



NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MILITARY, NATIONAL, AND PUBLIC SERVICE

Minutes of June 2019 Commission Meeting

The National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service (the Commission) held a meeting on June 19-21, 2019, in Hyde Park, NY. Portions of this meeting concerned organizational and other pre-decisional and deliberative matters and were 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 Allard
- Mr. Steve Barney
- The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson
- The Honorable Mark Gearan
- The Honorable Avril Haines
- The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck
- Ms. Jeanette James
- Mr. Alan Khazei
- Mr. Thomas Kilgannon
- Ms. Shawn Skelly
- The Honorable Debra Wada (also serving as Acting Executive Director)

Staff present:

- Paul Lekas, General Counsel
- Jill Rough, Director of Research and Analysis
- Peter Morgan, Director of Operations
- Other Commission staff

June 19, 2019

Business Meeting

The Commission convened at the FDR Presidential Library and Museum in Hyde Park, NY, at 0807 ET. All Commissioners were present. Chairman Heck moved to close this and other business meetings to occur on June 19-21, 2019, because pre-decisional and organizational matters would be deliberated. A motion was made and seconded, and all Commissioners present agreed.

Chairman Heck moved to approve minutes from the May 2019 Commission meeting. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the May 2019 minutes with minor clarifications and technical edits.

Chairman Heck reviewed the agenda for the entire trip. Peter Morgan, Director of Operations, shared a handout that depicts visually the major goals and events of the Commission until its close. It was not discussed, but Mr. Morgan encouraged Commissioners to share their thoughts throughout the next three days.

Paul Lekas also noted that the materials for the hearing do not use the term “Serve America.” The staff has found that several groups use that term in their names, including a political action committee supporting Congressman Seth Moulton. He noted that staff is working on developing alternatives for the Commission to consider.

Moonshot Discussion

From 0811 to 1035 ET, Dr. Jill Rough, the Director of Research, led a discussion about the moonshot proposal. She shared handouts, which included a diagram of the life of service, the moonshot math (numbers of those who serve), and a memo reflecting Commissioners’ views from earlier sessions. Dr. Rough suggested that they would spend an hour reviewing the overall objective of the moonshot, and the next hour reviewing the details in the roadmap. The current overall objective was tied to 2032, as an aspirational date, which is the 70th anniversary of the JFK speech.

Ms. Haines asked to clarify some of the numbers. If the goal is 2 million youth annually participating in the ASVAB (that is 20% of the available population), then how many more people would that be over the current number and why was 2 million selected as a goal? Annie Rorem, Deputy Director of Research, explained that currently 659,000 youth took the ASVAB across all 4 years of high school. Ms. Haines noted that she understood the value of using the ASVAB as a metric. She then asked how many opportunities are available now in national service given the goal of 1.6 million opportunities. Ms. Rorem responded that AmeriCorps and Peace Corps have approximately 80,000 combined participants each year. Dr. Rough noted that Senior Corps has 220,000, which should be included as we are looking for a broader population to participate than just young Americans.

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Overall Objective of Moonshot

Ms. James raised a concern with a phrase in the circulated memo, “the nation lacks a cohesive social fabric.” She felt the word “lack” was too strong. She offered that the social fabric could be “shaky” or “at risk.” She later cautioned against the “nation in crisis” theme, which she believed to be used too often to be meaningful. She recommended the Commission substantiate that something very serious is occurring if it decides to pursue the “crisis” theme.

Mr. Barney felt that the “lack” term was not too strong, though he expressed concern about insufficient clarity around identifying the problem the Commission hopes to fix. He proposed the problem as “Americans are not adequately prepared to exercise the rights and responsibilities required for a republican form of government.” He was struck by Professor Black’s written testimony and recommended that the Commission look to that statement for ideas. Ms. James supported Mr. Barney’s formulation of the problem.

Ms. James then explained her understanding of the term “social fabric,” describing it as what connects Americans and a feature that becomes more apparent when one is abroad. She shared her view that there are generational divisions about how that social fabric is felt. Vice Chair Gearan asked whether she would agree with the idea that we, as a nation, are divided. Ms. James pushed back on that approach, noting that, while we may be split by the controversies of the day, we all still see each other as Americans. She expressed a desire to avoid feeding the media’s current narrative about divisions. Ms. Haines later countered that she does think we have significant divisions, including inequality. People have very different experiences depending on their socio-economic status and exposing people to those differences is important. Ms. Haines wondered if the phrase “the country’s cohesive social fabric is at risk” would be acceptable. Ms. James seemed amenable.

Chairman Heck recalled earlier conversations about how the opportunity to serve can bring people together and make people more tolerant. He suggested the idea behind service is to mend the fraying social fabric. He also noted that shifts in the general population over the last 15-20 years have meant that the “we” of our society is not as strong as it used to be.

Vice Chair Gearan connected the conversation back to the Commission’s national tour in 2018, during which the Commissioners heard of the many challenges facing Americans. He expressed that while he does not support an overly negative final report, but he does believe an edgy critique will increase attention to the report and provide an opening for the Commission to express a solution. He noted that while a “moonshot” provides an understandable frame, other moments are worth considering as well, noting that the GI Bill was proposed two weeks after D-Day.

Dr. Davidson emphasized the importance of the report having a hook and conveying why the Commission is talking about these issues at this time. Accordingly, she explained, the moonshot could either address a problem to be solved or an opportunity to be seized. She recommended looking to Robert Putnam’s concepts for what makes a strong social fabric. She also advocated for including trends in civic participation—voting, joining groups, etc.—as a proxy for describing the trajectory of the nation. Dr. Davidson referenced Ms. James’ comments from the

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April meeting about how the nation has faced worse crises in the past. She argued that the nation resolved those crises by having leaders pursue bold solutions, and that things will not turn around on their own.

Ms. James endorsed the idea that the concept of “we” in the nation may not be as strong as it once was, that the report should point to historical trends in participation to show the problem, and that history has shown military service strengthens the social fabric. She argued that tying the moonshot to facts and the Commission’s observations will lessens the opportunity for it to be politicized, which she worries about with terms like crisis.

While supportive of the use of markers, Ms. Haines questioned whether the traditional markers continued to be the correct ones. She argued that the younger generations are interested in participating in various forms of service, but they do not appear to view such service as being service to the country, per se, and part of their responsibility as a citizen, but are instead focused on helping their local community. The younger generation appears to be more inspired by local and global connections, rather than national ones – as compared to her generation. She pointed to comments made by younger people at Commission events and some polling on how young people understand their citizenship, what they associate as being “American”, and how many people express a lack of support for democracy as the best form of government. Dr. Rough latter commented that the research team needs to look more closely at this polling and other available metrics.

Ms. James pondered how the consistent mantra against bureaucrats and politicians by politicians and others for the last 15-20 years have contributed to the desire to focus locally or globally. Mr. Khazei echoed the sentiment that there is a generational change, noting that teenagers have grown up facing terrible national challenges: the financial crisis, wars, school shootings, etc. He noted that when the Commission has met young people who serve in any capacity, it has observed their sense of commitment to the nation. Vice Chair Wada wondered what inner-city kids and young people from minority communities will think of when they hear the phrase “social fabric.” She believed that they will not appreciate or understand how the national piece connects to themselves or their families.

Mr. Allard offered that the goal should be an integrated or coordinated social fabric. The issues that concerned him most were the lack of awareness about the military, despite years of war and lots of advertising, and the siloed nature of the national service and public service communities. Dr. Davidson noted that the military is still respected, but the challenge is finding people who are fit and able to join. She added that the lack of respect for civil service is a crisis. She believed that young people’s view of public service connects to the challenges recruiting and hiring, as well as a loss of faith in the government. Ms. James later added, “woe to the people if government workers just stop working.”

Mr. Allard raised another concern about whether the service communities can absorb massive numbers of new recruits. He does not want to build motivation to serve and then not be able to provide opportunities or provide bad ones.

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Mr. Kilgannon said he found a balance between Ms. James' and Vice Chair Gearan's points. He wants to be provocative, but he does not want the message to be politicized. The natural bridge is the solution provided by Dr. Davidson and Ms. Haines—specific findings and metrics. He reiterated metrics highlighted earlier in the conversation. He stated that the Commission needs to say that everyone is part of the problem and the solution.

In addition to metrics, Commissioners shared other possibilities for how to frame the moonshot, including:

- The nation is on a negative path, as demonstrated by certain indicators, and needs a change in trajectory. As a nation, we are at an inflection point and service can help us to rise above the challenges.
- Service is the story of America; while the various streams of service are struggling in their own ways, every day there are average acts of greatness done by normal Americans that do not get attention.
- Service is part of preparing people to be part of the republic, by teaching them about the responsibilities and rights of citizenship, as well as supportive members of their community.
- Service is a secret: most people have no connection to it though there is great hopefulness in service in its many forms, military and other, and across generations, young and old.

Vice Chair Gearan noted that in framing the issue, the Commission should not lose the connection to leadership and the role of the government to push for change. He did not want to minimize individual acts of service, but he argued for a structure that would encourage the Commission's audience to support and develop the service efforts that already exist.

Chairman Heck reminded the Commission of prior discussions, during which Commissioners agreed that the report is technically for Congress, but it will include recommendations to the President, Congress, and the American people more broadly. He reiterated the report needs to be geared towards the leaders who can act on the Commission's recommendations.

Ms. Skelly connected the discussion to President Kennedy's call for a moonshot. She noted that President Kennedy made two moonshot speeches: the first, in 1961, was to Congress and was very technical; the second, in 1962 at Rice University, explained the reasoning and was more visionary. The latter is most often referred to as the "moonshot" speech. Ms. Skelly argued there is an opportunity to both lay out a plan and inspire people to join us. Chairman Heck agreed, noting that the introduction in report will be the inspiration part and the details will be latter detailed recommendations.

Mr. Khazei contended that, if the Commission does the report well, the people who want to embrace this vision will be able to encourage Congress or the Administration for change. He remarked that more people in the past two years have talked to him about taking national service to scale than in the past 10 years combined, and people are glad that the Commission bringing these topics together and shining a spotlight.

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Vice Chair Wada questioned whether the Commission has the same and right goal in mind yet. She asked are we articulating what we want to achieve and if we are fixing the social fabric, then what is the end goal?

Ms. Haines said that the Commission should focus on how service addresses two elements related to national unity: (1) how service can improve the sense among Americans that they are part of one diverse but coherent community, and (2) how service can improve the ability of people to understand each other's experiences and thus lessen certain divisions within the country. Service provides value by giving people a chance to understand different perspectives.

Ms. Davidson recommended that the Commission discuss running for office as a kind of service, in part to try to drown out that negative narrative about these positions by sharing the positive stories of everything the government does to help people's lives. Ms. Skelly noted that there are 500,000 elected positions in the United States. The two Commissioners suggested describing the design of the republic and the reasons people should run.

Vice Chair Wada commented that the public bifurcates the idea that we respect servicemembers, but not always the leadership decisions about use of the military. She thinks, similarly, the Commission should be able to convey support for the public servants that work every day, regardless of whether one supports a bigger or smaller government.

Mr. Barney observed that the social fabric talk seems to take the Commission in a direction of a problem, and it is difficult to frame our report this way with the appropriate nuance. He proposed instead framing it as a great opportunity that will benefit everyone. Chairman Heck agreed, noting that if this is an aspirational document, then it is tough to start with the negatives. Mr. Khazei suggested framing service as addressing the needs of the nation: better participating citizens and connecting Americans.

Ms. Haines noted the unique way in which a crisis motivates people. The original moonshot was framed in the context of a competition with the Soviet Union and the fear that we could lose in that competition. Some may argue that the nation faces a crisis today and that national service is part of the solution to address the nation's needs.

Mr. Barney encouraged the Commission to focus on building citizens to inspire long-term change, recognizing that the power of a "crisis" to bring people together could dissipate quickly.

Dr. Rough put to the Commissioners that she was hearing two distinct approaches: pointing to the problem of a weakening social fabric, on the one hand, and calling on Americans to uphold their obligations as citizens, on the other. Ms. James expressed concern about the position that service is the solution and proposed instead that it be described as a pathway. Vice Chair Wada said, as the Commission on Service, if we don't say this is a solution, then who will. Mr. Kilgannon countered there are other potential solutions, but they are not within our mandate.

Mr. Kilgannon suggested that without discussing a crisis that service can help to address, the Commission will not generate media attention. He echoed earlier sentiments that the Commission needs to provide a reason for people to pay attention. He shared that he is

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comfortable conveying that politicians and the media are part of the problem and the solution as well. Mr. Gearan agreed and thought there are edgy things we can say.

Moonshot Details

After a break, Chairman Heck transitioned the conversation towards the specific details of the moonshot and what metrics can be used to measure success. He noted that it is difficult to impact some of the numbers of participants, such as increasing the number of uniformed service members. He asked for ideas for how to demonstrate an increase in propensity to serve in the military, such as changing where recruiting occurs, increasing the number of individuals taking the ASVAB, or growing the number who walk into recruitment offices.

Ms. Skelly emphasized that a lot of people do not understand what the military does and how it is used, even while it remains one of the most trusted institutions in America. She contended that increasing understanding of the military is key. She supported using the ASVAB as a metric – doing so would facilitate individuals learning about the diversity of options in the military at an earlier age and may increase interactions with the military.

Mr. Barney offered the goal of “100% of high school sophomores will have been provided an opportunity to learn about military service and to assess their need to take an ASVAB.” He argued that individuals cannot wait until their senior year to make these important decisions. He framed this as a way of ensuring that young people make informed decisions. He hoped that an increased understanding would also ensure that those youths that do sign up do not feel as separated from the community. Ms. James liked this approach, noting that an early start gave individuals an opportunity to address other qualification limitations. Ms. Skelly agreed and said she hoped to change the narrative that the military is where you go when you do not have any other options. Dr. Davidson pointed out that narrative is part of the history of all militaries, and it is a positive as well, the military can be a ladder to pull people out of tough positions. Commissioners referenced the discussion that occurred in the May hearings.

Chairman Heck provided three observations: (1) the ASVAB needs to be rebranded, so there is a value to take it even if you do not need to know your military occupational specialty; (2) beyond the ASVAB, more education on the benefits is important, so that we do not see ROTC students who didn't know to get a scholarship until their second or third year; (3) we need to advertise that there is more to do in the military besides pulling a trigger.

Playing the devil's advocate, Chairman Heck challenged that the ASVAB is one more standardized test that takes away from instruction time. Dr. Davidson said that if we frame this as a career exploration tool that is connected to other service opportunities, then the concern would be addressed. Mr. Khazei agreed that a broader framing makes it acceptable. Staff and Commissioners added that the test takes approximately three hours and that individuals who want to go into the military take test preparation courses, similar to SAT prep programs.

Ms. Haines asked whether any state laws that mandate that the ASVAB be made available at the schools required everyone to take it. Ms. Rorem clarified that, in those cases, schools must provide an opportunity for the test and make students and families aware. She noted that if the

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goal is 100% of students have an easy opportunity, state legislative support would be necessary but would take more time.

Mr. Barney conceded that it is one thing to make the ASVAB available to everyone and another to motivate people to take it. He suggested the ASVAB could become a requirement to participate in a national service program or to receive federal student loans. Mr. Allard suggested tying it to selective service registration.

Mr. Kilgannon suggested that there should be a big goal with sub-goals. The big goal should be to address the 70% issue, in other words, only 30% of individuals are eligible to join the military. Ms. Skelly had previously raised this issue. Mr. Kilgannon argued that the moonshot should be for that percentage of eligible individuals to go up—possibly to 50%. The message should be that the pool has been shrinking, and we need to stop here and push the other way. He argued for framing this as a national security problem. He suggested that recruiter geography or the ASVAB could help get to that goal. He asked Tony Kurta about this at the last hearing and sensed the military could support including options for public and national service in the ASVAB, especially if doing so would open up military access to schools. Dr. Davidson noted that these numbers are impacted by recruiting standards, which may also need to change. She clarified that only 30% are qualified, but the number qualified and propensed is even smaller. Ms. James offered that another sub-goal could be to connect with guidance counselors, because they are the ones who can help students identify where their strengths will be best used and a possible plan.

Ms. Skelly observed that there are two different areas to impact: recruiting and education. While they overlap, she wanted to emphasize the latter. She would like to see military information be part of civics education. She recognized that the recruiting piece is harder to change and the military is ill served by the populace's understanding of it. Dr. Davidson raised that recruiting stations used to be a place to learn about skills, not just get into military; and that one problem she would like to address is for the all-volunteer force to have fewer recruiting problems.

Vice Chair Gearan asked how much of a critique of the military recruiting approach the Commission is willing to make. One could posit that a lot of the problems are military planning related, such as messaging, standards, and funding in geography. Chairman Heck agreed these are problems, but was reluctant to address specific standards, especially in the moonshot. He might be willing to say broadly that reviewing standards is important. Ms. James suggested that the Commission could go so far as to highlight that some of the accession standards are keeping good people out.

Chairman Heck redirected the conversation towards a single, big aspirational goal for 2032, instead of focusing on sub-goals. Vice Chair Wada reframed Mr. Kilgannon's suggestion as an increase in recruiting—80%, or some other significant percentage, of Americans meet the requirements to serve or are both eligible and propensed—as a possible moonshot. Chairman Heck agreed with this general goal; he clarified that 28% are eligible and then only half of those are academically qualified and only half of that are propensed, that is how we go from 32 million to 450,000 highly qualified and interested individuals.

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Mr. Khazei suggested as a moonshot to seek a doubling of those qualified and propensed, from 450,000 to 1 million. He recognized, however, that DoD has short-term interests that reinforce the regionalism of recruiting and also may exacerbate civil-military divide issues. He wanted to tie this issue back to the broader picture that the moonshot will improve the republic. Mr. Kilgannon agreed and proposed that a step could be service projects that focus on physical fitness and academic programming, which would make everyone more prepared.

Chairman Heck noted that the Commission seemed now to be discussing two goals: everyone taking the ASVAB or increasing the percentage of high-quality recruits. He asked the Commissioners which they prefer. Ms. Haines argued for 100% accessibility of ASVAB and some education sub-goals. Ms. James responded that she sees the ASVAB as a sub-bullet and would rather look at doubling high-quality recruits (from 450,000 to 1 million). In addition to increasing ASVAB numbers, Chairman Heck added that recruiting in a broader geography should be part of the 1 million goal.

Vice Chair Gearan and Mr. Khazei then noted that while the metrics are important, the moonshot needs to involve developing connections between different streams of service. Vice Chair Gearan felt that a rebranded ASVAB can help achieve that. Mr. Khazei noted that if recruiters have someone interested but unable to serve, then they need to connect them to other opportunities. He believes that a stronger call to service in general will also help achieve specific metrics. Ms. Haines agreed and noted that she supported the approach of endorsing a top-line number goal for all services. Chairman Heck suggested the figure of 5 million in service, without clarifying exactly how many more are for military, national, or public service.

Mr. Kilgannon raised a concern that one broad number in service would allow leaders to shift blame and pass the buck. He thought specifying where the growth in service should be, then specific coalitions and actors can be held accountable. Vice Chair Wada attempted to combine the concepts, laying out a 5 million in service with suggestions on how it would break down, later revising the approach to target X number of Americans who are eligible and have the opportunity to serve. Ms. Haines supported this approach.

Dr. Rough offered to make a short summary of the conversation, to circulate amongst Commissioners for their comments. Vice Chair Wada noted that we have not given time to public service, which she would like to ensure is not ignored. Mr. Gearan said that framing this as a story or with examples would be best.

Engagement Update and Planning for Final Report Release

At 1045 ET, Jeff McNichols, Deputy Director for Government Affairs and Public Engagement, provided a brief presentation on the engagement plans for 2020 and final report release options, supported by members of the GPE team. This team is working to achieve 3 goals: (1) create pressure on Congress and Executive Branch to enact final recommendation, (2) inspire more Americans to have a common expectation of service, and (3) handoff our efforts to stakeholders in 2020.

Congressional and Government Engagement

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Mr. McNichols outlined the oversight committees, congressional caucuses, and individual members that the Commission has engaged or plans to engage. He noted that he is currently scheduling sessions for the RAW team leads to discuss policy proposals with congressional staff to gain a better sense of the political realities surrounding these options. He is also working closely with the OGC team to collaborate on the legislative proposals to ensure we can get technical assistance when it is needed. GPE is currently circulating congressional recess toolkits to individual offices to facilitate district work on services topics. This outreach work will continue through 2019, and in 2020 the goal is to schedule additional rounds of briefings and hopefully participate in congressional hearings.

While describing the caucuses, Mr. McNichols highlighted the For Country Caucus, which is made up of freshman members, many of whom have expressed an interest in service issues. Mr. Allard noted that the Black, Asian, and Hispanic caucuses actually come together on a regular basis as well – into the Tri-caucus – and recommended that GPE use those meetings to reach a broad group. Mr. Barney suggested looking at the party staff that works with House and Senate leadership, explaining that it may facilitate reaching several prominent members at once.

Mr. McNichols noted that executive branch outreach has fallen into a regular cadence, with monthly interagency meetings as well as targeted session with specific agency staff (such as OMB, HHS, or CHCO). These interactions will continue to be used to test policy proposals and garner technical assistance. Additionally, GPE has engaged with many government associations, which are vested stakeholders.

External Relations

Morgan Levey, External Relations Officer, led this discussion, outlining three goals: (1) raising awareness of the Commission, (2) igniting a national conversation on service, and (3) building relationships to cultivate input and eventually apply pressure on Congress. GPE works to achieve these goals through commission events, external events, and relationship management and coalition building. Ms. Levey noted that while she is not going to delve into the first two, they take up a huge amount of staff time and energy.

Vice Chair Wada pointed the Commission to a schedule of external events for the rest of 2019, noting that if something is not listed, it is because the organization could not appropriately accommodate the Commission. Ms. Levey added that the Commission would be meeting with informal youth advisory groups throughout the fall.

Ms. Levey discussed efforts to develop relationships and coalitions. She noted that relationships take a lot of different shapes and go through many stages. GPE began with broad outreach to everyone to make sure that they knew the Commission existed and had a chance to feed into the interim report. For example, in 2018, over 300 stakeholder organizations were engaged. GPE is now focused on developing stronger relationships with key stakeholders in six areas: national service, public service, military service, selective service, civic education, and cross-functional issues. This curated list will be revised after the July voting session. Next, Ms. Levey will work to build coalitions of stakeholders likely to support specific policy proposals now and into the future. All three stages will be ongoing starting this summer.

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Ms. Levey also shared an image of a pie with six slices to explain different stages of relationship management and noted that not all relationships have all six parts. She gave the example of Brookings, where we first reached out over a year ago, have been getting their input for a while, we have asked them to share our updates with their networks, and now they are working with us on a joint event in October. She explained the last slice is when someone champions the work, which is the goal of being able to hand off advocacy to other groups when the Commission ends.

Vice Chairs Gearan and Wada asked about whether outside groups have provided us with diverse perspectives that are missing from the Commission. Ms. Levey responded that GPE has been trying to connect to many different kinds of groups and continues to add to the list with voices that we have not yet heard from. She also noted that in 2018, many groups were not able to engage fruitfully with the Commission because it had not provided enough specificity about the direction of its recommendations. Publication of staff memos has given the team better opportunities to reengage with some of these groups. Mr. McNichols noted that GPE welcomes further ideas. Ms. James recommended speaking with all major youth organizations.

Public Affairs and Communications

Erin Schneider, Public Affairs Officer, outlined the three goals of the communication strategy: (1) increasing brand awareness; (2) igniting a national conversation on service; and (3) informing Congress, the President, and the public of the Commission's work and final recommendations. GPE intends to accomplish these goals by building relationships with journalists, using events to drive their message, and digital communications. Cristina Flores, Public Affairs Officer, explained the difference between the three tiers of media (national, trade, and no target) and how they build relationships with these journalists. Ms. Schneider noted that they work on both internal and external communications, to ensure that all staff speak with the same cohesive voice and that we do not communicate more than the research or legal teams are ready for. She also highlighted that the external communications have been on an earned media basis (versus a paid strategy).

Ms. Schneider and Ms. Flores then outlined additional communication work they intend to pursue. During this summer, their major efforts will be outreach to congressional communication teams to identify potential amplifiers and developing messaging around the final report. They expect to present updates on this work in September. They emphasized that between July 2019 and March 2020 the Commission does not intend to release any new information, which will present challenges for communications. They have adopted a goal of receiving 5000 public comments by January 1 as a marker for how well their communication strategy is working. The GPE team also continues to update the website, expand use of the newsletter, and ramp up the blog. They asked the Commissioners whether they would support creating videos during this lull; videos have more staying power than other media and would help reach new audiences. They also asked how much of the budget can be devoted to communications efforts and requested assistance from the Commissioners to connect with media in key local congressional districts.

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Mr. Allard suggested finding a young person who did not know what to do with their life until they took the ASVAB. Ms. Schneider explained that the website has space for individuals to share their stories and that GPE follows up with individuals who share stories at events. Dr. Rough added that the final report will tie personal stories to specific recommendations.

Mr. Barney recommended that GPE look at media markets for early primary states, so that they can potentially raise our questions to candidates.

Dr. Davidson argued that building the conversation on service is a key goal of the Commission, and so requires the Commission to devote funds to that effort. She suggested focusing on increasing the number of videos of YouTube. Chairman Heck noted that there is a videographer coming tomorrow, but that the budget is tight, so the use of gifts will be key. Sandy Scott, on detail from CNCS, offered that CNCS could help with videos, especially if they are explaining the report findings. Vice Chair Wada also noted that the Commission could do public service announcements; she mentioned an individual who offered to help.

Commission Timelines

Mr. McNichols then turned the conversation to describe five efforts that will occur in 2019 and 2020, which he described as (1) feedback/buy-in, (2) coalition formation, (3) political pressure, (4) final report release, and (5) handoff. He also explained that GPE is planning for the final report release to have six major components: the release event, a digital campaign, a media campaign, a mailing campaign, congressional briefings, and coalition briefings.

Mr. McNichols explained that GPE is looking for clarity from the Commission in several areas about the release event, including the budget and staffing levels, the number of events to have, whether to organize them by geography (northeast, west coast, DC) or topics (military, national, and public service), whether they should be physical or virtual, and the time frame (all done in the same week or over months). He noted GPE would like the Commission to make decision this month, to ensure that staff can find appropriate venues and develop a budget. He latter reviewed three options for the release event, ranging from a press conference only to many events spread across the country.

Mr. Khazei argued that the release should achieve two strategic objectives: moving the recommendations forward in Congress and informing stakeholders about the recommendations. He recommended that the focus be on identifying and engaging legislative champions.

Ms. James added that for the Commission's last major communication, the Commission should not be siloed. As a result, she does not support topic-based events. She would like every event to have good representation from all three service areas. She also noted that if an intent is to have congressional people involved, then the event should be in the Statutory Hall or on the lawn of the Capitol to make it easy for them to attend.

Vice Chair Wada concurred that a Capitol Hill location would be necessary if the Commissioners agree that the goal is to have congressional support. She pointed out that in previous conversations Commissioners talked about traveling and asked if that was still important to them. Vice Chair Gearan recognized that we are in the eleventh hour for planning and asked GPE what

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the dream release event would be. Ms. Skelly asked if it would be bodies in the room or press coverage.

Mr. Khazei argued for picking a date soon and trying to get big names to attend, suggesting attendance by all living Presidents as a goal. Mr. Allard agreed, and brought up the idea of a pilot project and suggested we could have people announce new programs that demonstrate the Commissioners' recommendations. Vice Chair Wada stated that she did not want to detract from the messaging of the final report and the effort to engage Congress. Mr. Khazei outlined an agenda with Chairman Heck explaining the big picture goals, big names endorsing those goals and calling for congressional action, and private sector leaders saying what steps they are ready to take. Vice Chair Wada asked whether it would be better to put it all together or to do it as part of an ongoing rollout. Mr. Khazei stated that, in his experience, it is better to do it all on one day.

Chairman Heck chimed in with a few thoughts. First, he explained that we will not know the congressional calendar until January of 2020, so we will not know when people are in town or on recess. Second, while he liked the idea of a big event, in his experience, every big name will want a speaking role or will not attend. Third, Commissioners should anticipate only a handful of congressional attendees, even if the event is in the Capitol. Finally, he noted that the budget remains tight. Mr. Allard countered that there are congressional events scheduled in advance that are well attended. For example, the Library of Congress hosts members and spouses at quarterly meetings. A discussion followed over how uncertain congressional recesses are. Chairman Heck proposed doing two events, one at the JFK Library in Boston and one as a press event at the Capitol. The former could be big and not focus on Congress, while the latter would be followed by delivering the report to members.

Vice Chair Gearan argued that if the Commission secures a big enough name, then the members of Congress will come. Vice Chair Wada and Ms. James confirmed that a celebrity would increase attendance. Mr. Barney asked the GPE team how to tie this work in with popular culture, with the example of getting a Commissioner on The Ellen Show. Ms. Levey and Ms. Schneider raised concerns that celebrities will draw focus away from the Commission's work and, also, may be difficult to secure. Ms. Skelly agreed, contending that splitting the congressional event from other outreach efforts would provide people more opportunities to follow up on the report. Vice Chair Wada noted that most celebrities have their platform, so the Commission might need to find an up-and-coming person who connects to the right demographics rather than an A-lister.

If the main purpose is to get attention for the final report and recommendations, Ms. Haines laid out two approaches: Mr. Khazei's recommendation, which promotes attendance from an array of people who will discuss the possibility of implementing recommendations in the report, and an alternative approach that highlights bipartisan congressional champions. If the Commission opts for the latter, Commissioners and staff should ask those members' staff to provide guidance on the structure and timing of the event.

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Mr. Khazei addressed the various ideas. As to congressional participation, Mr. Khazei recommended identifying four to seven champions. He believed that even during a recess the Commission can get those people to attend. He supported Chairman Heck's suggestion of the JFK Library, but he worried that the Commission would not get the right stakeholders there. He also supported getting celebrities, but recognized the difficulty involved in that approach. Finally, he noted that if Commission wants to involve the private sector, it would need only a few CEOs who can demonstrate that people are ready to lead on these issues.

Mr. Kilgannon worried about bringing in lots of big names because of the possible effect on diluting the Commission's message. Instead, he recommended simplicity, and supported doing two big events initially, followed by smaller events around the country. He suggested one more set of hearings next summer (CEOs, celebrities, military leaders, national service leaders) to get Congress' attention.

Mr. Barney expressed concern about convening a panel or involving outside individuals, namely that it would cause the Commission to lose control of messaging and provide people with an opportunity to criticize the report. He supported having one big event in DC and then going out to other places from there. Mr. Kilgannon expressed that he shares that concern for the March roll out, but he sees the risk as shrinking over time because the media will have already covered the report and it should be easier to identify people who support the recommendations. He suggested that GPE can put off inviting people for later events until after March.

Vice Chair Gearan stated these approaches are not different from the interim report release, and Mr. Khazei suggested that the interim report release was not big enough. Chairman Heck then wrapped up the talk, promising more time to discuss the issue on Friday. He asked GPE to prepare a revised proposal sheet for that conversation.

Ms. Levey quickly noted that there are 114 requests out for statements for the record. She asked Commissioners to review the list and provide contacts if they have them. The discussion ended at 1255 ET when the Commission broke for lunch.

Planning for July Meeting and Proposal Voting

From 1415 to 1635 ET, Dr. Rough and Mr. Lekas reviewed the July voting schedule, with assistance from various staff.

Voting Materials

Physical copies of the P2S binders were distributed and the electronic versions were distributed via email the previous Friday. The SSS/EWM binder will be mailed on July 3rd and sent digitally. Commissioners were asked to bring the marked-up binders back in July.

Dr. Rough reviewed the kinds of deliberative materials found in the binders: bundle proposals, which should not contain high costs, complexity, or sensitivity issues; stand-alone proposals, which are more complex; considered-not-adopted lists; and research menus. She encouraged the Commissioners to read the memos carefully, especially when the materials are not from your workgroup. She noted that generally the recommendations are for up and down votes.

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In response to Mr. Kilgannon's question, Dr. Rough shared there are currently 31 unique votes scheduled for the week. Mr. Khazei noted that the continuum of service and moonshot ideas are not part of that picture and felt it critical that those ideas be resolved at the onset. Chairman Heck explained the moonshot discussion this week was intended to reach consensus on those issues ahead of voting. Mr. Barney agreed the moonshot is the lens the Commission must have in mind during its voting deliberations. Ms. Haines asked about where there will be a vote on the metrics for the moonshot. Dr. Rough stated that the metrics in the moonshot can be changed easily in the report, but the recommendations are central to the structure of the report itself.

Mr. Barney questioned whether the Commission is looking for a bunch of proposals in general or only those necessary to achieve the moonshot. Chairman Heck shared that RAW has tried to mirror this approach but distinguishing between bundle memos and stand-alone memos. He added that all proposals are things the workgroup believed would address the "3A" issues. He also said that connecting specific proposals back to the moonshot should occur after all the recommendations have been discussed.

Dr. Davidson asked how amendments would be handled, specifically floor amendments. Chairman Heck championed getting through as many votes as possible in the time permitted. Ms. Haines offered a compromise, to permit floor votes only in extraordinary circumstances, which might be recognized by unanimous agreement. She noted that Chairman Heck, or any other Commissioner, would then be empowered to block a floor amendment. Alternatively, Ms. James suggested that floor amendments could table votes, and the Commissioners could return to consider an amended version later, if there is time.

Procedural Issues

Mr. Lekas reviewed the procedures for voting. He explained that the procedures are intended to drive the Commission to decision points, which will be the building blocks for the final report. He noted how many votes are required to pass a recommendation and that the meeting would be split into deliberation blocks with voting at the end of each block. He also explained the proxy system for those that cannot be present, noting that Dr Davidson would be absent for the entire week and Ms. Haines would be absent for Friday, July 19.

Mr. Lekas briefed the Commission on the difference between amendments and clarifications to voting proposals and provides examples to illustrate. The Commissioners were encouraged to be as specific as possible in their thoughts. He asked that all amendments be sent to himself and Dr. Rough by July 10. A complete list without staff recommendations will be shared via email by July 12. On July 15, when people arrive, the staff will share objective information on the difficulty or benefits of the change. Generally, the Commissioners will vote on amendments before the recommendations.

Ms. Haines asked whether a request to pull an element out of a bundle for a separate vote is an amendment. It was decided that it would not be treated as an amendment, but rather would be done immediately.

SSS/EWM Sequencing

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Dr. Rough expressed that the issues in this area are so intertwined that they need to be addressed in a particular order. She shared a handout that outlined this sequencing. Jud Crane, Team Lead for Selective Service, noted that after the hearing tomorrow the approach may need to be modified. The questions in order were:

- Whether to keep a military draft contingency (recognizing this topic was voted on last year in Waco);
- What is the purpose and value of the draft mechanism, which will focus on whether the draft is for combat replacements only;
- Whether to register all Americans;
- What should be the ordering for registration (active pre-mobilization registration versus passive post-mobilization registration);
- If the Commission supports pre-mobilization registration, then how should the pre-registration system be revised (such as whether there should be face-to-face registration, improved due process for denied benefits, and a conscious objector box);
- Whether to adopt a Service Registration System and how it should be structured;
- What voluntary systems, if any, should be adopted;
- How to reform the structure of the draft (such as the age for draftees, the duration of conscription, and the skills required); and
- Whether to endorse a set of bundled proposals.

Mr. Allard asked where taking the ASVAB might fall into this sequence. Mr. Crane explained that, if the ASVAB would be required for SSS registration, then it would go to revising the pre-mobilization registration system. If instead, you thought it would be part of a national roster, then it could go in the voluntary systems discussion. Dr. Rough noted that we can also include things into the aspirational discussion without any specific recommendations. Mr. Lekas also noted that this could be raised as an amendment to the ASVAB proposal in the military service section of the voting binders.

Ms. Haines asked how we are handling recommendations where the Commission is not instituting an immediate requirement, but where we recognize there will be a cost and want Congress to fund these efforts. Dr. Rough responded it might depend on how quickly you want to get the funds. If it is day 1, then we should have a legislative proposal; but if it is a goal for several years down the line, then it can be in the narrative text. Mr. Allard asked for cost projections, and Dr. Rough promised to follow up.

Ms. Haines stated that she believes, regardless of the pre- and post- mobilization question, that the Commission must opine on women registering. Additionally, it was her opinion that the pre- and post-mobilization question should be treated as separate from the passive/active registration question. In both cases, she seemed confident the current voting sequencing would be fine. Chairman Heck and Vice Chair Gearan seemed to agree. Dr. Rough clarified that both the pre- and post- registration questions will be shared, but one will get pulled depending on how the Commission votes.

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P2S Binder

Ms. Rorem then shared tips for how to efficiently read the binder materials. She noted that the materials are generally organized in the order of voting. She reviewed the format for the memos, explaining that the top sheet should lay out the problem, the goal, recommendations, and a risk analysis. They should help indicate which proposals each Commissioner should perform a deeper dive into. Behind the top sheet, the memos contain four sections: the key points, the background, findings, and recommendations. Ms. Rorem noted that the votes are in the italic language and the implementation bullets beneath describe one way forward.

Ms. Haines raised that there may be disagreements on the implementation language and asked how edits to that language would be treated. It was determined that these would be treated as amendments and Commissioners should be as specific as possible when requesting changes there. Ms. Rorem also clarified that generally the memos are subject to a single vote, even though they may have several interconnected recommendations.

Ms. Rorem highlighted that the bundles contain multiple ideas, which are outlined in the top sheet. She distinguished this from memos, which have one singular focus. She walked through the structure of a bundle, and noted that there is no risk analysis, because if there was major risk it would have been put in a stand-alone memo.

Ms. Rorem noted that tab 7 and 18 are different. They have alternatives to consider and each alternative will be voted on separately.

Mr. Allard requested that the staff prepare a cheat sheet for voting, suggesting this might help limit deliberations to the issues where there is not unanimity. Mr. Barney described it as a manager's package. Dr. Rough agreed to prepare this document. Vice Chair Wada recognized that voting will be hard because the amendments will not come in until three days before the Commissioners meet. Mr. Kilgannon noted that the conversations around the votes is important to help shape the narrative of the report.

Expectations

Chairman Heck announced how he plans to run the July meeting. The Commission will need to hold roughly six votes a day, not including amendments. The staff will tee up a proposal. If everyone agrees on a proposal, then the Commissioners will be able to move through the easier things rather quickly, which would leave more time to resolve the harder issues. Ms. James asked whether Chairman Heck will be limiting time people can speak. He did not think that will be necessary.

Mr. Kilgannon asked whether individual names would be recorded with the vote. After a brief discussion, it was decided that voice votes would be taken; names would not be recorded, but the total number of votes for and against a proposition would be recorded. Mr. Lekas highlighted that the votes and decisions made in July would not be public until the final report because they will be treated as preliminary decisions until they are formally made public.

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Ms. James asked whether the final report would permit additional views, such as additional information to be considered, if they are not dissenting or alternative views. There was a discussion on how this would impact messaging and the challenges of discussing this in theory. It was decided to put off a final decision in this area in order to focus the Commission on trying to achieve consensus and resolve issues through amendments.

Mr. Kilgannon asked whether we anticipate any courts making decisions in the next year that will make votes in July irrelevant. Mr. Lekas informed the Commissioners of the state of the two relevant cases—in appeal and discovery—are unlikely to have major actions between July and December. He noted that if there are any relevant legal actions, he would update the Commissioners.

Final Report Planning

Vice Chair Wada noted that the Commissioners asked for a draft table of contents of the Final Report. Dr. Rough circulated a draft, adding that the structure of the report would change based on the SSS and EWM votes. She also re-emphasized that for planning purposes, a March 1, 2020 release date is being used. This means that the text of the final report must be locked by November 10, 2019. She said that Commissioners would receive a draft of the text around September 3. Staff will be looking primarily for input on tone and messaging.

Chairman Heck noted that following the July meeting, the Commissioners will hold further meetings on September 19-20, October 17-18, and November 14-15. Currently, the Commission is not scheduled to meet in August or December. Vice Chair Wada pointed out that engagements may occur throughout.

Moonshot Discussion (Continued)

Starting at 1650 ET, Chairman Heck returned the conversation to the moonshot concept. A revised document outlining metrics discussed in the morning was circulated. Chairman Heck noted that the options under military service focus on “a significant increase in the number of Americans eligible and propensed for military service.”

The Commissioners then debated whether the goal should be to increase the number of youth who consider taking the ASVAB or are exposed to the opportunity. Mr. Lekas noted that state legislation can limit where the test can be administered and how scores are released. Ms. Haines noted that everyone already has the opportunity now because they can go to a MEPS station. Ms. James countered that sophomores cannot go to MEPS or recruiting offices because they are too young. Ms. Haines, acknowledging this, said the goal should be clear that we want it to be more accessible than it currently is, whether that is through states actually providing it or through a better branding and promotion program. Mr. Barney agreed that the term “exposure” is too wishy-washy. Mr. Kilgannon suggested the goal of doubling the number of kids who take the ASVAB. Chairman Heck proposed 100% of sophomores taking the ASVAB in 2032.

Ms. James pointed out that under the fourth bullet, it should read that the programs reach out to underrepresented, not underserved, populations. Everyone agreed. Chairman Heck asked whether there is a tangible number to attach to this sub-goal. Mr. Khazei suggested geographic

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outreach expansion as something that would meet this goal. Vice Chair Wada said that if the Commission is looking for geographic distribution, then it must be explicit. Ms. Skelly asked about the practical implications for this approach. Will it cost three times as much money to recruit a kid from New York? Ms. James said that there would be both a financial cost and a cost associated with shifting the recruitment culture. Vice Chair Wada recommended better tracking of recruiting as a first step.

Vice Chair Gearan wondered whether everyone is comfortable with this approach, since it is very “Big Brother” in nature. Dr. Davidson pointed out that critics have argued that the Commission is designed to get the military into more places and to increase government intrusions into people’s lives.

Chairman Heck brought the conversation back to the moonshot, which is to expose all sophomores to all of the streams of service and to get 5 million Americans serving. He suggested that the RAW team present a revised list without breaking things into separate categories. That would be discussed at the Commissions’ meeting on Friday, June 21.

June 20, 2019

Business Meeting

The Commission convened at the FDR Library in Hyde Park, NY, at 0800 ET with all Commissioners present.

Mr. Lekas and Ms. Rough briefed the Commission on the day’s public hearings. They provided background on the panelists, the issues likely to arise, and the key questions for Commissioners to explore with the panelists. The meeting ended at 0835 ET.

Public Hearing: Civic Education and Service in Schools

From 0900 to 1200 ET, Commissioners held a public hearing titled Creating an Expectation of Service Hearing: Civic Education and Service in Schools. Panelists included Derek Black, a Professor at the University of South Carolina School of Law; Annie Hsiao, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Discretionary Grants and Support Services in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education at the U.S. Department of Education; Dr. Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg, the Director of the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tufts University; Ananya Singh, the Youth Advisory Council Mentor of the National Youth Leadership Council; and Alhassan Susso, the 2019 New York State Teacher of the Year and a faculty member at International Community High School. A live stream of the hearing is available on the Commission’s Facebook and YouTube pages.

Public Hearing: An Infrastructure to Serve America

From 1300 to 1600 ET, Commissioners held a public hearing titled Creating an Expectation of Service: An Infrastructure to Serve America. Panelists included Brigadier General Derin Durham, the Deputy Commander of Air Force Recruiting Service; Dr. Ben Ho, an Associate

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Professor of Economics at Vassar College; Dr. Dorothy Stoneman, the Founder and former CEO of YouthBuild USA, Inc.; and Dr. Drew Train, Co-Founder and President of OBERLAND; and Dakota Wood, a Senior Research Fellow for Defense Programs at the Center for National Defense. A live stream of the hearing is available on the Commission's Facebook and YouTube pages.

June 21, 2019

Public Hearing Debrief and Selective Service Deliberation

The Commission started at 0800 ET to discuss the prior day's public hearings and deliberate on issues involving the Selective Service System. All Commissioners participated in the meeting.

Integrated Recruiting

Commissioners first spoke about comments in the second panel from General Durham regarding the Air Force's recruiting approach, which in part attempts to connect interested individuals to civilian positions in the Air Force in addition to military positions. Mr. Allard hoped that other services follow suit. Dr. Davidson clarified that the Air Force is connecting potential recruits to all of the ways to serve the Air Force, i.e., active duty, the guard, the reserve, and civil service. Ms. Haines noted that the panelist shared his own personal view that it would be good to expand the program. Vice Chair Wada added that the Air Force is forward thinking and has no problems getting recruits. Ms. Skelly said the Air Force is taking the first logical step on that path by connecting all of the programs within the Air Force, and the Army has not been able to do that.

Ms. Barney recalled his trip to TRADOC, which CNCS and Peace Corps also attended. There was a lot of energy in the room and people seemed supportive of the idea of sharing recruiting leads. Chairman Heck pointed to Ms. Stoneman's testimony where she raised the question of why people are not being shared with Youth Build when they are turned away from other service opportunities. Vice Chair Gearan warned against the current narrative that national service will take the rejects.

Civic Education

Chairman Heck refocused the group back on civics. Ms. Haines felt the panelists expressed thoughts were consistent with the recommendations the Commission has been developing. She appreciated the conversation about training teachers. She was also persuaded by the panelists' discussion about social-emotional learning and recommended the Commission highlight it as a best practice. Additionally, she heard the panelists draw a distinction between civic-action activities and service learning and that this would be important for the Commission to do in the final report. Mr. Susso and Dr. Kawashima-Ginsberg talked about how civic action projects in which students experienced for themselves how their voice was capable of producing change in the society through an exercise of civic action, inspired young people in ways that simply reading out civics did not. She indicated that the current bundle should be amended to reflect those ideas.

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Finally, Ms. Haines requested statistics that linked civic education and service in a way that makes it clear why investing in civics would strengthen service. Dr. Davidson asked for the sources that underlie the Commission's talking points that relate to these topics. Ms. Rorem and Dr. Rough responded that the studies RAW has found show that there is a strong correlation, but they cannot show causation. Additionally, the data shows increased participation, not more service. Ms. Haines referenced the HHS study, and Dr. Kawashima-Ginsberg's comment on the dearth of academic research in this area. She suggested a new recommendation that would support more research. Vice Chair Wada pointed out that the research does show if an individual is more educated, then they are more likely to participate in civics.

Ms. James raised an issue that is still confusing for her—national standards on civics education. She thought she heard someone at the hearing say that if national standards were set it would be helpful, but no more details. She recognized that states are loath to accept a proposal in this area. Chairman Heck heard there was a role for a common core-like curriculum, a general baseline with the local school district being able to adapt as necessary. He agreed that the federal government will not act in this space and pointed to state associations who might champion it.

Chairman Heck expressed a desire to go bold, but also be achievable. He did not think we will get Congress to appropriate lots of money towards civics education, especially given the last rounds of revisions of the ESEA, which took the individual grant programs and lumped them together. One area where we can have an impact is requesting additional funding for Title II professional development. Mr. Susso said that unless we have educators prepared to do it, it cannot be done.

Dr. Davidson argued that the federal government has an obligation to promote and support civic education and voting education, noting the focus of first principles on the need to educate a citizenry to be informed and capable of voting. Mr. Khazei pointed out that STEM investment was pushed by industry, adding, with Dr. Davidson in agreement, that industry will not do the same with civic education. Chairman Heck agreed. He cautioned against the federal government specifying curriculum or standards and emphasized the importance of teacher development. Dr. Davidson agreed that a focus on teacher development is appropriate.

Mr. Khazei recommended that the Commission highlight service learning as a tool that bolsters and supports civic education, with action civics as a combination of the two. He views service-learning programs not only for students but also as amenable to development through corporations.

Mr. Barney stated that what he found troubling about the history of civic education is that the government invested millions into civic education programming but once the money stopped the programs dropped off the chart. He emphasized the need to make civics a core teaching capability as a good way of making it sustainable. Mr. Barney also raised that we need a lot more leaders who can think about a lot more than STEM issues. He noted that the federal government decided to emphasize STEM education and now it is seen as valuable. He thought that emphasizing civics in the final report as a critical capability for citizenship could lead to the same focus from others.

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Chairman Heck built on that point, suggesting that the report recognize that with finite time in the school day the best way to incorporate civics is into the entire school day and every course that is taught. Dr. Davidson mentioned there still might be a need for a standalone civics course, to relay some basic information and capture the experiential aspect. Ms. James suggested adopting a point Mr. Susso made, that education departments use civics as the model subject when asking teachers to practice how to develop curriculum or make a test.

Mr. Barney raised an idea from the hearing, which is that the first opportunity kids have to learn about citizenship is kindergarten, where you have to obey certain rules and follow some orders. Ms. Skelly added, referencing Prof. Black, that school discipline is one of the first experiences people have with the power of the state. Mr. Barney acknowledged the disciplinary aspect of early citizenship education while noting that it also entails a positive aspect.

Vice Chair Gearan returned to Chairman Heck's point of operating between boldness and reality. He noted that the Commission is entering a space that is at the heart of some of the divisions in our country. Unless the Commission offers a very elementary proposal, it will be hard to break through the political divides to make actual change. Mr. Kilgannon noted that the EWM work group asked what the Commission means by "civics education" and who gets to decide that. He thought the Commission could at least agree to a baseline for those questions without jumping into national standards. Chairman Heck suggested recommending that Congress promote a model curriculum that includes X, Y, and Z. He reminded people that when Common Core was adopted there was a lot of push back about how Congress was impeding on the states, even though it was National Governors Association, and not the federal government, that had developed it. Later in the discussion, Mr. Lekas noted that there are a number of curricula in existence, including one that was created and adopted by more than 20 states. Chairman Heck suggested that one recommendation could be to encourage the National Governors Association to review curricula and recommend adopting one or developing another.

Mr. Kilgannon recalled Prof. Black's use of the phrase "citizenship crisis" and expressed concern about striking the right balance between the federal government pushing to define citizenship (or how to enhance better citizens) versus imposing requirements on individuals or states to achieve it.

Ms. Haines supported professional development as a bold, but feasible, option. Ms. Haines also emphasized the importance of preparing students to have respectful conversations on controversial issues, referencing Ms. Singh's discussion about how her school peers did not develop that skill during class and had not received formal civic education. Dr. Davidson framed this as part of the skills of citizenship. Mr. Kilgannon highlighted Mr. Susso's testimony in which he described that discussions of complex problems in the classroom and how students gained an appreciation for how finding solutions to such problems can be complicated.

Vice Chair Gearan and Chairman Heck recommended the Commission emphasize civic education in its final report. Chairman Heck recommended that it be the lead-in to the report, from which the discussions on service and discrete recommendations would follow. Dr. Davidson noted that while the Commissioners themselves began their journey ready to jump into

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“chapter 3,” most people do not have the same experience in military, national, and/or public service and need first to be educated.

Vice Chair Gearan then turned to what the Commission means when it discusses civic education. He argued that civic education must do more than make people feel better – it must lead to participation. He expressed difficulty in conceiving of civic education without emphasizing that everyone must register to vote. Dr. Davidson, stepping back, asked about how individuals engage in the “canvas of democracy,” noting that while there are many ways to engage, voting is a key part. Chairman Heck agreed that voting engagement is one way to measure if the Commission has been successful.

Ms. James connected the discussion to the experience of Denver North High School students who spoke with the Commission in 2018. They were required to do community service to walk during graduation (but not to graduate). Ms. James wants to celebrate what those students are doing, but at the same time noted that it was not comprehensive or attached to a curriculum.

Ms. James then raised the ASVAB, and Commissioners spoke about how a rebranded ASVAB that focuses on the career exploration component could be valuable for service and civic education. Several Commissioners tied the ASVAB to the broader moonshot goals and to furthering service across all streams. Mr. Kilgannon recommended that the Commission emphasize how the ASVAB supports each stream of service. Ms. Haines built on this idea, focusing on how a proposal centered around the ASVAB could be among those that integrate the streams of service. She noted the unique challenges of each stream of service—for example, health standards for military service, infrastructure and branding for national service, and low morale for public service. Mr. Kilgannon recommended emphasizing these challenges in the different chapters.

Vice Chair Gearan reflected on the Commission’s effort to integrate the three streams and recommended identifying a space to elevate all three streams and build bridges among them. Mr. Allard recommended the California Department of Services as a model. Ms. Skelly suggested that the interagency meeting that Commission staff convenes could be a nascent seed of that, and there could be one agency that hosts regular meetings with the Executive Office of the President providing support.

Chairman Heck noted the precariousness of making recommendations contingent on another recommendation that may not happen. Vice Chair Wada noted that a centralized service authority would need to have sufficient authority over various departments to execute successfully, and there are significant jurisdictional limits on Congress doing so. Vice Chair Gearan recommended that the President be involved and felt that the Peace Corps and CNCS would not do well in this role given their own struggles for attention and funding. Commissioners also felt that OPM and the Department of Education would not be acceptable vehicles.

Chairman Heck said that this issue could change the tenor of the report and recommended the Commission vote on an overarching service authority. Mr. Allard points out that NASA was formed to accomplish a specific task and could be a helpful model. Dr. Davidson cautioned

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against some other whole-of-government efforts, such as the creation of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, noting that NASA could serve as an example of a more successful model.

Chairman Heck asked for an options memo identifying a lead for service authority, to include assigning the task to an existing cabinet agency, creating new lead agency, placing an existing official or agency (like CNCS or the CNCS CEO) under the Executive Office of the President, or creating a new office within the Executive Office, similar to the Office of Management and Budget. The Commission expressed general support for this approach.

Service Registration System

The Commission then discussed the public hearing on the proposed service registration system.

Ms. Skelly expressed concern that about the proposal as presented, noting that the proposal would need to be incredibly tight if the Commission opts to recommend it. She strongly suggested that the proposal be developed in a more sophisticated manner, including with expert review, to make the intent clear and ensure that the proposal does not serve as a poison pill that detracts attention from the Commission's other recommendations.

Ms. Skelly and Chairman Heck pointed to constructive input from panelists about using the right words to describe the proposal and avoiding other words that carry negative connotations.

Commissioners then discussed General Durham's comment during the public hearing about the ability to locate individuals through existing databases. Commissioners were generally wary of the ability of the federal government to compel access to information in state licensing databases and private companies. Mr. Barney emphasized that in the realm of national security, there is no substitute for the government having its own direct access to information it may need.

Dr. Davidson noted that while the private sector may be gathering information that could be useful, she does not believe the private sector ever gathers information on individuals and then matches those individuals with skill sets. She endorsed the idea of "badging" individuals as a way to help generate a culture of service; Mr. Allard and Ms. Skelly agreed, noting that this ties into earlier conversations about citizenship.

Reform of Selective Service System Registration

Chairman Heck redirected the conversation to the Selective Service System (SSS) and raised two topics. First, whether the SSS should continue to exist as a pre-mobilization registration system or a post-event active system. Second, whether women should register for selective service.

Chairman Heck recommended that if the Commission does opt to move away from pre-mobilization registration, it should, as recommended by Dakota Woods, identify the contours of what the nation would do in the event there is an emergency that requires conscription. He noted his view that federal databases would be sufficient, in the event of a mobilization need, to access everyone. He further noted that it would be imprudent to develop an approach reliant on state systems since those likely would be nearly impossible to access.

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Ms. James distinguished between stand-by and deep stand-by modes, which involve registration without the supporting mechanics. Ms. James expressed concern about how a decision to delay registration would be seen by our allies and other foreign entities. She thinks future generations will believe they do not have to worry about the possibility of conscription and would not be convinced to participate in the event of a need.

Vice Chair Wada said that if the nation is successful in addressing its civic education issue and moving to a more unified country, then perhaps it would be fine to move to a post-mobilization registration approach. Under the current climate, however, she expressed concern that people would not respond when told to show up to register.

Ms. Skelly pointed to deficiencies in the current system. She described it as unfair and also organized in a conscious attempt to get people to register without drawing attention to what people may be committing themselves to, i.e., risking their life.

Mr. Barney expressed ambivalence. While he previously felt more strongly about maintaining the status quo, he is increasingly interested in post-mobilization idea, despite disagreement with that terminology. He noted that during warfare there might not be time to register, conscript, and train the force. He thinks the idea of conscription is a quaint notion of how wars have been fought in the past, and that the next major threat will happen in less than 60 seconds. He believes there should be a point when the President can order registration at any time, without requiring an emergency as a predicate. He also believes registration must be tied to the idea of citizenship, because it will be essential to have a more robust sense of citizenship for a post-mobilization model to succeed. He said he would be willing to take the national security risk, if any, to ensure that people commit to the registration later on and in the meantime have a voluntary system where people can register at any time.

Vice Chair Wada inquired about tying a change in posture to a metric, such as recommending that the nation move to a post-mobilization posture once the civics work is done. She discussed her concerns about people being responsive. Chairman Heck said that use of existing databases would hold those people accountable. He thinks that if a change in posture is tied to another event occurring it will never happen. He wants the Commission to support recommendations that must be implemented at this moment.

Ms. James said that she found the construct intriguing but was not willing risk national security. She also expressed concern that the risk would be to the nation's uniformed service members. Her approach would be to maintain registration and put the infrastructure into sleep mode.

Commissioners discussed testimony from Bernard Rostker about how the SSS registered people in the early 1980s. Vice Chair Wada suggested recommending a test: have the President call for active registration and if 90% register, then move to a post-mobilization posture.

Ms. Haines expressed discomfort with both the current system and the post -mobilization approach. She outlined her preference for a system that makes registration a more conscious event, changes the penalty structure, provides people with an opportunity through the registration system to be the first person to be called, provides people with an opportunity to serve in other

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ways, and provides people an option to look through other service opportunities. She expressed openness to moving away from this preferred system in favor of a consensus approach, with some limits. She noted that if the Commission agrees on a post-mobilization approach, she would recommend, like Vice Chair Wada, that it be done only after the Executive Branch conducts testing and is confident that it will work. If the Commission opts to maintain a pre-mobilization approach, then the SSS will need changes, and the idea of building out the system to provide additional service or volunteering options would change the tone and make it more palatable.

Dr. Davidson supported this approach and felt that it would allow people to add some benefits and passion behind other volunteer options, such as emergency services. She noted that state-run training programs are helping to make local communities more resilient. She has seen this at the Department of Homeland Security and even in some companies and believes tapping into that movement could be significant.

Vice Chair Gearan cautioned against a “crawl-to-walk” approach and endorsed being “big and bold,” as Mr. Barney recommended. He wants to ensure the Commission stay focused on the big and bold ideas.

Chairman Heck agreed with others that regardless of the result on pre- versus post-mobilization, the Commission must redefine the system to make it clear that it is about more than just combat replacements. He believes this notion is ahistorical and has been a disservice to the system.

Chairman Heck then provided his rationale for endorsing a post-mobilization approach. He said that DoD does not count on conscripted personnel and has nearly four million available individuals before it would need to go to a draft. He believes there would be time to conduct registration and drafting post-event, and said he was struck by the many people who have been subjected to penalties for not registering, especially when looking at this issue from a demographic perspective – those who do not go to college and/or do not drive, in particular, are disadvantaged. He also noted all the grounds permitting people to avoid being drafted, which he views as not equitable. In addition, Chairman Heck noted that moving to a post-mobilization posture would be more appropriate from a perspective of fiscal conservatism and would free up \$20 million for other programs – including those the Commission may want to achieve.

Dr. Davidson emphasized the need for volunteers and “voluntolds” – particularly in the event of a problem on the home front, which is the scenario that would most likely require many people.

Ms. James agreed with Chairman Heck that the military does not want to rely on a draft and wondered about the political aspect of the issue. Noting the unpopularity of the draft, she said, no one has been willing to include conscription troops into plans, for fear of a leak. In light of that, she does not have confidence that the military would not need a draft and pointed to WWI and WWII and how events occur that people did not predict at the time. She posited that it could be time to return to an intentional, rather than passive, registration system. That approach could help to improve the inequitable aspect of the penalty structure but would result in a decrease of compliance. Ms. James noted that she may be comfortable with that approach in exchange for

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the added solemnity and ability to tie it to citizenship ideas – which, she noted, would help to connect the system to the Commission’s overall objectives.

Mr. Allard expressed skepticism about delays associated with post-event registration and associated risks, and said his inclination was to support a modified version of a pre-mobilization system.

Who Should Register for Selective Service

Chairman Heck introduced a discussion of selective service registration. He said that if it is made clear that the purpose of the system is not merely about combat replacement troops then everyone must register. There is a wide variety of jobs that people must fulfill in the case of an emergency. Ms. Haines concurred with Chairman Heck about opening registration to all Americans, though endorsed that in the context of pre-mobilization registration rather than a post-mobilization approach.

Vice Chair Wada agreed with this approach, noting that regardless of the decision made regarding pre- and post-mobilization registration, we do not know what skill sets will be required and so it will be important that all Americans register. Chairman Heck noted, too, the age restriction, recommending no age restriction because, for example, the nation might need a 45-year-old with the right skills. Dr. Davidson cautioned, however, against including anyone under 18 in this approach. All Commissioners agreed not to recommend lowering the age floor below 18. Chairman Heck also noted that broadening the draft-eligible base would send a strong message to adversaries. Mr. Barney suggested requiring people to provide information about skills when registering. Vice Chair Wada suggested mandatory registration for people in the 18-44 age range and voluntary for those 45 and older. Chairman Heck recommended mandatory registration for everyone.

Several Commissioners talked about how to involve companies and organizations into a mass mobilization effort.

Mr. Kilgannon returned to the purpose of a draft and felt that as a practical matter there would be no call for conscription other than in a scenario require ground combat troop replacements. He does not see conscription being used to bring on cyber warriors but does see it happening to, potentially, to identify individuals to protect infrastructure and engage in clean up. Ultimately, even if a broader base of Americans is called to register, he believes that the military would draw from essentially the same cohort of individuals (men aged 18 to 25 or so). Ms. James agreed with this and added that she does not see a draft being used for particular skillsets other than, potentially, medical.

Chairman Heck said that in Vietnam, people were drafted for non-combat roles and currently, the military has three people supporting each infantryman, emphasizing that combat replacement has never been the sole purpose of the draft. Vice Chair Wada added that historically, such as in Vietnam, the military did a poor job of using people with needed skills efficiently, for example, by putting those people in combat roles when they would have been more effective elsewhere.

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Mr. Kilgannon also cautioned against conflating military service with other kinds of service, especially if done in the conscription scenario. The idea of a system in which people could proactively volunteer for homeland security projects is not objectionable to him but he has concerns about tying that to a military conscription system. It connects something that is episodic and less risky, with something that should be a more solemn commitment.

Ms. James said that she views the purpose of the military is to execute the nation's military needs and to do it in a way where the outcome that is more lethal for the enemy and with the least number of casualties. Ms. Skelly asked if that described today's military, and Ms. James said she thinks so, and does not see compelling evidence that adding women to the force would make it more lethal. Ms. Skelly asked whether every person added through conscription wind up in a combat position. Ms. James said the Services have not been willing to clarify how they would use conscripts or how women would be used, so it is not possible to know. She expressed concerns as well about the disruption to society and the need for deferments and exemptions, such as around women who are or may be pregnant, and other family-related needs. Vice Chair Wada noted that the SSS Work Group reached apparent consensus on removing deferment and exemptions now and putting that responsibility on Congress as part of enacting draft legislation.

Commissioners discussed further the historical role of the draft and how conscripted individuals were used.

Ms. Haines indicated that she appreciated Ms. James' thoughts on extending registration beyond the existing cohort. Ms. Haines explained that she personally approached this question from a different perspective but that even if she were to focus on the question as framed by Ms. James, as to what would be best strictly from a military "lethality" perspective, extending the registration requirement to women would be warranted in her view. Specifically, she noted that there is evidence of women in the military who are more capable than some men at what might be considered lethal skills and consequently, if the objective is to have the best talent pool to draw from on those particular skills, adding women to the pool could potentially assist in making the military more lethal. Ms. Haines also noted that there are indications that not having women included in the registration requirement is having a negative impact on our national security today, in advance of a national emergency, which gave her pause. For example, the fact that the country only requires men to register is understood by some women at least in part as another indication that the government perceives men as more valuable than women when it comes to defending the nation – which some women has indicated is both disempowering and furthermore a reason not to volunteer to serve in the military. Ms. Haines explained that her first question when faced with a facially discriminatory practice against an historically discriminated group such as women is simply to ask if there is a good reason for making the distinction and in this case, she has not been persuaded that there is a good reason for the different treatment. Ms. Haines noted that while it seems clear there would be deferrals specific to women in light of pregnancy, for example, there is not a reasonable basis for distinguishing between men and women for purpose of registration.

Mr. Kilgannon drew a distinction between women who voluntarily enter military with those that would be conscripted. He explained that he sees men and women differently. Although there

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are women who can outcompete men, those are self-selecting females who want to be there. He has heard different messages from male servicemembers on how working alongside women affects culture. He has heard women say that not registering has made them be viewed as lesser but added that when the government says it has a claim on you and calls you up for military duty, that is an erosion of women. He believes that adding women to registration will ultimately be harmful to them over the course of time in the way we view women and for their equality.

Planning for Final Report Release (Continued)

At 1130 ET, the Commission continued its discussion of the final report release. Commissioners debated the merits of holding an event in Washington, DC, or elsewhere and of inviting outside speakers or not.

Chairman Heck noted that while the Commission need only deliver the report to the SASC and HASC, he wants to deliver a copy to each member's office and ensure copies are available for organizations the Commission has worked with on various issues within its mandate. He noted that within the budget, the Commission will not be able to hold three-to-five release events around the country. He added that the Commission may be able to send one-to-three Commissioners to other events – events hosted by outside organizations, conferences, and the like – but emphasized the importance of setting out what the Commission's goals would be at those events.

Mr. Khazei recommended exploring those possibilities as forums to talk about the recommendations with interested audiences. He recommended having host institutions—for example, the Kennedy Library, the George W. Bush Library, the Clinton Library, and/or the McCain Institute—convene a forum about the Commission's recommendations and invite the panels and handle logistical arrangements. Chairman Heck asked GPE staff to connect with those four institutions and inquire about their principals being available between March and the end of May 2020.

Chairman Heck returned the discussion to the final report release event, expressing a sense that Commissioners supported holding it in Washington, D.C. Further, Commissioners seemed to support the event be structured as a press conference with identified congressional champions and a stakeholder audience, followed by delivery of the report to members of Congress. The Commission would then, in the ensuing two months, hold follow on events, including at least one at a presidential library that the Commission arranges, plus additional events arranged by others, depending on how those possibilities unfold.

Moonshot Discussion (Continued)

At 1215 ET, the Commission continued deliberation to define its moonshot. Dr. Rough circulated a revised discussion document at this time.

Commissioners recommended that the moonshot incorporate a “lifetime of service” concept. They also preferred a more detailed approach reflecting quantitative goals, to a higher-level one expressing general objectives. Commissioners then talked about how to frame the overarching objective to achieve by 2032. Several Commissioners supported looking beyond a “culture of

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service” to the promotion of citizenship and service. Commissioners also examined ways to express this objective in each of the subject matter areas – for example, in public service, improving morale and developing a better talent management culture.

Vice Chair Gearan agreed to work on developing language for the overarching objective.

Executive Session

From 1245 to 1300 ET, Commissioners held an executive session outside the presence of staff, after which they concluded the Commission’s June meeting.

Prepared by Paul Lekas, General Counsel

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