

Nevada Department of Education

Nevada Commission on Mentoring

Friday, April 14, 2023

2:00 PM

Office	Mode	Platform
Department of Education	Teleconference/Livestream	Zoom

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION MEETING

COMMISSION MEMBER PRESENT

Karl Catarata, Chair

Katie Membreno, Vice Chair

Douglas Garner

Brigid Duffy

Laura Davidson

Sebastian Cardenas

COMMISSION MEMBER ABSENT

Michael Maxwell

Michael Flores

DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT

Sarah Thomas, NDE Staff

Brittany Adams, NDE, Contractor

Rose Cota, NDE Staff

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance, and Land Acknowledgement:

Vice Chair Membreno called the meeting to order on Friday, April 14, 2023, at 2:05 p.m. Vice Chair Membreno called roll and established quorum.

Chair Catarata led the Subcommittee in the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Catarata acknowledged the land.

2. Public Comment

Chair Karl Catarata opened the floor to public comment. There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Flexible Agenda

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

There was no vote taken for approval of flexible agenda.

4. Welcome and Introduction (Mission Statement)

Vice Chair Membreno thanked Subcommittee members for their attendance and for reviewing the applications in advance.

5. Approval of NCOM March 3, and March 17, 2023, Meeting Minutes:

Vice Chair Membreno called for comments or changes to the March 3, 2023, meeting minutes.

Motion: Approval of NCOM March 3, 2023, meeting minutes

By: Katie Membreno

Second: Karl Catarata

Vote: Passed unanimously

Vice Chair Membreno called for comments or changes to the March 17, 2023, meeting minutes.

Motion: To approve the NCOM March 17 meeting minutes.

By: Katie Membreno

Second: Karl Catarata

Vote: Passed unanimously

6. Chair's Report:

Chair Catarata informed the Subcommittee that he has transmitted an application for the NCOM Commission when it comes to a business and industry leader and/or a representative of the workforce in the state of Nevada from Mr. Andrew Holbert (phonetic), and the Commission is awaiting approval from the Governor's Office of this appointment. Chair Catarata indicated that the Commission is still looking for another youth Commissioner. Chair Catarata reported that NCOM does not have any current bills in the Nevada Legislative Session. Chair Catarata indicated that the 16 grant applications this cycle is an increase over the last grant application cycle and congratulated all Commissioners for their work and representation.

7. NCOM Development updates:

a. NCOM Grant Fund Applications Review

Vice Chair Membreno indicated that the subcommittee would review the FY 2023 grant applications one at a time, beginning with the Asian Community Resource Center, noting that this application is a request for \$2,000 for materials for their literacy program.

Chair Catarata noted that this applicant has previously received a grant from Nevada HealthLink. Chair Catarata additionally indicated that the application specifically notes the importance of staying on par with colleagues who are more blessed financially. Chair Catarata further noted that he would like to see the offices of this organization.

Commissioner Duffy indicated her unfamiliarity with this organization and noted that this one was a possible funding for her.

Commissioner Cardenas concurred that this application was also a maybe for him.

Dr. Davidson concurred with Commissioners Duffy and Cardenas, noting that she would have liked more information regarding the outreach of this organization as well as the particular framework it uses for financial literacy.

Vice Chair Membreno also listed this application as a maybe.

Vice Chair Membreno indicated the next organization is Black Wall Street Reno, with a request for \$10,000, and noted that she was not familiar with this organization. Vice Chair Membreno expressed concern with the fact that this organization is looking to start a mentorship program but does not already have an existing one.

Chair Catarata noted that this organization was awarded a small grant by the Red Field Foundation and further indicated that this organization is partnering with other organizations to schedule different events to participate in outdoor activities.

Dr. Davidson explained that this organization is part of a coalition that is starting to build in the Reno area which consists of several mentoring organizations working together to try and build out more capacity. Dr. Davidson further noted that she would have liked to see more detail regarding how the funds would be spent.

Commissioner Cardenas concurred, noting that the request appears to be for a camp program and indicated his desire to have seen a description of what would have happened throughout that camp program. Commissioner Cardenas explained that due to the lack of detail, this application was a no for him.

Commissioner Duffy expressed concerns with the plan of this organization, as well, and noted that this was a no for her.

Dr. Davidson noted that she has not worked directly with this organization but does know of the coalition being built, although not specifically of this organization in particular.

Chair Catarata noted that this application fell into his for possible consideration pile and also expressed concern in the lack of detail regarding the specific programming. Chair Catarata raised the possibility of a lower amount of money, noting that a micro grant might be feasible along with NCOM supporting the organization and continuing a possible relationship.

Vice Chair Membreno noted that this was a maybe for her, as well, indicating her concern at the newness of the organization and the large ask for funding.

Vice Chair Membreno indicated that the next application came from the Board of Regents for an undergraduate research program.

Chair Catarata explained that the Board of Regents did not submit this application, but rather it came from the UNLV Office of Undergraduate Research. Chair Catarata commended the detail provided in the application and explained that although this is their first attempt at applying for a programmatic grant, it appears that they are utilizing it to support their costs on this high-impact mentorship program. Chair Catarata explained that this program did reach out to him in advance and explained that the mentorship includes connecting a graduate student with an undergraduate student, with an intended expansion to high school students.

Dr. Davidson concurred with Chair Catarata, noting that this application was a yes for her.

Commissioner Cardenas concurred, noting that this application was a yes for him, as well.

Commissioner Duffy also noted this application as a yes but expressed concern that the application indicated that the money would be used over the course of the 2023-24 academic year rather than during the spend-down time of this particular grant.

Chair Catarata indicated that the Commission could ensure that the applicant abides by the grant procedure.

Chair Cardenas noted the importance of awarding the grant with the strict parameters, and discussed re-appropriation of the funds, should this applicant not be able to spend them, to an organization either cut out of this funding or which receives a lower amount of this funding.

Rose Cota, NDE, confirmed that all monies from the grant must be spent by June 30.

Vice Chair Membreno indicated that all grant applicants received all of the important dates, including the closing date and spend-down date.

Vice Chair Membreno noted that the next application comes from NEWL, with the Women's Research Institute of Nevada. Vice Chair Membreno indicated that the ask of \$125,000 was higher than the Commission has to offer, but indicated the organizations longevity, as well as its standing in the community for supporting students, particularly students of color. Vice Chair Membreno commented on the fact that this organization does not receive any university funding and as such, women in this program are not asked to pay anything. Despite the high ask, Vice Chair Membreno suggested providing a lower amount to this organization.

Chair Catarata questioned how much the Commission would then like to provide to this organization, explaining that based on the Commission's decision, he is open to approval of this request.

Commissioner Duffy concurred.

Commissioner Cardenas expressed concern at the fact that this organization has asked for similar level grants in the past and cautioned that the amount NCOM might be able to offer would only be a drop in the bucket as compared to the impact that could be made on other organizations. As such, although Commissioner Cardenas indicated his willingness to provide funds to this organization, he noted that he would be inclined to give preference to another worthy application.

Dr. Davidson concurred.

Vice Chair Membreno concurred, noting that this organization did note in the comments that they are looking for any sort of funding as they are struggling on providing even smaller resources to their students.

Vice Chair Membreno explained that Eddie's House is a program with which she is unfamiliar.

Dr. Davidson explained that Eddie's House is the primary homeless support center for youth and makes a significant impact on the community. As such, Dr. Davidson voted this one a yes.

Commissioner Cardenas concurred but indicated his belief that this organization undersold itself based on the amount of good it is doing in the community.

Commissioner Duffy also marked this application as a yes.

Chair Catarata marked this application as a yes.

Vice Chair Membreno noted that the next request was in the amount of \$2,000. The Vice Chair did not provide the name of the organization and noted that the organization did not sign or submit a date submission.

Commissioner Duffy explained that she has not heard of this organization before, surprising given that they assist foster youth.

Dr. Davidson noted that they appeared not to have finished their application and as such, are in her no pile.

Vice Chair Membreno concurred.

Commissioner Cardenas Concurred.

Chair Catarata requested that NDE staff reach out to this organization to determine why the application is incomplete given that they have received grants from other organizations in the past.

Vice Chair Membreno noted that the next application comes from La Vos Latino Law Student Association, run by the Boyd Law School, and provides mentorship to any student in attending law school, primarily the Latino community.

Commissioner Duffy noted that this one was in her no pile based solely on what the funding would be used for.

Vice Chair Membreno, who had been a part of this program, explained that the program actually connects a mentee with a mentor through the program so the mentee can then apply for scholarships that assist on the next steps on their path.

Commissioner Cardenas indicated his willingness to put this in the maybe pile, noting that because not all applicants have personal advocates familiar with their programs on the Commission, all should be judged solely on their applications. Commissioner Cardenas also noted his familiarity with this program and provided high praise for its work.

Vice Chair Membreno indicated that the Incline Education Fund applied for a grant of \$5,000.

Dr. Davidson explained that this is an interesting population group in that it encompasses both extreme wealth and high poverty and explained that this organization provides a lot of support to the Incline schools. Dr. Davidson noted the clarity and detail of the application and indicated that this one was a yes for her.

Vice Chair Membreno concurred.

Commissioner Cardenas concurred.

Commissioner Duffy concurred.

Chair Catarata concurred.

Chair Catarata indicated that the next application was for Mater Academy East, with a request for \$1,200 for mentor stipends to run a summer mentorship program.

Vice Chair Membreno indicated her unfamiliarity with this organization.

Commissioner Cardenas explained that this is an East Side school with a good history of mentorship programs and indicated that he would put this in his yes pile but would give preference to other organizations as this is a school that has the capacity to fundraise.

Dr. Davidson indicated that this was in her no pile as Mater is a big charter school network in Nevada and nationally and because their request was a bit vague.

Commissioner Duffy explained that this was in the middle for her.

Chair Catarata also noted this one as a maybe.

Vice Chair Membreno discussed the request from the Northern Nevada Literacy Council for \$2,000.

Dr. Davidson indicated that this one was a definite yes as it was a reasonable ask and the application described the challenges and needs of their youth, as well as provided detail regarding mentoring.

Vice Chair Membreno concurred.

Commissioner Cardenas concurred.

Commissioner Duffy concurred.

Chair Catarata concurred.

Vice Chair Membreno noted that Seriously Stressed Incorporated was requesting \$1,000 and indicated her belief that the application could have been more specific regarding how the funds would be used. As such, the Vice Chair expressed her belief that the Commission should reach out to express some support.

Commissioner Duffy concurred.

Commissioner Cardenas concurred.

Chair Catarata concurred and added his concern that LBGTQ and LGBTQ were used interchangeably in an area of the application. Chair Catarata further noted his desire to know where the services the organization provides are being provided and to whom.

Dr. Davidson concurred.

Vice Chair Membreno indicated that the Southern Nevada Black Educators Initiative requested \$10,000 and noted that this funding request may need to be reconsidered given the already compiled list of yeses and maybes thus far.

Dr. Davidson noted that this was a definite yes for her, even if the amount were reduced, given the dire need in education right now to support retention of black educators and encourage a better pipeline for diverse educators. Dr. Davidson called attention to their great data and solid evaluation plan.

Commissioner Duffy noted that this request was for a stipend salary and indicated that in order to meet the parameters of the grant, the educator would need to be given all \$10,000 in one

month. Commissioner Duffy further noted her inability to discern the age range of those to whom the grant would benefit. Nonetheless, Commissioner Duffy agreed with Dr. Davidson on the need of this cause, and thus placed this request in her maybe pile.

Vice Chair Membreno concurred and noted her confusion in how the funding will benefit mentorship specifically and as such, also placed this request in her maybe pile.

Commissioner Cardenas discussed how this grant would be going to mentoring the people that would be mentoring youth and indicated his willingness to lower the grant amount.

Chair Catarata concurred with Commissioner Cardenas.

Vice Chair Membreno next discussed the Taking Back the Block Foundation, aka the Donna Street Community Center.

Chair Catarata indicated that the ask of \$125,000 was significantly more than the Commission could grant and noted for all members of the public to be sure to look at available funding prior to submitting applications. Chair Catarata noted his familiarity with the organization and its leader, Mr. Robert Strawder, and discussed the mentorship of black and brown youth taking place in this organization. As such, Chair Catarata indicated his willingness to grant this organization \$500 to \$1,000.

Vice Chair Membreno noted that she would like to know where the organization is getting its teachings from and how they're going to be best utilizing that for their students, as well as what platform would be used to enhance their goals.

Dr. Davidson noted that this was a maybe for her given the large amount and non-specificity in terms of how the funding would be used. As such, Dr. Davidson indicated that she would be fine with a smaller amount and would agree to \$500.

Commissioner Duffy noted that this was originally a no for her because of the large amount and noted that she would be willing to move it to a maybe for a smaller amount should funding be available.

Commissioner Cardenas concurred.

Vice Chair Membreno indicated that MOB, the Most Outstanding Ballers girl's youth basketball team was requesting \$16,000 for their team to attend a tournament in a different state.

Commissioner Duffy questioned how the organization would be able to note which children on the team would be unable to afford it, and whether the money would be distributed to only those children or all children. Commissioner Duffy did express significant support to the organization itself, but questioned the funding, noting the importance of ensuring the funding went to those who need it.

Commissioner Cardenas concurred, adding that the purpose of the funding is to pay for the specific trip and not for the actual mentorship operations.

Dr. Davidson indicated that this was a no for her for all the reasons stated by Commissioners Duffy and Cardenas.

Vice Chair Membreno concurred, noting that this did not appear to meet the goal of the Commission.

Vice Chair Membreno opened the floor for discussion on Youth Advocates Program (YAP).

Commissioner Duffy noted her familiarity with the organization, explaining that they are very embedded in both the Department of Family Services and the Department of Juvenile Justice Services in working as mentors. Commissioner Duffy further indicated that their request and purpose of funding was right on point and thus were in her yes pile.

Vice Chair Membreno noted that the final applicant was Scholastics Academy Las Vegas, who is requesting \$1,000 for materials, extra tutors, and mentors, as well as to train volunteers to assist students before and after school.

Commissioner Duffy noted that the questions were not well vetted out, and the application included typos and did not provide answers to some of the questions.

Commissioner Cardenas concurred, noting that some of the answers were very short and having typos in a one-sentence answer did not provide him with confidence that the funds would be used appropriately given that attention to detail is required by DOE for the grant.

Dr. Davidson concurred.

Chair Catarata concurred.

Motion: To approve the Northern Nevada Literacy Council for \$2,000.

By: Katie Membreno

Second: Brigid Duffy

Vote: Passed unanimously

Motion: To approve the Incline Education Fund for \$5,000.

By: Katie Membreno

Second: Laura Davidson

Vote: Passed Unanimously

Motion: To fund Youth Advocates Program (YAP's) application for \$500.

By: Brigid Duffy
Second: Katie Membreno
Vote: Passed Unanimously

Motion: To approve Eddie's House for \$1,000
By: Katie Membreno
Second: Brigid Duffy
Vote: Passed Unanimously

Motion: To approve Board of Regents Undergraduate Research for \$4,000
By: Katie Membreno
Second: Brigid Duffy
Vote: Passed Unanimously

Motion: To approve Asian Community Resource Center for \$1,000
By: Katie Membreno
Second: Brigid Duffy
Vote: Passed Unanimously

Motion: To approve NEWL for \$5,000
By: Brigid Duffy
Second: Karl Catarata
Vote: Passed Unanimously

Motion: To approve La Vos and Southern Nevada Black Educators Initiative at \$3,250 apiece and to move Donna Street to a no as it cannot meet NCOM's current funding resources.
By: Laura Davidson
Second: Brigid Duffy
Vote: Passed Unanimously

Rose Cota indicated that she would forward the information to all Commissioner and NDE staff for the record. Ms. Cota next indicated that the information will be provided to her supervisor, Jessica DeLallo, to begin the work with the grants department. Ms. Cota explained that NCOM is scheduled to meet on April 21 and asked if the Commissioners would like to vote on the grants at that meeting or if they would prefer to schedule a different meeting. Ms. Cota suggested that the decline letters be begun, as well, so that they can also be done within the appropriate timeframe.

Commissioner Duffy requested that this be agendized for the April 21 meeting to make the announcements to recipients by May 5.

Rose Cota indicated that she would put together the agenda and post it by the following Monday in accordance with Open Meeting Law.

8. Agenda Item Considerations

a. Quality Discussion for the Sub-Committee Meetings

Commissioner Cardenas offered to draft the rejection letters and asked that they be approved by a certain date.

Chair Catarata noted that the grants could be approved and the letters could then begin to be distributed on April 22. Chair Catarata further noted that the Commission would vote that as soon as the results of the April 21 meeting are posted, the efforts of staff and the subcommittee must occur immediately to meet deadlines accordingly.

Motion: That based on the results of the April 21 full NCOM meeting, that letters of approval and decline be sent out immediately following the meeting, and appropriate follow ups from staff be conducted.

By: Karl Catarata

Second: Katie Membreno

Vote: Passed Unanimously

9. Public Comment #2

Commissioner Duffy indicated that this was a good way to spend a Friday to support mentoring organizations across the state.

Chair Catarata noted his appreciation for all members of the subcommittee, recalling a time when NCOM had a budget of \$0. Chair Catarata thanked Ms. Cota for volunteering her time for today's meeting, as well.

10. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the April 14, 2023, NCOM Subcommittee meeting. 4:37pm.

By: Karl Catarata

Second: Brigid Duffy.

Vote: Passed Unanimously