



**SerVermont Commission CNCS Grant Application Review Meeting**  
109 State St, Montpelier, VT 05609  
Fourth Floor Conference Room  
**10 December 2015**  
(Approved 1/21/16)

**Members in Attendance:** Lee White, Justin Morande, Betsy Ward, Jim Coutts, Dan Noyes, Jason Shute, Guy Isabelle, Madeline Strasser, Shelley Park, Sabina Haskell, Thomas Hark, Doug Kievit-Kylar

**Staff in Attendance:** Philip Kolling, Robyn Baylor, Sharon Hearne

**Attended by Phone:** N.A.

**Unable to Attend:** Jason Gosselin, Ryan McLaren, Peter Hayward, Ashley Burke, Lisa Schold, Jacob Bogre, Christy Gallese

**10:00 am Welcome and Introductions**

Phil Koenig, brought the meeting to order at 10:00 AM asking those present to introduce themselves and to say who it is that they represent (and what our favorite holiday tradition was).

**10:20 am Extended Executive Session for Review of CNCS Grant Applications**

Phil took the group into executive session in order to provide commissioners with the opportunity to comment on their review of the 2015 CNCS grant applications. He offered a synopsis of the process clarifying that successful competitive grants are funded for a three-year period. Distinction between Formula-Funded and Competitively-Funded Grants is as follows:

- **Formula Dollars** are provided by the CNCS to State Commissions based on population size with a min of \$600K/state. These monies are leveraged by State Commissions to support AmeriCorps/VISTA programs with applications selected by State Commissions.
- **Competitive Dollars** are provided by the CNCS to State Commissions to support applications/programs compete successfully in a nation-wide CNCS competition.

Phil began the discussion by offering a summary of Background and Statistics (appended). Those assembled elected to begin the review of applications by considering the continuations (those already on a three-year grant: COMP, VHCB, VYDC, ECO). Sharon informed us that she had already conducted site visits for these programs. The question was posed, "Is there any reason why the four applications for continuation should NOT be forwarded to CNCS for consideration"? A **MOTION** was made to submit all four (4) Continuous Program applications to CNCS for their consideration but there was a desire to consider the applications one at a time and to VOTE up or down for each program/application. Pertinent/significant comments are captured below as well as the result of each vote:

**IMPORTANT NOTE: All comments collected during this review process will be forwarded to applicants BEFORE applying to CNCS in order that these comments can be used to strengthen the applications.**

**VHCB:** After a brief discussion, a **MOTION** was made to support the application with the understanding that the applicant will work with Phil and with Sharon to refine and strengthen the application. The **MOTION** carried with one recusal.

**VYDC:** After a brief discussion, a **MOTION** was made to support the application with the understanding that the applicant will work with Phil and with Sharon to refine and strengthen the application. The **MOTION** carried with one recusal.

**ECO:** After a brief discussion, a **MOTION** was made to support the application with the understanding that the applicant will work with Phil and with Sharon to refine and strengthen the application. The **MOTION** carried with one recusal.

**New applications to be considered include the following (NOTE: It was decided to review each application in advance of taking a vote to decide which applications to support or not to support):**

**CEDO:** In year three (3) of a three-year grant cycle, this application is considered a RECOMPETE. Discussion regarding this application was vigorous with commissioners in support of the application and those highly critical of the application. Sharon described past issues with compliance but assured everyone that under new leadership the program now has a corrective action plan and made tremendous strides to improve their performance and compliance. Several pointed out that the program has never been fully enrolled and currently has enrolled but 12 of 22 slots (55% enrollment). The program also has not fully retained members and hasn't spent all program dollars awarded. It was noted that there was no allocation for staff training charged to CNCS (although it was also noted that training in this case could be and might be paid with "other" dollars). Discussion also focused on the unique "need", issues, and clientele served by CEDO – and the desire to ensure that these continue to get addressed/served. It was noted also that the issues dealt with are NOT the "sexy" issues that others get to deal with. There was consensus that the application did NOT make clear just what it was that volunteers did.

**VHEC/VCC/Pathways Program:** Question: Part of School Turnaround & STEM – qualified? No performance record to date. Branding of A\*C (AmeriCorps) in application is a bit understated. Level of Evidence is STRONG for mentoring, BUT less so for the Program itself. Very REAL concern for the fact that full enrollment is 50 members and, to date, none are enrolled.

**LEAP:** There is a new program director (NEKI member/4-H Coordinator for Extension Service). Program Coordinator has been hired (VISTA Leader of Upward Bound). Described as an "Old Ship" sailing in a new direction. Program in a REAP Zone (Good!). It is notable and commendable that the application described the desire to recognize excellence by calling it out and rewarding it. The program is structured with both supervision of both members AND the supervisors themselves. No compliance issues noted.

**VYCC:** This program previously was a recipient of CNCS funding in the early 2000s with a VISTA farm project. The notice priority of Conservation is aligned with Area 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conservation Service Corps. (21CSC). Concern was voiced for 56 hour weeks – is this realistic? VYCC match is impressive. The program has gotten and currently gets Transportation dollars and this be helpful as CNCS works with DOT (because DOT is largely white male dominated, and they get credit for the diversity of VYCC A\*C members).

After review of the new applications the group wrestled with whether all applications should be supported or, whether it was best to put forward only select applications. Betsy expressed that she believed that the CEDO and VHEC applications were not strong enough for submittal. Shelley asked what the downside of supporting/submitting all applications might be (and Phil described how it is that submitting applications known to be non-competitive could hurt consideration of stronger applications). Sabina reminded everyone that programs would all be given opportunity to incorporate the group's recommendations into a revised application. Phil posed that an interim step could be that for those applications not supported by commissioners there could be an opportunity to redraft proposals and resubmit for additional/follow-up review by commissioners. Tom noted that applications have Standards by which they should be judged...and that they should be held to the highest of standards. The point was made that there exist multiple organizations in Chittenden County that provide services to the population(s) served by CEDO (including Partnership for Change, Burlington School District, etc.). Someone suggested that CEDO be considered for formula funding but NOT to forward as a competitive application.

With discussion concluded, a **MOTION** was made to support the applications submitted by **LEAP** and **VYCC** with the understanding that the applicants will work with Phil and with Sharon to refine and strengthen the applications. The **MOTION** carried with one recusal.

The application submitted by the **VHEC/VCC/Pathways Program** was not anticipated to be seen by CNCS as competitive on a national level with very REAL concern for the fact that full enrollment is 50 members and, to date, none are enrolled. Someone hypothesized that the program design may NOT be particularly appealing to young volunteers. A **MOTION** was made to NOT support the application for competitive funding but, rather, to consider the program for funding with formula dollars. The **MOTION** carried unanimously.

Discussion regarding the **CEDO** application included a desire to see more results achieved, a bold new approach to the work, and the possibility of working with other organizations as partners. A **MOTION** was made to hinge potential formula funding support on whether or not the program could achieve targets (such as having 100% enrollment by May 1, 2016) but, instead, was revised to

NOT supporting the application for competitive funding. The **MOTION** carried with one recusal.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "DK-Kylar", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Doug Kievit-Kylar  
Secretary

## APPENDIX: 2015 Grant Review Background and Statistics

### Grants Submitted

ALL					
	\$	MSY	Slots	Cost / MSY	
VHEC	\$ 105,895	11.64	50	\$ 9,098	
VYDC	\$ 325,000	26	26	\$ 12,500	
LEAP	\$ 296,292	21.7	36	\$ 13,654	
VHCB	\$ 368,669	30.01	36	\$ 12,285	
CEDO	\$ 193,552	15.06	24	\$ 12,852	
VYCC	\$ 196,249	15.7	35	\$ 12,500	
ECO	\$ 261,424	20	20	\$ 13,071	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,747,081</b>	<b>140.11</b>	<b>227.00</b>	<b>\$12,279.94</b>	
CONT.					
COMP.					
VHCB	\$ 368,669	30.01	36	\$ 12,285	
VYDC	\$ 325,000	26	26	\$ 12,500	
ECO	\$ 261,424	20	20	\$ 13,071	
	\$ 955,093	76.01	82	\$ 12,619	
Submitted					
FORM.					
VHEC	\$ 105,895	11.64	50	\$ 9,098	
LEAP	\$ 296,292	21.7	36	\$ 13,654	
CEDO	\$ 193,552	15.06	24	\$ 12,852	
VYCC	\$ 196,249	15.7	35	\$ 12,500	
	\$ 791,988	64.1	145	\$ 12,026	
AVAIL	\$ 600,000				
Over ask	\$ 191,988				

### Grant Submission Analysis

	\$ CNCS	MSY	Slots	CNCS		Other \$	Total \$	Total Cost / Mem.	Total Cost / MSY	% CNCS Dollars
				Cost / MSY	Cost / Mem.					
VHEC	\$ 105,895	11.64	50	\$ 9,098	\$ 2,117.90	\$ 37,558.00	\$ 143,453.00	\$ 2,869.06	\$ 12,324.14	74%
VYDC	\$ 325,000	26	26	\$ 12,500	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 364,768.00	\$ 689,768.00	\$ 26,529.54	\$ 26,529.54	47%
LEAP	\$ 296,292	21.7	36	\$ 13,654	\$ 8,230.33	\$ 290,652.00	\$ 586,944.00	\$ 16,304.00	\$ 27,048.11	50%
VHCB	\$ 368,669	30.01	36	\$ 12,285	\$ 10,240.81	\$ 573,885.00	\$ 942,554.00	\$ 26,182.06	\$ 31,408.00	39%
CEDO	\$ 193,552	15.06	24	\$ 12,852	\$ 8,064.67	\$ 173,331.00	\$ 366,883.00	\$ 15,286.79	\$ 24,361.42	53%
VYCC	\$ 196,249	15.7	35	\$ 12,500	\$ 5,607.11	\$ 580,118.00	\$ 776,367.00	\$ 22,181.91	\$ 49,450.13	25%
ECO	\$ 261,424	20	20	\$ 13,071	\$ 13,071.20	\$ 217,130.00	\$ 478,554.00	\$ 23,927.70	\$ 23,927.70	55%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,747,081</b>	<b>140.11</b>	<b>227.00</b>	<b>\$ 12,279.94</b>	<b>\$ 8,547.43</b>	<b>\$2,237,442.00</b>	<b>\$ 3,984,523.00</b>	<b>\$ 19,040.15</b>	<b>\$ 27,864.15</b>	<b>49%</b>

### Enrollment

Current Year Enrollment			
	Slot Awd.	Slots Fill	%
VHCB	36	29	81%
LEAP	38	17	45%
VYDC	26	17	65%
CEDO	22	12	55%
ECO	20	20	100%
VCC	50	0	0%

2014 Enrollment			
	Slot Awd.	Slots Fill	%
VHCB	37	36	97%
NEKI	34	26	76%
VYDC	39	37	95%
CEDO	36	27	75%

#### Last year (2014-15):

- NEKI had \$20,760 unspent, or 9% of their award (\$229,638 [2014-15]). Program was ceased and new LEAP program launched.
- CEDO had \$64,740 unspent, or 26% of their award (\$251,809 [2014-15]). Current award was reduced to \$189,605 for 2015-16.
- VYDC and VHCB spent full award.

#### This year:

- Too early to tell, but current year enrollment is somewhat of a proxy for how they are doing.