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NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MILITARY, NATIONAL, AND PUBLIC SERVICE

Minutes of March 2018 Commission Meeting

The National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service (the Commission) held a meeting on March 15-16, 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
- Ms. Avril Haines
- The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck
- Ms. Jeanette James
- Mr. Alan Khazei
- Mr. Thomas Kilgannon
- Ms. Shawn Skelly
- The Honorable Debra Wada (except for 3/16 morning session)

Commissioners absent:

- The Honorable Mark Gearan

Others present:

- Kent Abernathy, Executive Director
- Jill Rough, Director of Research and Analysis
- Keri Lowry, Director of Governmental and Public Engagement (present for portions)
- Gregory Brinsfield, Director of Operations (present for portions)
- Paul Lekas, General Counsel
- Rachel Rikleen, Deputy General Counsel (present for portions)

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- Yolanda Hands, Operations Program Manager (present for portions)
- Peter Morgan, Deputy Director of Operations (present for portions)
- Annie Rorem, Deputy Director of Research and Analysis
- Amy Schafer, Research Team Lead
- Judson Crane, Selective Service Research Team Lead
- John Lira, Policy Analyst (present for portions)
- Sandy Scott, on detail from the Corporation for National and Community Service (present for portions)
- Eleanor Vuono, incoming Senior Legal Counsel (3/15 only)

March 15, 2018

Executive Session

From 0900 to 1100, Commissioners convened an executive session at the Commission's offices in Arlington, VA. The executive session was held without the presence of staff. The purpose of the executive session was to consider ways to organize Commissioners into working groups to facilitate the review of research and policy alternatives and to consider various options for rendering Commission decisions.

Meeting Preview

At approximately 1100, the Commission reconvened with staff present. The Chairman closed portions of the meeting to the public because pre-decisional and organizational matters would be deliberated.

Mr. Abernathy briefed the Commission on the agenda for the two-day meeting. He further provided the Commission with an update on information technology and the online travel system. Mr. Lekas and Dr. Rough introduced Commissioners to new members of their respective staffs.

Structured Deliberation on Mandatory National Service

The Commission held a structured deliberation on mandatory national service lasting from approximately 1115 until 1220. Dr. Rough provided an introduction and Ms. Rorem moderated the deliberation. An account of the deliberation is set forth in a separate memorandum for the record (MFR).

Presentation by the Klein Brothers

The Commission received a presentation from Max and Jake Klein, twin brothers from New Jersey who founded the website "Kids That Do Good" (KTDG). They were accompanied by their mother and father. The briefing was followed by a question-and-answer session. The Kleins circulated a written presentation ahead of time. The meeting with the Kleins began at 1255 and lasted until 1355.

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The Klein brothers discussed KTDG with the Commission. KTDG is an online aggregator of charities for parents and children to identify service opportunities for young people in communities around the country and to post ideas about how others can serve. It also contains service-related resources for teachers and educators. KTDG uses social media to communicate with users but the Klein brothers noted that they do not have or use social media in their personal capacities. Currently, KTDG identifies service opportunities in the top 80 U.S. markets. The Klein brothers hope to expand KTDG’s reach to the top 100 U.S. markets by the end of 2018. They said the youngest kids who have participated in service activities through KTDG are 7 or 8 years old.

The Klein brothers say their idea in founding KTDG was to help kids get involved at any age, and the website grew out of the Klein brothers’ own commitment to service. Their parents guided the brothers from an early age to give back to their community. Starting at a young age, the brothers began a tradition of donating birthday money each year to causes in which they believed. They would ask family and friends for money instead of other types of gifts. Over the years, the brothers made donations of a jaws-of-life for their local fire department, bulletproof vests for their local police department, and computers for their local library, among others. They found that making donations like this was the easiest way they could give back at a young age. Over the years, they realized how difficult it was for kids to get involved in other ways because of their age.

Commissioners asked why the Klein brothers began their tradition of birthday donations with public safety. Mrs. Klein said that their town in New Jersey had many 9/11 first responders and lacked necessary equipment.

Commissioners asked about barriers to service for youth. Mrs. Klein noted that there are laws that restrict the kind of work young people can do; in New Jersey, one must be 14 years old to obtain work papers. Dr. Davidson noted this as an interest point for the staff to explore.

Mr. Barney asked the Kleins about their peers, specifically, what stands in the way of their peers getting involved in service and what motivates their peers to follow the Klein brothers’ example. The brothers believe their peers have a view that social media will do everything, as well as an interest in getting a “trophy” versus helping others. They believe teachers have a lasting impression, especially at an early age. They support a service requirement although their school does not have one; they think it would help to get more young people involved in their community and away from being too wrapped up in social media. They feel their generation believes it is “entitled to everything” but the brothers’ view is that they must earn it and must give back. The Kleins’ parents taught them to be charitably-minded at an early age.

Chairman Heck asked the parents what prompted them to instill this ethos in their sons. Mrs. Klein explained that the Kleins live in an entitled area and many children take that for granted. Mr. Klein said that he and his wife both worked hard and came from unprivileged backgrounds—he, the son of a Brooklyn cab driver; she, a first-generation American—and they resolved to teach their boys at an early age about the importance of giving back. The parents

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felt this was important to connect with their community. Mr. Klein's parents did not teach him those same lessons. Mrs. Klein said that her father was in the military in both Israel and the United States and believed in service.

When asked what they intended to do when they get older, the Klein brothers said they wanted to grow KTDG worldwide and pass it on to their own children. In terms of their careers, they are considering Wall Street or Washington, DC.

The Klein brothers expanded on their views regarding social media. They view a lot of their peers as caring too much about social media trends. The Klein brothers believe that social media has a negative effect on their peers. The Kleins' friend group tends to use social media in a more limited fashion.

The Kleins said that their friends have a similar mindset with respect to giving back to their community. They think their efforts with KTDG has had an effect on other peers, too, some of which surprised them because they felt those peers were too engrossed in social media.

Mrs. Klein noted that the efforts are starting to rub off onto other parents, and she sees many encouraging their children to get involved. Mr. Klein noted with regret that the schools do not do enough to teach public service.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Klein brothers noted that today was their 16th birthday. In keeping with tradition, they decided to contribute their birthday money to the Freedom Alliance, run by Mr. Kilgannon, to enable the Alliance to send 32 care packages to soldiers overseas.

Briefing on the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

The Commission received a briefing from two members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS) relating to LDS' efforts to promote an ethos of service both within its ranks and in the broader community. Presenters included Elder Kevin Calderwood, member of the Sixth Quorum of the Seventy, and Sister Sydnee Calderwood, North America Northeast JustServe Specialist. The briefing was followed by a question-and-answer session. The meeting with the Calderwoods lasted from approximately 1355 to 1520. An account of the meeting is set forth in a separate MFR.

Research Update

Dr. Rough briefed the Commission on the status of research efforts. This session lasted from approximately 1545 to 1615.

Dr. Rough informed the Commission that the research, analysis, and writing (RAW) team would have five staff members as of Monday, March 19. With added staff, the RAW team is now in a position to accept research and data assistance from outside sources and would seek to leverage outside resources as much as possible. In addition, Dr. Rough informed Commissioners that staff would be populating a shared database with background material once the database

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becomes available. The RAW team provided a series of background briefings to Commissioners prior to the meeting and she noted that the team would be providing additional research primers and background policy-oriented reading material in the future.

Dr. Rough noted that staff had been offering people the opportunity to provide statements for the record. In addition, the RAW team would be preparing notes from public stakeholder meetings and would provide Commissioners with read-outs from interviews that it conducts. The RAW team will analyze and code all public comments once the appropriate information technology system is in place and will prepare executive summaries for the Commissioners to review.

Dr. Davidson asked how the RAW team would gather input from people who do not serve. Dr. Rough explained that she and her team were thinking about how to accomplish that. One approach would include more face-to-face meetings; though not statistically significant, such interactions could provide valuable qualitative information. Dr. Davidson suggested connecting with young people through career fairs and other channels focused on helping young people find their career paths. Ms. Lowry noted that the engagement team would seek to connect with a handful of organizations, such as the American Counseling Association, to explore ways to reach young people who may not have a propensity to serve.

Mr. Allard asked if the Commission could seek public comments from people who do not want to serve in order to understand what prevents them from serving. Dr. Rough explained that the next version of the website would enable staff to capture and code that sort of information. Dr. Rough also noted that staff is maintaining all comment cards received in addition to comments supplied via the website or Federal Register notice.

Mr. Kilgannon suggested using social media platforms such as Google, Facebook, and Instagram to engage with the non-propensed community. Ms. Wada noted that she has been seeking an audience with senior personnel at Facebook. Chairman Heck asked how the Commission would use those platforms; would the Commission ask them to mine data? If so, how would that assist in tracking the non-propensed audience? Ms. Wada suggested encouraging a company like Facebook to launch a “service” initiative, and then leverage their platform to spread the word and, later, share the Commission’s recommendations with a broad audience. She asked if the Commission staff could support a detailee from Facebook; Mr. Abernathy indicated that the staff would not be able to handle a detailee at this point in time.

Dr. Rough provided an overview of the near-term approach for Commissioners to consider policy alternatives. She proposed using the June 2018 meeting to scope possible policy alternatives in order to enable Commissioners to provide feedback during deliberations in the fall. She also proposed to engage the Commissioners on evaluative criteria—to include political viability, cost and fiscal concerns, public opinion, acceptability, and others—to guide Commissioners deliberations on specific alternatives.

Mr. Barney requested Dr. Rough’s views on the Commissioners’ role in deliberations between now and June. Dr. Rough explained that the Commissioners would be responsible for determining which criteria to use and how to weigh criteria, and which recommendations to

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propose. Her hope is for the Commissioners to reach decisions in 2018 that will guide the more rigorous analytical work of 2019. She noted that to the extent the Commission chooses to engage in certain information collection activities, staff will need to begin the Paperwork Reduction Act at least four months before the proposed collection activity will begin.

Ms. Haines expressed interest in considering policy ideas sooner rather than later. She also asked if the RAW team would gather information on the number of high schools with service requirements for graduation. Dr. Rough indicated that the RAW team would gather that data, and closed by noting that the RAW team plans to gather information for the Commissioners to enable them to vet policy alternatives.

Engagement Update

Ms. Lowry briefed the Commission on the status of engagement efforts. This session lasted from approximately 1615 to 1630.

Ms. Lowry informed Commissioners that she has spoken to almost 40 entities thus far. She explained that she intends to prepare memoranda for the record of engagements, though the lack of staff has limited her ability to memorialize these engagements for the benefit of Commissioners. She noted that four individuals would soon be onboarding to the engagement team.

Ms. Lowry provided an overview of her goals with respect to engagement efforts. She intends to engage proactively with government agencies, MSOs, VSOs, and other organizations. Her goal is to work with these organizations to amplify the Commission's message and build its audience.

Ms. Lowry is considering ways to engage the non-propensed population and to find unique engagement opportunities for Commissioners. Mr. Barney suggested one way to reach the non-propensed population would be to engage with 4H and Future Farmer clubs in rural areas; he also suggested Boys and Girls Clubs, community activists, and U.S. organizations that are involved in promoting service. Ms. James noted the unlikelihood that non-propensed folks would stand up and speak at a public meeting; she suggested looking into small, outside-the-mainstream groups. Ms. Wada suggested finding a way to engage with the "detention kids" at high schools. Mr. Khazei agreed, and expanded the suggestion to include most high school graduates, from which he thinks the Commission would learn a lot. Dr. Davidson suggested contacting students at community colleges. Mr. Kilgannon suggested inmates. Ms. Wada suggested juvenile detention facilities. Mr. Barney suggested people on probation. Ms. Wada and Dr. Davidson suggested engaging with military recruiters.

Ms. Lowry turned to social media platforms. She explained that the engagement team would be developing its use of social media and has spoken with organizations that are open and receptive to helping the Commission to spread the word. Ms. Lowry mentioned the need to build relationships with national media outlets. On that point, Mr. Allard suggested connecting with the National Press Club, which Ms. Lowry plans to do in April.

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Chairman Heck requested a briefing on the plan for the Denver meeting in April. Ms. Lowry informed the Commission that the public meeting would occur on Thursday, April 19, rather than Friday, April 20, due to the anniversary of the Columbine attacks and the “smoke out” event on April 20. Ms. Lowry mentioned that staff was exploring splitting Commissioners into two groups to pursue engagements outside of the public meeting; Chairman Heck requested more specificity on engagements before finalizing a plan to split the Commission into separate groups.

Ethics Training

Ms. Rikleen provided the Commission with training on ethics issues that may arise in selecting locations, venues, and participants for Commission events. Ahead of the training, the legal team circulated a one-page briefing memo addressing these points. The ethics training lasted from approximately 1630 to 1700.

March 16, 2018 Session

Beginning at approximately 0800 on March 16, 2018, the Commission convened at its offices in Arlington, VA. The Chairman closed portions of the meeting to the public because pre-decisional and organizational matters would be deliberated.

Business Meeting

The Chairman moved to approve the minutes for the Commission’s February 2018 meeting. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the February 2018 minutes with a nominal amendment from Ms. Skelly.

Chairman Heck requested Commissioners to provide him with preferences for assignments to Commissioner Work Groups and for participation in the three Commission site visits that would not require attendance of all Commissioners.

Deliberation Regarding Public Meeting Format

Chairman Heck invited Dr. Rough to lead a discussion about whether to take straw polls at public meetings of the Commission, specifically on two questions: whether people support mandatory service, and whether people support having women register for the draft. Dr. Rough noted that taking straw polls carried the risk that the Commission would be perceived not to have a rigorous research methodology. She also noted that straw polls could inject bias into the audience; could, over time, bias Commissioners about the state of public opinion, in part because the Commission would be visiting only a handful of the 20,000 cities in the United States; and would not further inform the Commission’s consideration of foundational questions. Dr. Rough noted that the Commission has or will obtain polling data on key questions, including mandatory service and women registering for the draft. She further noted that straw polls at public meetings could risk overreliance on public opinion for questions that should be evaluated according to the needs of the nation.

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Several Commissioners indicated that they recognized the concerns that Dr. Rough raised but felt a straw poll would nevertheless be useful for the Commission. Ms. James noted that she believed it important to ask these questions, in particular the question of women in the draft, because of the origins of the Commission. She felt that the Commission owes it to its stakeholders and the American public to ask that question of the people the Commission meets. She also referenced the possibility of a GAO audit. Mr. Kilgannon pointed out that not asking the audience for its views on women in the draft could itself raise an optics issue. He also noted that he feels it important to gauge people's visceral, gut reactions on the matter and that gut feeling should be a factor in the Commission's evaluation.

Chairman Heck noted that he did not feel any Commissioner would be swayed by a hand poll and it could provide a means to pulse the audience. In light of the concerns about optics and statistical methods, he recommended that the Commission address the matter in an executive session.

This portion of the meeting ended at approximately 0825.

Presentation by the Department of Education

Representatives of the U.S. Department of Education briefed the Commission on various Department programs and issues related to public service, civics education, and other topics. Representatives from the Department included Maureen Dowling, Ed.D., Director of the Office of Non-Public Education and the Military Affairs Team in the Office of Innovation and Improvement; Carney McCullough, Director of the Policy Development Group in the Office of Postsecondary Education; and Elizabeth Norris, Confidential Assistant in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. An account of the Department's presentation and the ensuing question-and-answer session is set forth in a separate MFR.

Structured Discussion on Definitions

The Commission held a structured deliberation on definitions of key terms lasting from approximately 1005 until 1105. All Commissioners with the exception of Vice Chair Wada attended. Ms. Rorem moderated the deliberation. An account of the deliberation is set forth in a separate MFR.

Presentation by MG Laich

Major General (MG) Dennis Laich (USA, Ret.) provided testimony to the Commission regarding the all-volunteer force and military conscription. A question-and-answer session followed the briefing. MG Laich also provided a written copy of his testimony for the record. An account of MG Laich's presentation, which lasted from 1100 to 1215, is set forth in a separate MFR.

Presentation by Dr. Nora Bensahel

Dr. Nora Bensahel provided testimony to the Commission regarding the all-volunteer force and the need to maintain the Selective Service System. A question-and-answer session followed the

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briefing. Dr. Bensahel also provided written copy of her testimony for the record. An account of Dr. Bensahel's presentation, which lasted from 1235 to 1400, is set forth in a separate MFR.

Presentation on the Conservation Corps and Forest Service

The Commission received a briefing on government-sponsored service activities involving conservation from Mary Ellen Sprenkel, Chief Executive Officer of The Corps Network, and M. Merlene Mazyck, Program Manager for the USDA Forest Service Volunteers & Service program. Ms. Sprenkel and Ms. Mazyck provided presentations to give background for the discussion, and the following notes are intended to supplement those presentations. In addition, Lashonte Moore, a veteran of the Conservation Corps who works with the Forest Service, attended to present a testimonial on her experience in the program. The presentation began at 1400 and lasted until 1500.

Ms. Sprenkel began with a brief video on the Conservation Corps and the Corps Network. She then briefed the Commission on the presentation. She explained that the corps began as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930s. Three million young men participated in the CCC, each receiving \$30 per month from the federal government. This effort helped to prepare a generation of men for service in WWII. In contrast, the modern Conservation Corps program is a public-private partnership. Approximately 25,000 men and women participate each year. Each participant makes a one-year commitment to serve. The Corps Network represents 130 separate corps, operating in all U.S. states and territories. The median age range of participants is 16 to 24 years.

Ms. Mazyck then briefed the Commission on the Forest Service. The Forest Service operates one of the longest and most significant partnerships of the Conservation Corps. It was authorized pursuant to the Volunteers in the National Forests Act of 1972. The Conservation Corps was authorized around the same time. Currently, there are 175 forests under the Forest Service's jurisdiction. The Forest Service relies significantly on Conservation Corps volunteers to support the millions of acres under its purview. From 1972 to 2017, the Forest Service benefitted from 3 million volunteers devoting 131.2 million hours of work, representing a \$1.7 billion value. In 2017, volunteer service represented the equivalent of about 2,500 full-time employees, a \$111 million value.

Ms. Mazyck next discussed the four 21 Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) programs that work with the Forest Service. They include about 86,000 volunteers who receive no pay and have an average age in their 50s; the Youth Conservation Corps, which includes 15-18 year olds who receive minimum wage for a 3-6 week program during which they live and work on the land; partnerships; and Job Corps. Individuals in these categories may perform any Forest Service roles with the exception of union jobs and law enforcement. In addition, the Forest Service works with various veterans programs, including the Veterans Fire Corps.

When the Forest Service works with 21CSC partners, the Forest Service is responsible for outlining the scope of the projects and work needs and providing necessary resources. The

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partners are responsible for managing administrative requirements, supervising day-to-day opportunities, and providing minimum wage payment to participants.

Ms. Mazyck then discussed the Public Land Corps Act (PLCA), which is now a resource assistance program. The Act enables the Forest Service to hire people with specific skills who are ready to work in the Service. It allows the Forest Service access to non-competitive hiring. The Service is working to extend this, in part because it does not have direct hire authority. The PLCA is part of the 21CSC Act being considered now by Congress.

Ms. Sprenkel added to the discussion of hiring authority. The Conservation Corps has non-competitive hiring authority which is good for two years. This has helped to provide a career pathway to individuals participating in the Corps; for example, about 12% of National Park Service employees came from a Corps position. It also generates cost savings to the government: according to Ms. Sprenkel, the Corps represents a 65% cost savings versus in-house work, and an 80% cost savings versus contractors.

Ms. Sprenkel suggested that the Commission look at standardizing hiring authorities for service-related positions. Only some government national service programs have direct hire authority. AmeriCorps VISTA and Peace Corps do have direct hire authority. The Forest Service and other parts of AmeriCorps do not have direct hire authority. The Conservation Corps has had direct hiring authority since about 2005.

Ms. Sprenkel and Ms. Mazyck noted that there is a huge potential for growth across the resource management agencies. Currently, there is about \$19.3 billion in backlog maintenance – work that could be addressed through increasing the scope of the Corps.

The presenters recommended that the Commission review the September 5, 2012, report of the 21CSC Federal Advisory Committee, which was chaired by former Interior Secretary Ken Salazar.

They then briefed the Commission on key policy priorities in the resource management conservation space. Those include: 1) reestablishing a Civilian Conservation Corps; 2) creating a council to oversee the Corps; and 3) aligning service with needs and career pathways, including assisting in transitions for veterans (who now represent about 10% of the current Corps). A more discrete goal is to grow the current Corps program to 100,000 participants within five years. Ms. Sprenkel believes that goal is reachable because the Corps centers on public-private partnerships, not merely federally-funded work.

Commissioners asked about the Corps working with the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Corps has no strategy for that, but does partner with Team Rubicon. The Corps does seem to have interest in exploring additional efforts with those agencies.

Ms. Haines asked about how the Corps and Forest Service make connections between specific issues and their work. Ms. Sprenkel explained that for the Corps, it depends on where the issue is based. For example, in California, the Corps has a right of first refusal; if it declines to take on

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an issue, the matter goes out for public bid. Ms. Mazyck said the Forest Service operates on the basis of shared stewardship. It builds a plan for each forest, and then reaches out to find people and organizations that can assist. She contrasted the Forest Service’s “reach out” approach with the “reach in” approach of the Corps.

Commissioners asked about the prospects of the 21CSC Act, which is pending in Congress. Ms. Mazyck expects that it will go to the floor of the House, and does not have a strong sense for whether it will succeed; she thinks it will pass in the Senate. Mr. Scott added that the 21CSC Act has support from Interior Secretary Zinke, who believes it presents positive economic impact, particularly in rural areas.

Ms. Moore talked about her own experience in the Corps. She came from Washington, D.C. She was a young mother with two kids and a high school dropout. She began working with the Earth Conservation Corps. This provided her with a living wage stipend and an education award. It enabled her to finance her education, develop job skills, and open opportunities to a career in the conservation field. She participated in two terms with the Corps, first in 2000 and then in 2003. From there, she was promoted to be a site supervisor and then a project coordinator. In her experience, a lot of Corps members come to the Corps because they have practical needs, such as a desire to complete their education and develop job skills. She has found that most leave with a lifelong commitment to conservation. Another benefit, according to Ms. Moore, is that Corps work requires adherence to rules and structures. Some people have trouble showing up ready to work and must leave the program. She has seen many who fail to stick to the rules and structures come back again for another chance, ready to work.

Executive Session

At approximately 1500, Commissioners convened an executive session outside the presence of staff. Following the executive session, Chairman Heck met with executive staff to brief them the on various requests and input from the Commissioners.

Prepared by Paul Lekas, General Counsel

Adopted by the Commission on April __, 2018