferences held by My Brother's Keeper to model what's been shown to work.

Dr. Michael Maxwell concurred with Dr. Garner's suggestions and added the idea of networking with other Commissions, such as the Nevada Children's Commission, who has representatives from a number of organizations serving youth, including mentoring organizations. Dr. Maxwell further suggested that NCOM be either at the beginning of the Young Men's Conference or at the end of it. Dr. Maxwell further suggested holding the NCOM conference in either May or sometime from late November into mid-December but indicated a preference for spring given that it would provide a buildup to the NCOM conference following the MBK and Young Men's Conferences. Dr. Maxwell indicated his belief that it would be wise for NCOM to do the conference in conjunction with the Nevada Children's Commission and other organizations.

Dr. Douglas Garner indicated that he is involved in the planning of both of the aforementioned conferences and informed the Commission that he will make sure that NCOM is at the table, is represented, and able to hear and see what's going on.

Chair Karl Catarata concurred with both Drs. Garner and Maxwell's suggestions regarding the MBK and Young Man's Conference and suggested researching the dates for those conferences and also suggested that the Commission work to identify a date on which the details, itinerary, and workshops for the proposed NCOM conference.

Sebastian Cardenas indicated his support for this suggestion and further indicated that the planning would be better as an in-person meeting as it does have to do with the image and role of NCOM in the community.

Dr. Michael Maxwell indicated his openness to participating in an in-person planning meeting.

Vice Chair Katie Membreno indicated that she will send a doodle poll out to the group regarding this potential meeting.

Dr. Michael Maxwell cautioned Chair Catarata to be sure to add the planning meetings to the agenda as an action item in the future in case any issues need to be addressed by a vote.

**9. Agenda items considerations** (Information/Discussion/For Possible Action)

Chair Karl Catarata indicated he will be adding a possible action voting agenda item for the annual conference to future agendas.

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Brigid Duffy indicated that the Nevada Children's Commission, at their meeting earlier in the day, had requested that Commissioner Duffy put NCOM back on the agenda as an update for the next Children's Commission Meeting in the upcoming months. Ms. Duffy explained that NCOM needs to be prepared to update the Children's Commission at their next meeting as well as introduce the new Chair and Vice Chair of NCOM. Ms. Duffy further indicated her support for incorporating the Children's Commission into the conversation regarding the proposed NCOM conference.

Chair Karl Catarata indicated that he will email Ms. Duffy, Vice Chair Membreno, and any other Commissioners interested in attending the next Children's Commission meeting.

Brigid Duffy informed Chair Catarata that she would add him and Vice Chair Membreno to the email list for notices of meetings as currently the notices are still going to former Chair Dr. Maxwell.

Dr. Michael Maxwell explained that he has been on the mailing list since meeting with the Children's Commission the previous late fall/early winter and plans to be available to listen in and participate in the Children's Commission meetings going forward.

Chair Karl Catarata informed the Commission that he has emailed both Commissioners Duffy and Maxwell as well as copied Vice Chair Membreno on the email regarding this topic. Chair Catarata further indicated that he would forward the email to any other interested Commissioners.

**10. Public Comment #2**

There was no public comment.

**11. Adjournment**

**Motion:** Adjourn the June 18, 2021, NCOM meeting at 2:57pm.  
**By:** Vice Chair Katie Membreno  
**Second:** Dr. Michael Maxwell  
**Vote:** Passed Unanimously