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NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MILITARY, NATIONAL, AND PUBLIC SERVICE

Minutes of June 2018 Commission Meeting

The National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service (the Commission) held a meeting on June 14-15, 2018, at the Commission's offices in Arlington, VA. The meeting concerned organizational and other pre-decisional and deliberative matters and was closed to the public pursuant to Public Law 114-328, section 554(b)(3). The Commissioners agreed to make a separate version of these minutes available to the public.

Attendance

Commissioners present:

- Mr. Edward T. Allard III
- Mr. Steve Barney
- The Honorable Janine Davidson
- The Honorable Mark Gearan
- Ms. Avril Haines (absent for portions)
- The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck
- Ms. Jeanette James
- Mr. Alan Khazei
- Mr. Thomas Kilgannon
- Ms. Shawn Skelly
- The Honorable Debra Wada

Staff present:

- Kent Abernathy, Executive Director
- Paul Lekas, General Counsel
- Keri Lowry, Director of Government Affairs and Public Engagement
- Gregory Brinsfield, Director of Operations
- Jill Rough, Director of Research and Analysis
- Other Commission staff (present for portions)

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June 14, 2018

Business Meeting

Beginning at 0900 ET, the Commission held a business meeting. The Chairman moved to close the full meeting to the public because pre-decisional and organizational matters would be deliberated. All Commissioners present agreed.

Staff Introductions

Mr. Abernathy invited the staff's executive team to introduce members of their respective staffs. Each staff member introduced herself or himself to the Commission.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Heck then moved to approve minutes from the May 2018 Commission meeting. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the May 2018 minutes.

Overview of 2018 and 2019 Planning

Chairman Heck then briefed the Commission on plans for the remainder of 2018 and for 2019, noting that the Commission has a compressed time frame in which to reach decisions on its recommendations. Chairman Heck reminded the Commission that meetings in October, November, and December 2018 would occur in Crystal City. He asked Commissioners to plan on meeting for three days during each of those meetings, with each covering Wednesday-Friday of the scheduled week. He asked Commissioners to plan on making available five-to-six days per month during calendar year 2019 for Commission work. That time would include monthly meetings in Crystal City along with external engagements around the country in small groups.

Chairman Heck requested that Commissioners provide him with information on any knowledge gaps that should be addressed through appropriate briefings during October-December 2018 meetings. As an example, he noted that he had requested that staff schedule a briefing from constitutional scholars to address the topic of compulsory national service. He referenced today's briefing by the Department of Labor as an effort to educate the Commission on workforce investment programs that may be relevant to recommendations the Commission will consider.

Briefing on Visit to Jacksonville, FL

Mr. Barney briefed the Commission on the May 17-18, 2018, visit of four Commissioners to Jacksonville, FL. Commissioners attending this trip included Mr. Barney, Ms. Skelly, Mr. Kilgannon, and Vice Chair Wada.

Mr. Barney described it as a well-executed trip that provided a good proof of concept for a scaled-down, partial Commission engagement. The trip included a heavy pace of back-to-back events at a centralized location. For each event, one Commissioner served as lead and had a single staff liaison. Mr. Barney endorsed that approach. He asked staff to reflect on the

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appropriate staff load and cost for partial Commission trips, but thought the approach in Jacksonville, overall, worked well. Mr. Barney did recommend that staff focus more on the execution and smoothness of the public meeting.

Ms. Skelly recommended clearer delineation of responsibilities among the staff during travel. She recommended convening a pre-trip huddle to gather staff and Commissioners with roles and responsibilities for the trip events to review the run of show ahead of time.

Meeting with Jacksonville Business Community.

Mr. Barney then provided his thoughts on the events held during the Jacksonville trip. He started with the discussion Commissioners held with members of the Jacksonville business community.

Mr. Barney described Jacksonville as a city growing based on migration, not birth rates, with businesses that value community service and see service as a positive quality of life element in attracting employees. He said the local Chamber of Commerce has a strong affinity with the military community. Businesses also support a “day of service” to promote service, though, as in other places, these efforts could benefit from better coordination to ensure distribution of assistance to a wider variety of needs.

Citizen Advisory Committee Roundtable.

Mr. Barney discussed the Jacksonville Citizen Advisory Committees Roundtable. It is a volunteer-led citizen advisory committee that acts as a liaison between the community and the mayor’s office. Participants in this roundtable favored Selective Service, expressed interest in the Works Progress Administration concept, and saw value in involving younger people through social media.

Disaster Relief Engagement.

Commissioners also met with representatives from organizations that work on disaster response. Mr. Barney was impressed with the knowledge, training, and expertise of those involved. Team Rubicon provides training for disaster response and that organization is integrated into the Jacksonville area’s disaster response plan. Mr. Barney views the Jacksonville approach as a model for integrating business with the public sector; for example, businesses that do logistics management partner with disaster relief and other community organizations to provide logistics support and enable the other organizations to focus on their core skills. Vice Chair Wada noted that the Team Rubicon representatives were not previously known to the local government representatives. The Commission’s event had the unintended effect of bringing together these individuals whose organizations work together. That seemed helpful to them and likewise will be helpful to the Commission as it develops its network across the country.

Naval Station Mayport.

Mr. Barney then spoke to the engagement at Naval Station Mayport. Commissioners met with individuals from the Fleet and Family Service Centers, which provide support to sailors and their

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families. While Mr. Barney had familiarity with the group, he found it beneficial to hear about their views on the value of service and how service can change people's lives. He also enjoyed meeting with junior sailors; those sailors came from a variety of backgrounds, but all seemed motivated by wanting something better in their lives. He noted that some were immigrants who saw the military as a way to become American, and many viewed the Navy as a career path rather than a short-term exploration.

Vice Chair Wada was surprised that fewer of the junior sailors came from military families. Amy Schafer, who attended the event, estimated that about half of the sailors came from military families, which is below the typical 70-80%.

Vice Chair Gearan inquired about military data on why people join. Vice Chair Wada, noting that the reasons have changed, explained that survey data maintained by each Service and by the Office of the Secretary of Defense generally identifies educational benefits, health care, and other incentives as the primer driver, with service to "do something bigger" ranking lower. Still, she suggested that a desire for something different in their lives is a primary driver.

Commissioners focused on how many of the sailors expressed, in Ms. Skelly's words, a "sharp, coherent story about how [joining the Navy] could change their lives socio-economically." Vice Chair Wada mentioned one sailor who said he joined to get out of the trailer park, and another, an immigrant with a child, who joined to get paid and have health care and get the support she needs to service in this country. Vice Chair Wada noted that for some people, the "giving back" part of the mission comes to them a little later.

Dr. Davidson mentioned restrictions on beards and tattoos as important for those in younger generation considering military service. These indicators of "belonging" are part of the larger question around propensity to serve.

Mr. Barney suggested that these relate to military capabilities and are beyond the scope of the Commission's recommendations. Dr. Davidson characterized them as an aspect of the military/civil divide and cautioned that the Commission avoid exacerbating the divide. Ms. Skelly noted that the military seems aware of change trends and seems to be moving in a positive direction in its adjustment of policies regarding tattoos.

Vice Chair Wada returned to the sessions with family support and sailors. She recommended that the propensity group consider changing demographics of the military force. Today, more service members are married with dependents and that percentage continues to increase. The average age has increased as well. Taken together, propensity should consider the differences in outlook and objectives for an 18-year-old individual versus a 24- or 25-year-old individual who is married with a family. Ms. James asked if those trends vary by service. Vice Chair Wada indicated that the trends are not service-dependent but noted that the Marine Commandant has indicated an intent to increase the average age of the Navy force.

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Mr. Allard turned the discussion to deployments. Ms. James discussed the change in expectations: currently, it is expected that one will deploy, and this is part of the decision an individual must consider in deciding whether to enlist.

Mr. Allard asked about current data on suicide rates. Ms. James said that according to a recent long-term Army study, suicide intention tends to decrease following a first deployment; those who make it through the first deployment without suicidal ideations are less likely to have such thoughts on their second and third deployments. Mr. Kilgannon added that data show that divorce rate increases with more deployments.

Visit to Stillwell Middle School.

Returning to the Jacksonville trip, Mr. Barney discussed the visit to Stillwell Middle School. This is a public school that had redefined itself as a quasi-military academy. Students wear uniforms (polo shirts with khaki pants) and each day recite the Pledge of Allegiance and the school's code of conduct. Students who attend Stillwell do so by choice (theirs or their parents). Mr. Barney noted that enrollment is trending upward and that the teaching staff includes a number of former service members. Dr. Davidson asked if teachers were part of Troop to Teachers; she noted that the program could provide a means to address teacher shortages. Mr. Barney did not know but thought Dr. Davidson raised a great point for follow up.

According to Mr. Barney, the teachers view themselves as life examples for the young people. They believe that military discipline is essential or helpful to accomplish things. Also, the teachers do not believe that middle school is too early to talk to people about service opportunities and even in those grades have begun to hold career days.

Mr. Barney next spoke about the Commissioners' discussion with students. The students favored women registering with the Selective Service System. This seemed to be based on their sense of fairness – a sense that Mr. Barney thought was particularly well developed. The students considered women registering and/or serving from both sides and felt it was not fair that men are required to register, and women are not, and also not fair that women are not permitted the opportunity to register. The students generally supported the idea of mandatory national service but seemed somewhat hesitant about being told what to do, which Mr. Barney described as being in part about how the issue was presented to them (i.e., what words were used). Dr. Davidson found it surprising that students at both Stillwell and Denver North High School were not averse to “mandatory” service. She recommended the Commission think further about why this might be.

Mr. Barney said the teachers they spoke with felt the students at Stillwell had a sense of entitlement similar to students at other schools, meaning in part that they are products of a society of rapid reward and instant gratification; the self-discipline taught in Stillwell requires a denial of immediate self-gratification for future gain.

Vice Chair Gearan asked if the students or teachers reflected on civics education, particularly in light of views that Florida's civics education requirements influenced the Parkland students. Mr.

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Kilgannon said this was a point of confusion: Commissioners believed that Florida required civics education, but one participant challenged that view and said civics education was not required; a staff member commented that the requirement lasted only one year. Later in the Commission meeting, Mr. Lekas reported back that Florida does indeed have civics education requirements that begin in middle school and remain intact today.

Ms. Skelly left the meeting with students feeling that they were comfortable with an expectation that they would continue to help their communities. Building on a point made by Mr. Barney, Ms. Skelly highlighted the importance students placed on fairness, which she found to be incredibly sophisticated.

VSO Roundtable.

Mr. Barney then spoke to the roundtable with members of veterans' services organizations (VSOs). The VSO representatives view the all-volunteer force as the "all-recruiting force" because most volunteers are actively recruited to serve. Vice Chair Wada added that few individuals walk in the door of recruiting stations ready to sign on the dotted line – with Ms. Skelly noting that many of those who do are not qualified to enlist. The discussion with VSO representatives made clear that there is a need for veterans to have greater opportunities to serve outside of the military – to provide value to their communities and counteract the perception that veterans are needy and damaged by their military service.

Research Update

Dr. Rough provided a research update and plan to the Commission. She supplied a presentation that accompanied her briefing. The following supplements the distributed material.

Dr. Rough informed the Commission that over the past six months, she and her staff have gathered research through various means including, from a qualitative perspective, through meetings with experts, interviews, public stakeholder meetings, and conferences. She noted that staff documents each session in a memorandum for the record (MFR) available on Share Point for Commissioners to review. There are also MFRs for each Commissioner Work Group deliberation. Dr. Rough added that her team has prepared more than ten primers on different topics and has many in progress.

The research team has three priorities over the next six months. First, continued data collection during Commission trips. She noted that for partial trips, back-briefs would be provided at the next full Commission meeting. Second, preparation of the interim report, which would begin immediately. Third, Commissioner deliberations in order to generate policy proposals for deeper consideration during 2019. She said the remainder of CY2018 is planned to set up the Commission for 2019 (which will include issuance of the interim report, public hearings, and vetting of policy proposals).

Mr. Allard asked how the Commission's plan compares to other commissions at similar points in time. Mr. Abernathy said he has been in touch with directors from past commissions. He noted that those commissions, including the MCRMC, generally had narrower, more refined mandates

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than this Commission. Dr. Davidson suggested that the Commission's mandate will become more finely tuned once Commissioners resolve definitions and scope the issues to address.

Dr. Rough then reviewed the data collection priorities for the remaining site visits. These included sessions with different demographic and socio-economic groups. Mr. Barney noted the importance of including Asian-American and Native American communities. Dr. Rough explained that staff is planning engagements with both communities; the Commission would meet with representatives from the Asian-American community in Los Angeles and staff is exploring meetings of tribal leaders for potential engagements.

Dr. Davidson applauded the current focus on the federal civil service. She believes the Commission can and should make recommendations on civil service reform. She suggested convening a town hall in the DC area with civil servants, and also engaging with the federal employees' union. Mr. Abernathy briefed the Commission on his and Ms. Lowry's meeting with Jeff Pon, the new Director of the Office of Personnel Management, noting that he has interesting ideas. Mr. Pon is interested in the work of the Commission and Mr. Abernathy believes there is a synergy between the two organizations on civil service issues.

Dr. Rough expanded on the third goal for CY2018: preparing for the Commission's work in 2019. She explained that the Commission would need to vet proposals from January through June 2019. Therefore, meetings in October, November, and December will include deliberations to prepare for 2019, and in particular, the vetting of policy proposals during the first half of 2019. Dr. Rough noted that the level of detail for policy proposals is to be determined by the course of deliberations and Commissioners' preferences. For example, if the Commission determines that current Department of Defense (DoD) policies on tattoos are too restrictive, Commissioners can either recommend that DoD reevaluate its tattoo policy or propose a new policy. Dr. Rough indicated that it would be up to Commissioners to decide how in-the-weeds they wish to make their policy recommendations and staff will follow their lead.

Over the next several months, Commissioners will deliberate in Work Groups at each Commission meeting. Staff will build in time for each Work Group to back-brief the full Commission on the status of their deliberations. Meetings in October through December will consist largely of Commission and Work Group deliberations with some presentations on key issues, including, for example, a panel of constitutional scholars to discuss mandatory service.

Dr. Rough next spoke further about the plan for the first half of 2019. Staff will engage in data collection in several ways. First, through public hearings. The public hearings will be formal hearings with transcribed testimony; notices will be published in the Federal Register. Second, through qualitative analysis of public comments. Staff is finalizing a software purchase that will enable this work to begin soon. Third, through quantitative analysis of existing data sets. Fourth, through continued interviews with stakeholders and experts. Fifth, through possible additional information collection, which could include a survey.

Dr. Rough noted that the GPE team would develop an engagement plan for 2019 that would ensure that small groups of Commissioners travel across the country between public hearings to

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solicit feedback. Dr. Rough then reviewed the nominal schedule for 2019-20 with respect to public hearings and preparation of the final report. Dr. Davidson stressed the importance of continued site visits for two reasons: to start the dialogue around service, and to further the Commission’s research objectives. Dr. Rough concurred. Ms. James added that continuing these visits will help to eliminate any concern that the Commission avoided seeking information and input from across the country.

Dr. Rough then turned to Work Groups. Going forward, Dr. Rough indicated that staff would reserve time for Work Groups to back brief the full Commission to ensure all Commissioners are aware of the status of deliberations. She noted that the bulk of time during the October, November, and December meetings would include Work Group deliberations. Based on guidance from Chairman Heck, those meetings would cover three days in each month.

Dr. Rough provided an update on deliberations of the Selective Service System (SSS) and Propensity To Serve (P2S) Work Groups. She explained that she would drive the schedule for deliberations of both groups, with Jud Crane driving the deliberations of the SSS Work Group.

Dr. Rough then turned to the Ends, Ways, and Means Work Group (EWM). She explained that EWM, as the “connector” group, will be reviewing the integrated service system proposal—this was raised by some Commissioners in Work Group deliberations in Boston—to flesh out, develop, and identify critical information gaps. If this proposal remains on the table, the Commission may decide it needs to develop further information, for example, by conducting a cost estimate. Consideration of a civics education proposal may also fit within the EWM structure.

Briefing by the Department of Labor

From approximately 1100 to 1300 ET, the Commission received a briefing on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the Job Corps programs from representatives of the U.S. Department of Labor. An account of this meeting is set forth in a separate MFR.

Update on Selective Service System Work Group

Beginning at 1330 ET, the Commission received an update on the status of the deliberations of the Selective Service System (SSS) Work Group, chaired by Vice Chair Wada.

Vice Chair Wada referred to the Commissioners’ first research question, which is whether a military draft or draft contingency remains a necessary component of U.S. national security. Vice Chair Wada reframed the question as whether the United States needs a mechanism by which it can draft (i.e., involuntarily compel) Americans to deal with a national emergency. She indicated that the Work Group seemed close to concluding that such a mechanism is needed. Given that, the Work Group intends to focus on the second question, which goes to what the mechanism should look like. Exploration of that question will include whether the system should remain the same; whether the current system should include women; whether the system should be expanded to include national emergencies; and other questions.

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Commissioners inquired about Vice Chair Wada’s use of the phrase “national emergency” in lieu of “national security.” Vice Chair Wada intended the phrase to be broad, noting that the Commission would need to define what it means. Vice Chair Wada recommended simplifying the question to, “Do we need a mechanism?” If the answer is “Yes,” then the second question is what should that mechanism be. Her current view is that we do need a mechanism given current events and history, and that the criteria for that mechanism remain to be determined.

Ms. James recommended identifying the reasons why we need a mechanism. Whether they be the reasons identified by the Department of Defense and others – deterrence, symbolism, having skin in the game, recruiting, the civil/military divide – or not, it is important for the Commission to spell those out.

Commissioners referred to the statutory language and deliberated on using “national security” as a stand-in for the more narrow “military draft or draft contingency” set out in the question formulated by the Commission. Several Commissioners supported this approach, with Mr. Barney noted that the broader approach finds support in the Presidential principles. Ms. Skelly recommended that the Commission define what is meant by “national security.” Mr. Kilgannon cautioned against taking a general approach, with the purpose of the Selective Service System being to generate combat replacement troops. Vice Chair Wada recommended that a decision about whether the System should be general (e.g., national emergencies) or specific (e.g., combat replacement troops) would best be determined after the Commission decides whether it requires a mechanism at all.

Ms. James noted that she could not envision a scenario in which the Commission would ever be able to say that the country would never have a need to quickly replace combat troops. No Commissioner disagreed. Ms. Skelly pointed out, however, that the Pentagon has failed to provide adequate answers on this question. Other Commissioners expressed similar disappointment. Chairman Heck suggested the Commission refer to the report by the GAO, in which the GAO expressed concern over the rationale put forth by DoD to support the current Selective Service System, as a stand-in for a thorough analysis of that rationale. Mr. Barney suggested that the Commission then begin with the premise that the nation must be able to conscript troops but need not contemplate nor specify what the need might be.

Mr. Kilgannon, referring to the Commission’s research questions, suggested that once resolving whether there is a need for combat replacement troops—with the likely answer being “yes” in absence of evidence supporting the contrary—the Commission should consider whether a civilian draft or draft contingency is necessary to address the general welfare. At that point, the Commission could turn to the second question, i.e., what is the appropriate mechanism to accomplish these goals. Other Commissioners agreed with this general approach.

Vice Chair Wada then summarized her fellow Commissioners’ positions. The answer to the first question presented to the SSS WG is that a mechanism is needed but Commissioners still need to consider the spectrum: is a mechanism needed to replace combat troops or for a wider purpose? Jud Crane identified various issues that would require further research, including developing the

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rationale commonly asserted for the current system, determining the return on investment for any system, assessing the military's operational requirements, assessing the timeline to draft individuals, considering issues related to cyber, and considering issues raised by conscientious objectors.

Mr. Khazei turned the discussion to conscientious objectors, recommending that the Commission consider alternative services or other approaches to address their concerns. Mr. Gearan asked that the Commission consider the definition of what it means to be a conscientious objector. Mr. Barney reflected on efforts by the conscientious objector community to permit people to opt-out of registration. His concern with that proposal is that it would provide a way for people to avoid registering, but a viable approach may be to permit the conscientious objector to note their status. Ms. James added that an objector could register to help in a non-military crisis. Mr. Barney noted that this sort of approach would move away from the legal foundation that supports the current draft registration system, which could present a legal risk. Mr. Allard then spoke to the current system for alternative work service. Mr. Barney recalled a public comment from someone who found alternative work to be a meaningful way to serve the nation and suggested this anecdote could be included in a sidebar for one of the Commission's reports.

Work Group Deliberations

From approximately 1415 to 1615 ET, Commissioners met in Work Groups to deliberate issues concerning the matters within the scope of their respective Work Groups. Accounts of these sessions are set forth in internal MFRs.

Deliberation on Defining Service

From approximately 1630 to 1720 ET, the Commission held a structured deliberation regarding the definition of service. Commissioners were provided an options memo ahead of time that identified five different definitions with explanations of the pros and cons of each.

Annie Rorem, Deputy Director of Research and Analysis, led the discussion – the Commission's third structured discussion on this topic. Ms. Rorem began by reviewing reasons in favor of agreeing on a definition of service. She noted that a single definition of service would help to establish a theory of the case or a unifying thread to link all three categories of service (military, national, and public) for any cross-cutting recommendations the Commission may adopt. She further noted that a single definition would support the Commission's vision statement and that the term has been used frequently in the Commission's engagements both by Commissioners and by members of the public seeking to understand the Commission's mandate. Having a unified definition of service would also facilitate discussions about motivating people to move from one category of service to another.

Chairman Heck noted that the Commission's definition of service would appear in its report and be used as a basis for the Commission's definitions and recommendations.

Ms. Rorem then offered five definitions for Commissioners to consider. Commissioners deliberated these definitions and identified words, phrases, and concepts that they recommended

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be included or excluded from an overarching definition of service. The account that follows does not gather all input provided on specific definitions but rather focuses on identifying input material to the Commission’s recommendation.

Ms. James felt it critical that any definition must include the term “mission” or a similar concept. Noting that a definition must cover all three categories of service, she believed that “mission” was integral to military service and better reflected an aspect of military service than the term “cause.”

Vice Chair Gearan endorsed the phrase “the public good” as an elevating phrase that conveys the collective interest of service work.

Mr. Khazei addressed whether the definition should include volunteerism. Noting his view that the Commission can have more impact encouraging a year or two of national service, he felt it important that the definition of service be sufficiently broad to cover volunteerism – in effect acknowledging that the United States is a country of volunteers.

Commissioners discussed whether the definition should focus on the individual or the organization providing service, with the individual being a part of an organization. They ultimately agreed that service need not be limited by whether an individual undertakes an effort by herself or as part of an organization.

Chairman Heck recommended the Commission avoid being too specific about the definition, noting that the three statutory definitions—for military, national, and public service—would provide the means for the Commission to pursue recommendations focused on particular scenarios.

At the close of this deliberation, Commissioners endorsed the following definition of service:

“A personal commitment of time, energy, and talent to a mission that contributes to the public good by protecting the nation and its citizens, strengthening communities, or promoting the general social welfare.”

Commissioners agreed to revisit this definition and conduct a vote during the June 15, 2018 morning session.

Work Group Deliberation

Beginning at approximately 1730 ET, the Ends, Ways, and Means Work Group convened to deliberate. An account of this session is set forth in an internal MFR.

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June 15, 2018

Work Group Deliberations

Prior to convening as a full Commission, from approximately 0800 to 0930 ET, Commissioners met in Work Groups to deliberate issues concerning the matters within the scope of their respective Work Groups. Accounts of these sessions are set forth in internal MFRs.

Business Meeting

The Commission reconvened at 0930 ET.

Vote on Definition of Service.

The Commission reviewed the definition generated during deliberations on June 14, set forth above. Chairman Heck moved to vote on the definition of service. The motion was seconded, and all Commissioners voted in favor of the definition.

Deliberation on Interim Report

Thereafter, Chairman Heck introduced Dr. Rough to lead a Commission deliberation about the audience and message for the interim report. Commissioners received an options memo ahead of time.

Dr. Rough explained that the menu of options provided to Commissioners derived from her review of interim reports issued by many commissions. She noted that the tone and structure of the interim report would depend on the audience and message selected by Commissioners, and that staff would be ready to support the Commission's ultimate choices.

Dr. Rough first outlined options for the primary audience of the interim report. She noted that the primary audience for the interim report may differ from the primary audience for the final report. She identified three options: the American public, Congress, and the President. She reviewed the benefits and downsides of each approach, as outlined in the options memo.

Several Commissioners endorsed the view that the American people should be the primary audience. Mr. Barney, for example, concurred that the Commission's initial response should be to inform the American public and respond to what the Commission has heard from them. He endorsed making the interim report as accessible as possible. Several Commissioners noted the importance of keeping in mind other audiences, even if the report is directed to the American public. Ms. Haines, for example, recommended that the Commission develop a strategy for engaging Congress separately, in addition to issuing the interim report.

Vice Chair Gearan suggested a more focused audience: key stakeholders within the American public rather than the American public at large. This would include civil servants, unions, mayors, governors, Congress, the service community, the military community, the press, and so on. He recommended that this approach would build energy and generate a feedback loop for the final report.

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Ms. James concurred with Vice Chair Gearan on the need to consider the Commission’s engagement needs after issuing the interim report. She expressed the importance of beginning congressional engagement as soon as possible after issuing the interim report. She also recommended that the interim report be drafted with more than one audience in mind.

Dr. Rough advised Commissioners on the trade-off between accessibility and the ability to target the report to a more specific audience.

Dr. Davidson suggested that Commissioners consider the objective of the interim report. With this, Dr. Rough turned the discussion to the options proposed for the interim report’s message.

Mr. Khazei expressed an interest in using the interim report to stir debate, generate media interest, develop a nationwide discussion around service, and, in short, build the groundwork to ensure that the Commission’s final report receives appropriate attention. With this in mind, he expressed some concern about meeting a January 2019 deadline, suggesting instead a March 2019 release date. He also recommended that the Commission seek to reach consensus on the direction it intends to take if not consensus on specific recommendations – in other words, publicize recommendations it is considering without publicizing the Commission’s decisions on those recommendations.

Mr. Allard concurred with Mr. Khazei, supporting an interim report that sets the stage for the Commission to interact more with the American public. Mr. Allard supported providing as much information as possible in the interim report even if the Commission cannot at this point be specific about where it is in deliberations and decisions.

Dr. Davidson supported using the interim report to galvanize interaction on issues being considered by the Commission. She suggested highlighting themes emerging from the Commission’s listening tours and the types of recommendations the Commission will consider. Dr. Rough noted that this approach would provide some indication of where the Commission is heading while not obligating the Commission to make a statement about the status of its deliberations.

Mr. Kilgannon emphasized the importance of how the Commission distributes the interim report. He felt the Commission should not focus on engaging with Congress at this point, and should instead raise the bigger-picture questions the Commission is considering and use the interim report as an opportunity to reach all stakeholders. He noted that he feels the Commission has interacted mostly with interest groups rather than with the variety of people who the recommendations will ultimately impact – teenagers, young adults, spouses, parents, taxpayers, businesses, and educators.

Ms. Skelly addressed the importance of developing a coordinated effort leading up to the publication of the interim report, which would include coordinated communications and engagement strategies to “shape the battle space.”

Vice Chair Wada addressed the points raised by Mr. Kilgannon. She views the interim report as an opportunity to educate the public about what the Commission has learned to date and to set

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the stage for the Commission to engage further with the public. An engagement plan should accompany the report to ensure individuals and groups in the American public are aware of the importance of the issues the Commission is considering.

Ms. Haines, building on others' comments, identified two purposes for the interim report: first, to stimulate debate; second, to articulate the problem the Commission intends to address through its recommendations. She recommended that the Commission use the interim report to provide its diagnosis on the state of America's civic health, to articulate what the Commission perceives to be the problem. She cautioned against providing the Commission's specific recommendations in the interim report—she thought this effort would box in the Commission without being particularly useful to its overall objectives. Ms. Haines supported the Commission continuing to work through policy options in the meantime. She also recommended that on the topic of civics education, if this is addressed in the interim report, it could be accompanied by a discussion of a state that has done a particularly good job developing a program, such as Florida.

Ms. James felt the interim report should lay the foundation for the final report. She also emphasized the importance of Congress in the entire process, and recommended that the report in part be seen as an update to Congress about where the Commission stands. She cautioned against surprising Congress. She approved of the approach taken by other commissions that used interim reports to identify the work done to date, the process undertaken, and the issues being considered. This approach, she felt, laid the foundation for successful reports that also avoided creating firestorms that could have coopted the remainder of those commissions' work.

Mr. Gearan recommended viewing the interim report as a case statement for the recommendations that will follow. He suggested thinking through the headlines the Commission would hope to generate (e.g., "In a stunning interim report on the state of the nation's civic health, the Commission has found..."). More specifically, he suggested that the Commission, if possible, use the interim report to indicate its decision on the question of women registering with Selective Service to avoid that topic being the only one that generates any interest following publication of the Commission's final report.

Commissioners then deliberated the value of signaling its decision on key issues, such as women registering with Selective Service, in the interim report. Some Commissioners suggested that doing this could draw fire in a helpful way to start a conversation on this controversial topic. Commissioners asked about the pending litigation involving women registering with Selective Service. Mr. Lekas briefed the Commission on this topic, and Commissioners generally agreed that the pending litigation should not affect the Commission's position on the question.

Dr. Davidson recommended that the Commission take a bold approach in the interim report.

Mr. Barney suggested that the Commission may identify topics without much controversy that it is more comfortable resolving in the interim report, and for those more controversial topics, stating that it has heard a variety of arguments and will continue its deliberation and its effort to hear from people across the spectrum.

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Ms. Haines supported the idea of the interim report laying out the state of the country's civic health and addressing the need for civics education and the need for service. Mr. Gearan agreed, clarifying his view that the report should focus on the state of the nation's civic life. He suggested that the report present a rebuke of the state of all three threads of service without presenting any policy recommendations. Ms. James expressed caution about this approach pending review of a draft.

Chairman Heck praised the Commission's discussion on the interim report. He indicated that the report would be presented to Congress regardless of the target audience. He endorsed having Commissioners meet with members, Commission staff meeting with Hill staff, and so on. As to the target audience, Chairman Heck emphasized that a decision will affect the writing style and took from his fellow Commissioners' deliberation that the target audience should be the American public. Chairman Heck also supported the report being provocative and bold: the we must do something to improve the civic health of the country, and we have a generation of Americans posed to fix it. He endorsed starting the interim report with a preamble assessing the state of play of civics in American society. On the topic of women registration, Chairman Heck supported including a statement that the issue should be decided by the American people and not left to the courts. Chairman Heck noted that the target audience for the final report would be Congress and the President.

Following further discussion about the importance of generating media attention, Chairman Heck summarized the Commission's views on the two options before it: first, that the primary target of the interim report should be the American public; second, that the message should focus on the current state of play of American society followed by strategic themes. Commissioners agreed by consensus.

Briefing on Records Management

The Commission received a briefing and training on records management from approximately 1100 to 1136 ET.

Peter Morgan, Deputy Director of Operations, provided an overview on the Commission's records management practices. Mr. Morgan briefed Commissioners on the SharePoint system for maintaining and sharing electronic documents. Commissioners indicated that they were comfortable with SharePoint.

Mr. Morgan then addressed emails, noting that email correspondence is subject to FOIA and as such is potentially viewable by the public. He added that emails will be turned over to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) at the conclusion of the Commission's term. He recommended that Commissioners keep a folder in their email boxes called "personal items" to facilitate staff's review of email in response to FOIA requests or archiving needs.

Mr. Morgan reminded Commissioners that the Operations team would work with Commissioners to gather emails to and from non-official accounts, which were used before creation of the

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inspire2serve.gov accounts. He asked Commissioners to segregate their Commission-related messages before that migration takes place.

Mr. Morgan also cautioned Commissioners not to use any email application to access their official email except for the Outlook application. He explained that applications other than Outlook store the date and are considered non-governmental third-parties.

Rachel Rikleem, Deputy General Counsel, briefed the Commissioners on the Commission's records management policy. She defined the term "record" under statute. She noted that anything could be a record but it must be connected to the work of the Commission. She distinguished between permanent and temporary records, and administrative documents. Further detail on these terms is contained in the Commission's records management policy, available on SharePoint. She noted that most of the records generated during the life of the Commission would likely be generated by staff, but that communications among or between Commissioners without staff could be considered records.

Ms. Rikleem then briefed Commissioners on their statutory obligations for records management, identifying five key responsibilities: (1) to receive training; (2) to create records of official actions taken and decisions made; (3) to maintain records; (4) to dispose of records that no longer need to be maintained; and (5) to report mishandling of records. Further detail on these is contained in the Commission's records management policy, available on SharePoint.

Ms. Rikleem advised Commissioners to contact Chantel Ramzey or herself with any questions on records management.

Legal Update and Ethics Training

From 1230 to 1320 ET, Mr. Lekas and Ms. Rikleem provided Commissioners with a legal update and ethics training.

Mr. Lekas briefed the Commission on the Commission's legislative proposals, a copy of which were distributed to Commissioners in hard copy. The proposals were included in the Senate's version of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2019. Based on conversations with Senate and House staff, Mr. Lekas expressed optimism that the proposals would remain in the final version of the legislation.

Mr. Lekas then discussed the Commission's recently-implemented regulations on the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA); efforts to develop privacy material for the Commission's engagement and outreach efforts; and guidance with respect to FOIA. He provided an overview of legal research efforts, which are being undertaken in close coordination with the research team. He also discussed efforts to identify constitutional scholars to brief Commissioners on mandatory national service and other topics in October.

Ms. Rikleem then provided Hatch Act training to Commissioners and senior staff.

Engagement Update

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From approximately 1320 to 1340 ET, Ms. Lowry provided Commissioners with an update on engagement efforts. She began by introducing the Government Affairs and Public Engagement (GPE) staff.

Ms. Lowry explained that the GPE had undertaken a lot of outreach with respect to trips. She acknowledged that the Commission had not received as much media attention as desired but hoped that the shift in public meeting strategy would encourage more interest.

Ms. Lowry expressed interest in receiving input from Commissioners about their contacts with different organizations and service stakeholders, their contacts with congressional staff and members, and their interests and comfortability with media appearances. (At the conclusion of this session, Commissioners provided their input to GPE staff.)

Jeff McNicholas, the Deputy Director for Engagement, briefed the Commission on congressional relations efforts. He noted that staff is starting to identify congressional caucuses and members with interest in all aspects of what the Commission is exploring. Mr. McNichols indicated that staff would work to establish those relationships over the next couple of months to ensure the Commission is on their respective radars by the time the interim report is issued.

Katie McSheffrey, a government affairs officer, briefed the Commission on efforts within the interagency. She noted that the questionnaire circulated by DoD in 2017 focused on Selective Service questions, and indicated that staff is now reengaging with agencies that completed that questionnaire along with other agencies to expand the discussion. She informed Commissioners that a first interagency meeting would be held in the next week and added that staff is working to arrange engagements with affiliated organizations such as the National Governors Association.

Ms. Lowry then reviewed a list of organization types that her team had or would be developing relationships with. Ms. James recommended that the list include faith-based organizations. Ms. Skelly cautioned against viewing some organizations as “foes” of the Commission, recommending that staff consider using the term “critic” or “skeptic” to describe an organization or individual that may disagree with the work of the Commission.

Executive Session

Beginning at approximately 1345 ET, Commissioners convened an executive session outside the presence of staff. Chairman Heck briefed senior staff following the conclusion of the executive session.

Prepared by Paul Lekas, General Counsel

Adopted by the Commission on July 19, 2018