Volunteer TN Executive Committee meeting 5-19-25-20250519_160749-Meeting Recording

May 19, 2025, 9:07PM 59m 41s

- Jim Snell started transcription
- OK, I think the recording has started, Terry.
- Terry Silver 0:06 Mm H.
- Js Jim Snell 0:08
 So I think we can go ahead and get started.
- Terry Silver 0:08

All right.

Well, thank you all for being here this afternoon.

We have basically we want to approve our last meeting's minutes and then we want to have a discussion about our Volunteer Tennessee staff and just looking ahead to address anything that might happen in some, maybe just some thoughtful brainstorming on what we can do to be prep.

For that.

So those those are the two things that we need to do today.

All right.

And Jim, I'm sorry. Yes.

Eileen Wollam 0:38

Sounds good.

I'm sorry, I'm just clearing my throat. Sorry.

Terry Silver 0:43

No worries.

Jim, do we need to do a quorum check?

- Jim Snell 0:50
 Yes, I'll do that really quickly.
- Ts Terry Silver 0:51 OK.
- Jim Snell 0:59

 OK, destiny brown.

 Is not on and I don't think she's gonna be able to be on.

 Nathan farner.
- FJ Farnor, Nathaniel James 1:08 Here.
- Js Jim Snell 1:10 Greg Lyles.
- GL Greg Lyles 1:11 Here.
- Jim Snell 1:13

 Betty White.

 Not able to join, sorry I skipped out of order.

 Terry silver.
- Terry Silver 1:20 Here.
- Jim Snell 1:21 Eileen wallam.

- **Eileen Wollam** 1:22 Here.
- Js Jim Snell 1:25 Yvonne wood.
- Ewon Wood 1:26 Here.
- Js Jim Snell 1:28
 And Jessica youngblood.
- Terry Silver 1:31 OK.
- Jim Snell 1:32

And she's not on. And I don't think she's going to be able to join. So you have. Five of the.

7 voting members of the Executive Committee, which constitutes a quorum.

Terry Silver 1:50 OK.

So our next business is to approve a statement of necessity. Is that correct, Jim?

- Js Jim Snell 1:58 Yes. Yeah.
- TS Terry Silver 1:58

OK, all right. Due to scheduling conflicts less than a quorum of Volunteer, Tennessee Commission members is present in person for the meeting today.

So enter Tennessee code annotated section 8-44, Dash 108, the Volunteer Tennessee Commission is allowed to rely on participation of members by electronic or other means to constitute a quorum.

Only upon determination by the Commission that a necessity exists, the Commission

is scheduled to consider time sensitive situations concerning our staff today.

Do I hear a motion to approve the determination of necessity to proceed with the meeting with the quorum to include electronic and phone call participants based on time sensitive matter of today's agenda, including approval of the Minutes and brainstorming around certain?

- Eileen Wollam 2:54
 I still move.
- Ts Terry Silver 2:55
 Thank you, alanine. Josette, I did perfect.

Scenarios that may occur with our staff.

- Farnor, Nathaniel James 2:55 2nd.
- Ewon Wood 2:55 2nd.
- FJ Farnor, Nathaniel James 2:59
 I think, Evan.
 Evan, I think when somebody did.
- Terry Silver 3:04
 Yvonne, was that you? Thank you.
 OK.
 All right.
 So that is.
- Js Jim Snell 3:15 But.
- Terry Silver 3:15
 That goes forward, right?

- Js Jim Snell 3:17
 Well, well, do you want me to do a roll call vote?
- Terry Silver 3:19
 What is that? Yes, I do.
 Jim, please. Thank you.
- Jim Snell 3:22
 OK, OK.
 Yeah, no problem, destiny brown.
 Nathan farner.
- FJ Farnor, Nathaniel James 3:30 Yes.
- Js Jim Snell 3:32 Greg Lyles.
- GL Greg Lyles 3:33 Yes.
- Js Jim Snell 3:35 Terry silver.
- Terry Silver 3:37 Yes.
- Jim Snell 3:38

 Eileen Wallen.

 Eileen, you're muted.

 She's she's muted, but she's giving the thumbs up.

 Yes, she can't get herself off mute.

 I think Yvonne would.

- Evon Wood 4:01 Yes.
- Jim Snell 4:02
 And Jessica Youngblood and the motion carries.
- Terry Silver 4:07 OK.

Thank you.

OK. Our next order of business is to approve the Minutes.

From three 2125, it will take just a minute to look over those minutes.

I believe they were emailed to us.

Does anyone have any?

- Jim Snell 4:28
 - Oh, sorry. I was just gonna say I can put them on the screen if anybody would like to put them on me to put them on the screen, if that.
- Terry Silver 4:34 OK.

Does anybody have any corrections or additions and or do you need to see them on the screen at this time?

OK. Do I hear a motion to approve?

- Farnor, Nathaniel James 4:49
 So moved.
- Terry Silver 4:50 2nd.
- GL Greg Lyles 4:52 2nd.

- Terry Silver 4:53
 Thank you. Jim, would you please do a roll call vote?
- Js **Jim Snell** 4:57 Yes, destiny brown. Nathan farner.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 5:03 Yes.
- Js Jim Snell 5:05 Greg Liles.
- GL Greg Lyles 5:06 Yes.
- Js Jim Snell 5:07 Terry silver.
- Terry Silver 5:08 Yes.
- Jim Snell 5:09
 Eileen, Yvonne Wood, Jessica Youngblen and the motion carries.
- Eileen Wollam 5:11 Yes.
- Ew Evon Wood 5:13 Yes.
- Terry Silver 5:19 K.

Thank you.

Alright, so our next discussion is to talk about worst case scenario with our volunteer

Tennessee staff.

Based on some of the changes that are occurring and that we've already seen with the miracor, so we kind of want to open the floor and talk about you know how we can be prepared if something does happen. And I want to start with Jim, if you'll give. Us any updates that you're aware of?

Of.

That would affect this conversation.

Jim Snell 5:53

Yeah. Well, I think the the main update is as best we can tell.

Through America's service Commissions, which is keeping a close watch on all of this as best they can tell.

Doge has left, physically has left the Ameri Corps Agency.

They believe that the Doge.

Doge employees are still monitoring.

The AmeriCorps Agency activities and communications, etc.

But they're no longer actually physically at the agency as best American Service commissions can tell.

So that's that's one thing that is potentially good that they've left and that potentially that means that.

The the cuts and terminations that they've done already.

Are potentially the only ones that are going to happen, at least for right now.

Terry Silver 7:00 OK.

7:01 7:01

The other thing.

Again, according to ask from the call that they had last week is and we actually there were confirmation from other state service commissions that they are moving forward with awarding the next round of operational funding, so.

I think probably.

Most of you, you all know that we have two main operational grants that provide funding for staff and supplies and travel, etc.

One is our Commission support grant, and that covers most of the staff and most of

our kind of day-to-day overhead, operational expenses and then we have the Commission Investment Fund, which includes salary for one staff and is.

Provides funding for all of our training and technical assistance, both for staff.

Staff Commission members and the programs that volunteer Tennessee funds.

So those are the two grants that according to ask the AmeriCorps agency, is moving forward and actually during that call, several state commissions confirmed that they were getting clarification request from the AmeriCorps agency about those two budgets.

Volunteer Tennessee did not receive any clarification request, but that that doesn't mean anything bad. It just means that.

Potentially they just didn't have any questions for R2 grants.

So that's another good sign that they're moving forward with those and those two budgets start July 1st.

So we're just a couple months away from those.

Two budgets to to start.

So those are the that's the good news.

The the other thing that is potentially good news.

Is the ask.

Relayed that they believe that that commissions can refund the programs that were terminated.

Now we do not have any confirmation from the Mayor Corps Agency about that, but that is what ask believes. So those those programs that we had to had to say goodbye to you last month.

And are kind of in the wings waiting for funding that would start August.

First, ASK believes that we can, that we and all other state commissions can refund those programs.

Terry Silver 9:29

Mm.

Wow.

Jim Snell 9:38

Again, that's their. That's their what they're hearing, but we don't have any kind of written communication or confirmation from the American Agency about that.

- Terry Silver 9:47 OK.
- Jim Snell 9:49

So those are the those are the key updates.

The the only other update that I'll share is that we have not yet received the results of the national competitive funding process.

And you know, we send kind of our our best programs to compete nationally against programs from across the country if they get funded, that money comes directly out of the pockets, so to speak, of the AmeriCorps agency.

And then we have our formula allocation that we then fund the other programs. So we haven't heard about the results of the competitive process and we still don't have our formula allocation for the program year that would begin in August, but according to ask, we should be getting those potentially this week both the competitive.

- Terry Silver 10:39 OK.
- Jim Snell 10:41
 Results and our formula allocation.
- Terry Silver 10:45 OK.

That's all good news. I was waiting for the bomb to drop.

There's no bad news at this moment.

Yeah. Yeah. Not not, not not any.

Not any additional bad news for than what we've already already gotten right.

Ts Terry Silver 10:57
OK.
OK, OK.

Do we have any questions or concerns among this group?

Based on what Jim has told us and what we've seen happen in the past couple of weeks.

G Greg Lyles 11:13

Have you had any contact with those programs that were eliminated or I mean?

Jim Snell 11:20

Yeah, sure.

Yeah, Greg, we, we we have.

I mean, we've been in communication with them to help them to, to exit their members and to close out their contracts and to do their final invoices.

So we've we've had quite a bit of communication back and forth with them.

They're also, apparently.

Some of the programs thought that volunteer Tennessee.

He had a say in which programs were terminated.

Which we did not.

I mean we we got a notification from the AmeriCorps agency with a list of the programs that were terminated, and that was it.

So to kind of settle that question, we sent the actual communication from the AmeriCorps agency with the attached spreadsheet that listed the programs.

You know, just to say, look, this is it.

We had no say in this.

They told us which programs were terminated and we are just implementing it. So that that was a little bit disconcerting that that programs thought that we had a say in it and that that we weren't being open with them about it.

But hopefully by sharing that we've kind of.

Kind of.

Kind of put that question aside.

Terry Silver 12:43

Well, nobody would know unless it was communicated, you know.

Jim Snell 12:47 Sure. Yeah, yeah.

- Ts Terry Silver 12:49
 - Full transparency.
 - I appreciate that you did that.
- Js Jim Snell 12:52

Yeah. And I I think, I mean we we had a call the the day.

- Farnor, Nathaniel James 12:52 Mm hmm.
- JS Jim Snell 12:57

I think it was April the 28th, so that was the Monday after the Friday when we got the e-mail that came at 6:00 PM at night, we had a call that that Monday with the programs that were terminated and I I think that we told them.

That we had gotten a notification from the miracle program telling us which programs.

Had had been eliminated.

- Ts Terry Silver 13:19
 - Mm hmm.
- Jim Snell 13:20

But to be honest, I don't remember.

I mean, I I don't remember what what we said and I don't.

I don't if we recorded that meeting.

So I I thought that we had told him that it wasn't our decision.

- Ts Terry Silver 13:33 Yeah, yeah.
- Js Jim Snell 13:34

Because it wasn't.

But anyway we we've shared it and and hopefully that will kind of quell any kind of doubt about whether or not we had any say in it.

Terry Silver 13:36

Yeah.

Mm hmm.

Well.

Thinking forward in in a scenario where you get a 6:00 e-mail saying.

We're shutting down this, this and this.

Volunteer Tennessee staff. You know what?

What would happen in that scenario?

I mean how would? Well, two questions, #1.

I know, I know that we have to go through the process of getting our ducks in a row, but is is there any?

Is there any funding available for our staff that would give them a certain amount of time, maybe to find something else or to have a little bit of cushion in case something did happen?

Jim Snell 14:35

That's a great question and the answer.

Is kind of.

Terry Silver 14:44 OK.

Jim Snell 14:44

And it it it depends. If we were to get that 6:00 e-mail.

It depends on when it comes.

Because.

We do, in addition to the federal funding for those two operational grants that I mentioned, we have matching state funds for the Commission support grant.

So those two together there, it's about half and half.

So the feds provide about half and the state provides about half.

So we do have those state funds.

The problem if we get that e-mail.

Between now.

And say you know.

Mid early to mid June, we're almost at the end of the state.

Fiscal year, so.

We've pretty much used up just about all of those state funds that there might be a little bit left in there, but not not a whole lot.

- Terry Silver 15:39 OK.
- Js Jim Snell 15:45

If we got that notification after.

After July 1st, the new state year starts afresh and we get we get the new state appropriation.

- TS Terry Silver 15:55 OK.
 - OK.
- Jim Snell 16:00

So we'd have, we'd have about \$460,000 in state appropriations.

That we could use 100% state money as opposed to 5050 federal state. But obviously it you know, it's only half of what we would need to keep the staff running. So it it would and and it also has to cover all the other expenses too like the

rent and the phones and all that kind of stuff.

- Farnor, Nathaniel James 16:20 Mm hmm.
- So we could probably manage a couple months.

Just on state money, as long as, as long as the state was OK with us using that money 100% instead of splitting it 5050.

FJ Farnor, Nathaniel James 16:45 Mm hmm.

- Terry Silver 16:45
 Mm hmm.
- **Jim Snell** 16:46

But it would really only be a couple months like three to four months.

Which is.

Time, certainly.

But it's not.

It's not a ton of time.

- Terry Silver 16:58
 Mm hmm.
- **JS Jim Snell** 16:59

But but again, that's if we get. If we were to get that kind of evening e-mail after July 1st, we would have a cushion of a couple months if we get it, if we get it between now and say, middle.

- Farnor, Nathaniel James 17:04
 Mm hmm.
- **JS Jim Snell** 17:16

June close to the end of June. There's not really any state cushion there.

So we would potentially be in a situation where we would have to wind down things very quickly.

Terry Silver 17:23
Mm hmm.
Hmm.

Jim Snell 17:31

And wind down.

Doesn't necessarily mean.

Laying off staff, I mean it's possible and I've already talked with Adam Jarvis with the

Department of Finance.

Administration about possibilities of maybe moving staff around within finance administration and trying to find places for folks within other state agencies.

F and A can't make any promises.

I mean, they would do their best, but it's unlikely that they would be able to pick up all the staff kinda on short notice.

Terry Silver 18:06

Mm hmm.

OK.

OK.

JS Jim Snell 18:12

They might be able to pick up a couple folks so.

It's not.

It's not something we could really rely on to say that we'll just transfer people over to finance administration.

Terry Silver 18:24 Now.

JS Jim Snell 18:26

Because they, as part of their budget, you know, they also have state funds that are allocated based on the number of staff that work within the department.

And you know, they don't that they can't just absorb.

Well, six, I mean, we've got 7 staff positions, but one of those is vacant.

So they they couldn't necessarily just absorb six staff members.

That easily.

TS Terry Silver 18:59

Right.

Comments. Questions.

Eileen Wollam 19:05
Eileen here. I have a question.

Terry Silver 19:06
Yes.

Eileen Wollam 19:09

The the staff are state employees, so if volunteer Tennessee employees are laid off. Would would they fall under the guidelines that the state has for all staff for notice of layoff, severance.

Pay and any of that stuff.

Jim Snell 19:37

And.

Well, so all of the volunteer Tennessee staff are executive service.

And for those who might not be familiar with how the state works, there are two types of employees.

There's executive service who serve at the at the will of the executive or the governor.

And then there are what are called preferred service that used to be called civil service. But now it's called preferred service.

So the civil service folks have more protection.

In terms of that kind of thing, executive service.

Eileen Wollam 20:14 Hmm.

Js Jim Snell 20:17

Employees really don't have any protections because they'd serve at the pleasure of the executive, and so there's not really there wouldn't be.

Eileen Wollam 20:20

Oh, OK.

Mm H.

Hmm.

Jim Snell 20:31

There wouldn't be severance packages or review, you know, review process or that

kind of thing.

Now I believe that.

Eileen Wollam 20:39 Hmm.

Js Jim Snell 20:40

I believe that staff would be eligible for unemployment because this would be something that would be akin to a layoff.

But.

Terry Silver 20:49 Hmm.

Jim Snell 20:50

There there wouldn't really be a whole lot of process that would be available for staff to to do anything about it.

Eileen Wollam 20:54

Oh, OK.

OK.

That's too bad.

Is there something like?

Like COBRA for continuation of health insurance.

Jim Snell 21:09

Yeah, sure.

Yeah. So yeah.

So staff would be able to do Cobra.

And for for folks, maybe folks are familiar with that.

But if you're not, COBRA essentially allows you to pay out of pocket 100% of your healthcare.

So you can continue your health care plan. I think it's for up to six months I think. And so you you.

You personally have to pay the full price as opposed to, you know, right now the

state pays most of the pretty good chunk of our monthly healthcare. But yeah, staff could could do COBRA Healthcare. Again, I think it's for six months.

- Eileen Wollam 21:59
 OK, good. I know.
 It's good to know.
- Js Jim Snell 22:02 Yeah.
- Eileen Wollam 22:03 Yeah.
- Js Jim Snell 22:03 Yeah.
- FJ Farnor, Nathaniel James 22:05
 Can I ask?

I got lots of questions on even know where to start and to what the end, but so thinking through.

- Eileen Wollam 22:09 Mm hmm.
- FJ Farnor, Nathaniel James 22:15
 The Commission is established by executive order at the state level, right?
- Js Jim Snell 22:21 Mm hmm.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 22:22

 But receives a significant amount of funding, of course, from the federal level.

 So assuming that we were to lose, whether in full or in some large capacity.

- Js Jim Snell 22:26 Mm hmm.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 22:33

The some of the dollars that actually help the Commission operate to either of the grants.

What level of work must still continue to happen?

Per executive order, anything right?

Or does it die with the funding right?

Because whether we're funded or not.

We were created at the state level.

Is that is my question.

Make sense?

Like, how do we get what work must continue to happen as outlined at the state level with or without funding that we then just have to figure out what does that look like?

Js Jim Snell 22:56

Yeah, yeah, yeah, sure.

Yeah. Well, really the only thing that's in the executive order is that the Commission must meet at least twice a year.

- Farnor, Nathaniel James 23:18 OK.
- Js Jim Snell 23:19

So the Commission itself, by executive order, would still have to meet. Now that that could be virtually, I mean it wouldn't necessarily have to be in person.

- FJ Farnor, Nathaniel James 23:30 Mm hmm.
- Js Jim Snell 23:32
 So it could be done at relatively low cost.

And I I'd have to go back and double check.

To see I mean the other things that are in the executive order are things that are specifically that that the Commission must do, are things that are related to the AmeriCorps program so that you know that it says that the Commission, you know, will submit the applications for.

- FJ Farnor, Nathaniel James 23:53 Mm hmm.
- Terry Silver 23:54
 Mm hmm.
- Jim Snell 24:00

 The formula funding and provide training and technical assistance etc etc. But if all of that.
- GL Greg Lyles 24:05 What?
- Js Jim Snell 24:07 Federal funding goes away, then.

Or or if the.

Commission. Well, I don't know.

That's a good question.

I'm not sure what would happen if the AmeriCorps programs themselves continue to get funding, but the Commission doesn't.

Because.

- FJ Farnor, Nathaniel James 24:24
 Who does the work?
- Jim Snell 24:25
 There are. Yeah. Yeah. Right there there are.

- Farnor, Nathaniel James 24:25 Yes. Who does the work?
- Terry Silver 24:27 Mm hmm.
- JS Jim Snell 24:28

There are some requirements in there for the Commission to do things.

And those are those are both.

Those are both require within the executive order and with within.

Federal statute commissions are required to do that.

So who would do it is a good question.

Now the other thing is that I mean the executive order does say that the Department of Finance Administration shall provide administrative support and staff to the Commission.

So, you know, I think finance administration would have to.

In order to honor that part of the executive order would have to provide at least.

Some support now, obviously it wouldn't.

It wouldn't be 7 full time people.

- Farnor, Nathaniel James 25:20 Yeah.
- Terry Silver 25:20 Right.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 25:21
 Probably the the as required right would be my assumption. It would be what's needed in order to accomplish that. Yeah, Yep.
- Js Jim Snell 25:24 Yeah, right.

Yeah, yeah, I mean it. It it could potentially be like added on to someone else's work

responsibilities that they do.

Kind of as a 1/4 of their time or something.

Farnor, Nathaniel James 25:36

Yeah. So so the the 460 ish four 54160 thousand in state dollars that we get the match dollars.

Where are those dollars coming from?

Are those a line item budget at the state level or those from FNA or those in the governor's office? Where are those dollars at?

Jim Snell 25:53

They are a line item.

Within the within the appropriations and within the governor's budget and then within the appropriations under the Department of Finance Administration, there's a line for Volunteer Tennessee that includes the seven staff positions and the state funds that go along with with that.

Farnor, Nathaniel James 26:07

OK.

So in theory, should the, let's say the federal dollars are no more and those are zeroed out.

Js Jim Snell 26:21

Mm hmm.

Farnor, Nathaniel James 26:22

The just the state portion, I'm thinking more long term even beyond like our current staff, right?

Js Jim Snell 26:26 Yeah. Yeah, sure, yeah.

Farnor, Nathaniel James 26:26

Like let's say.

For years, going forward, are those dollars? Do they only exist in order to meet the

match, or is there some expectation that we could at least ask to continue keeping our 460,000 state dollars? And we now just have a new budget model that we. Have to navigate right in terms of.

Jim Snell 26:42

Yeah, sure.

Yeah. Well, I mean I, yeah.

Farnor, Nathaniel James 26:45

Any sense?

Yeah.

Js Jim Snell 26:46

Oh yeah. Yeah, sure.

I think the Commission could certainly ask to continue to get that funding. Now again, it's it's only half of the cost, so.

- Farnor, Nathaniel James 26:55 Mm hmm.
- Js Jim Snell 27:00

And.

Some some of the overhead expenses like the the, the phones and the computers and the space.

- Farnor, Nathaniel James 27:04 Mm hmm.
- Js Jim Snell 27:12

Those would be ratcheted back.

In a proportional way to, if there you know if there was a significant reduction in staff.

FJ Farnor, Nathaniel James 27:20 Mm hmm.

Jim Snell 27:22

And some of the other overhead expenses would probably also be proportionally reduced, but you know the the some of the some of the cost are like the financial cost that we pay to the office of Business and finance to do the work that they do that.

Would if the programs continue.

They they charge us based on a the number of transactions that they do.

So if we're, if we're still, if we still have programs and they're still the programs are still getting paid and we're still doing all that work.

Those costs would probably remain pretty much the same.

And and those are the largest overhead, kind of indirect expenses that we have for volunteer Tennessee is paying for those financial accounting services.

- Farnor, Nathaniel James 28:16
 Schedule.
- Jim Snell 28:17

So that we probably wouldn't see a whole lot of savings there.

Some of the other things we would see some savings.

Again, proportional to the number of staff, because a lot of those things are based on a head count.

- Terry Silver 28:23 ls.
- Jim Snell 28:28

 And so if you if you have three staff instead of seven, you're getting charged for three.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 28:35 Mm hmm.
- Js Jim Snell 28:36 Instead of seven.

So you know, with the state funding alone, there would be I think there would probably be enough money to continue with a couple staff. I haven't done the numbers exactly.

Need to figure out to to do that.

Proportional for the things that are proportional and the the things that aren't proportional to see exactly, but it probably would be maybe two, maybe three staff with just the state funding alone.

Farnor, Nathaniel James 29:03

Mm hmm.

OK.

That's helpful.

And I assume that and I think that's helpful for obviously it sounds horrible that we even have to have this conversation.

But of course, where my head goes is, let's say in a worst case scenario, that was to happen and we're able to hang on to at least a good chunk of our state dollars, right?

Jim Snell 29:11

Sure.

Mm hmm.

Farnor, Nathaniel James 29:23

What does our new staffing model look like, right?

I mean, assuming there's an executive director and maybe.

One or two more people.

What are their new jobs?

Jim Snell 29:33 Mm hmm.

Farnor, Nathaniel James 29:34

Right. Everybody's capacity.

Obviously, people are gonna have their hands in a lot more buckets because it takes,

yeah. So just trying to think through like, what are those priority areas, right. Megan, I hate to even ask that question, but I'm like, assuming, yeah, I don't know.

Jim Snell 29:43

Mm hmm.

Sure.

Farnor, Nathaniel James 29:50

And again, we won't know until those things happen.

But I'd hate. I would rather try to figure out some of those things now as a worst case scenario and not when we've got a week's notice, right.

- Terry Silver 29:55
 Thank you.
- Js Jim Snell 29:56

Yeah.

Right, Yvonne?

Do you want me to answer that question or do you want to, OK.

So. So I'll tell you based on other state commissions that have smaller staff than us because they have less americor money.

Because the amount of formula money that we get for the miracle program is based on a population formula, which is why it's called formula money to begin with.

And Tennessee is kind of in the middle.

It's a it's an average size state, so we get an average amount of formula funding. But there are a bunch of small states that don't get a whole lot of formula money. A lot of those states have 3234 staff members.

And in that in those situations.

Their staff, including a lot of times the executive director themselves.

Are doing the portfolio management of the MIRACOR programs. So the day-to-day support of the programs, making sure invoices get paid and processed for payment, providing training and technical assistance.

Doing the contracts, you know, doing the the grants management stuff on the federal side of things.

So those are those are kind of the priorities that I would see if we were to have a

significantly reduced staff in terms of the federal side.

Now the other.

The other part.

You know, in terms of the things that I think would be valuable for the Commission to keep doing if we could, if we find ourselves in this situation, the things that I think we should continue to try and do, if we can, you know.

- Terry Silver 31:43 Mm hmm.
- Jim Snell 31:47
 The governor's Volunteer Stars Awards it it is a state, has a statewide impact.
- Terry Silver 31:50 Hmm.
- Js Jim Snell 31:55 And.

Could I think be done?

With less staff involvement than what we've done in the past, I mean, we would have. I think we could probably trim that back a little bit, but I think it's worthwhile to keep doing.

The other thing that I think would be worthwhile to keep doing.

But it's costly.

Is the statewide volunteer portal.

Because right now, volunteer Tennessee is paying about \$70,000 a year for that system.

And that covers the statewide portal for the parts of the state that don't have a volunteer center.

And then I think 11 sub sites for like hands on Nashville volunteer Memphis, the Volunteer Center in Chattanooga, the the larger metropolitan areas.

All have a subsite that feeds into that statewide site.

But you know, realistically we would have to come up with with more money because that \$70,000, I mean that that's a pretty good chunk of the 4/4/60.

So we would have to figure out funding to come from somewhere else for that.

Then the other thing that.

I think would be nice to continue if we could figure out.

Is the conference.

Terry Silver 33:21 Mm hmm.

Jim Snell 33:22

But again, that that would potentially look quite different than what it looks like right now, because we fairly heavily subsidized that conference with federal funds because it's part of our overall strategy for providing training and technical assistance for the field at large.

And so the registration that people are paying.

Covers about 1/4 of the actual cost.

And the rest is picked up by volunteer Tennessee and also through sponsors and that kind of thing.

So we'd have to pretty significantly think about how we how we do that to be able to maintain that in a way that's would be financially feasible.

So, Yvonne, you had your your hand up.

Ewon Wood 34:17

And you actually touched on two of the things that I was gonna ask about.

I don't know if it would be a significant savings or if it's even doable, but I'm thinking about the staff.

Is there any way that you guys can go like 100% remote?

Would that be any type of savings? Or would you even be able to do what you need to do in that facet? And then the second thing was how?

What does that mean for the annual conference and the award?

And you've already mentioned how we're and I feel the same way. I would like to keep that, but I don't know if even if we were to cut those or limit those or change those, if it would be enough of a savings to warrant doing it.

Terry Silver 34:48 Hmm.

Mm hmm.

Mm hmm.

Jim Snell 35:04

Yeah

So.

So we're already pretty much 100% remote.

In fact, we've got, you know, Candace lives in Memphis. Anthony lives in Greenville. And and I'm in the office right now. But I'm. I'm here because we're having a meeting and to provide a public space in case a member of the public wants to show up. I'm here. Nobody did.

But but I'm here.

So. So we're already remote.

So that wouldn't really provide us any cost savings again, what would provide cost savings would be, you know dropping that headcount from 7:00 to say 3.

We would, because again, like for example the space, even though we don't really use space, there is space available for staff.

If they want to come into the office.

It's it's, it's not assigned to them, so it's what they call free free address.

So you just come in and you find a space and you set up for the day, and then you pack up and leave at the end of the day and take all your stuff with you.

So, but that's based on a head count.

So you know we we get charged proportionately to the number of staff.

You know our computers, obviously that's based on the number of staff.

Phones based on the number of staff.

So again, we would.

We would see some savings, but it's actually wouldn't really change whether we're in person or virtual doesn't really change that a whole lot.

I'm sorry.

Terry Silver 36:52 Mm hmm.

Jim Snell 36:54

I think you asked something else that I'm not sure that I that I touched on.

Ewon Wood 36:57

Yeah. Well, it was about the conference and the awards and I would love to keep them, but I don't know how we could shave enough money off and still have what they are to even count.

Jim Snell 36:59

Yeah.

Hmm.

Terry Silver 37:05 Mm hmm.

Js Jim Snell 37:09

Yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah, yeah.

Well, so the so the yeah, I mean we could we can get into it a bit more.

The governor's Volunteer Stars Awards typically brings in more.

More money.

Than the conference in terms of sponsorships.

And you know well ads, but.

Those kinds of things.

We still subsidized the cost of it using.

Our our Commission support grant funds, because it's it's an important project of the Commission.

But yeah, I mean, it would have to.

It would have to.

Either we would have to get a lot more sponsors.

To do the event the way we've been doing the event because the event is, I mean, that's really the the cost of the governor's Volunteer Stars awards.

I mean other than the staff time, the event itself is the primary cost for that.

So I mean, we could.

We could not provide food, which is the largest expense for that event. That would save a lot of money.

We could look for cheaper options for.

Where we held it.

You know.

So if we could find a place that was not as expensive.

Although the Franklin Marriott actually comps the space, so they give us the space for free because we are spending money on the hotel rooms and the food. And as long as we meet food and beverage minimums for the for the governor's Volunteer Stars awards and the.

Terry Silver 39:00 Mm hmm.

JS Jim Snell 39:06

Conference combined because they're Co located and it's the same. It's in terms of the hotel.

It's the same event.

For us, it's two different events. For for them it's it's all together as long as we meet our food and beverage minimums, they don't actually charge us for the space.

Terry Silver 39:24

Jim Snell 39:24

So so if we if we tried to save money by not having food, we'd have to, we would have to move it somewhere else.

Otherwise, we'd get charged for the space and we wouldn't really be saving anything. So but but that is a possibility.

The first couple years we actually held it here at at the Tennessee Tower.

There's a fairly large.

Meeting room.

I don't know if it would really be big enough to hold the number of people that have been showing up lately, but you know, we could potentially manage and there might be other state facilities that we could potentially use that wouldn't cost us anything. Or that would be a much lower cost, so we could potentially save save money in a couple ways.

There. But again, the food is is the biggest cost of that event.

Ts Terry Silver 40:26

And we did.

One year we had a virtual conference that could that could be an option if we wanted to continue.

- Jim Snell 40:31 Yeah.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 40:32 No.
- Jim Snell 40:34

Yeah, well, we had the virtual conference and we did the governor's Volunteer Stars awards virtually that year too, because that was COVID when everything was shut down.

Terry Silver 40:35

The conversation.

We did.

Yeah.

Jim Snell 40:43

So yeah, that those are possibilities to have a virtual conference.

- Terry Silver 40:45 Mm hmm.
- JS Jim Snell 40:48

You know, we could also consider a one day conference instead of a 1 1/2 day conference.

- Terry Silver 40:52 Love you.
- Js Jim Snell 40:55 I mean, there's a variety of ways where we could.
- Terry Silver 40:55
 Mm hmm.
- Jim Snell 40:58

 Trim the cost a little bit.

 Umm.

So yeah, the the other thing again would be.

A to try and maintain a semblance of what we've done in the past with some cost savings would be to do more fundraising and sponsorships and looking to get more money coming in. That's not state money.

- Farnor, Nathaniel James 41:22 Mm H.
- Js Jim Snell 41:29

 And to kind of help with some of that federal money that could potentially go away.
- FJ Farnor, Nathaniel James 41:34 So the the two. Yeah, go ahead, Terry.
- Terry Silver 41:34 I wonder.

Well, I was thinking about our Rd. show and I'm wondering if this is something that we could.

Approach with with any sponsors that we find to help with you know that are involved with the road show.

Maybe that's something we could talk with them about.

Farnor, Nathaniel James 41:54

Yeah, potentially.

No, I'm kind of in the same place. I'm. I'm pulling that up a little bit more on the money side.

I know we're talking a lot about how do we save costs.

How do we cut costs?

- Terry Silver 42:05 OK.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 42:05
 You know, how do we prioritize? Also the other flip of the coin though, right, is how do we get more money, right?
- Terry Silver 42:06
 Thank you.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 42:12
 So it's not just at some point it's like you can only cut so many bills, right?
 It's like you just need more money to cover the bills.
- Jim Snell 42:16 Yeah, right.

Farnor, Nathaniel James 42:18

So the two things that come to mind, one arm or one is I think to your point, Terry, and I think this is something.

Eileen, maybe we and the friends folks can brainstorm.

But if there's ever a time to really try to put the fire on, trying to really fundraise, I mean right? I mean, it's now or never, right?

The time has come where, for those dollars matter.

So really trying to think through.

How we?

Strategize around this moment right and and in fact, there's a lot of entities and a lot of people. That, of course are.

- Terry Silver 42:48
 Thank you.
 Mm hmm.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 42:53 I mean, I'm just saying.

All of the posts and all of the messaging and all of the news coverage that is happening across the state and the country. But it's been for our purposes in the state of people that are very disappointed that that they're that with the funding cuts and they're very.

Disappointed to see that AmeriCorps being slashed chair, and they're very disappointed to see this cut over here, right?

And if if some of those entities are entities that are willing to put their dollars behind helping to salvage some of those things, we I think need to be brainstorming how we how we navigate that and how we give them.

- Terry Silver 43:19
 Yeah.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 43:24

To do that, right? Are you upset about this and you really care about it? Are you in a place where you're willing and able to give and not everyone is? And that's OK. But if you are an entity or a person that really values these programs, right?

- Terry Silver 43:32 Mm hmm.
- Eileen Wollam 43:33 Mm hmm.

- Farnor, Nathaniel James 43:36
 I think about Americor alumni. I think about some of those entities, right?
- Terry Silver 43:40 Yeah.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 43:40

How do we really intentionally say like, hey, now's the time, right?

If you if you've got the ability and the desire, and you value these programs, please be willing to to throw in some support, right?

So I think there's something there that maybe is worth exploring.

And I think, Commissioners, I know we always struggle with getting Commissioners to donate.

- Terry Silver 43:54 Mm hmm.
- Eileen Wollam 43:59
 I was gonna mention that.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 43:59

But.

Yeah. So I think that that's a factor.

The other thing is.

Knowing some of the catalysts behind a lot of these cuts across the board at the federal level, at least, the public catalyst is, you know, the public kind of talking points from Doge.

Are we want to give some of this power and this spending and this prioritization back to the states, the States, this, the states that, yada yada, yada yada, whether or not I agree with that, that's the that's the logic that's being thrown around right is giving giving some.

Ts Terry Silver 44:29 Mm.

Farnor, Nathaniel James 44:30

Of this, back to the States and putting it back on the states to do some of the work. That's the logic that has been publicized a lot at the federal level, both from the administration and from Doge proper.

And I'm wondering if.

There's value in us also having that conversation at the state level, right? Like at this moment in time I are, are we tied to only getting \$460,000 from the state?

- Terry Silver 44:57
 Mm hmm.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 44:57 I don't know.
- Evon Wood 44:58
 I'm so glad that you said that because I'm sitting here thinking we're the volunteer state.
- FJ Farnor, Nathaniel James 44:59 Right. Like if there's a time to ask.
- **Ewon Wood** 45:03 That's what we're known for.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 45:03
 Yeah.
 Exactly if there's a.
- Terry Silver 45:04
 That's right.
- Ewon Wood 45:05
 I mean, can we not is there?
 Is there not?

Is there not a mechanism for us to request a higher amount?

How does that work?

Jim, can we not request or or prompt or meet with whomever to get that amount raised?

Js Jim Snell 45:17

Yeah, yeah, sure.

So so yes, I mean the Commission could ask for for more funds in the governor's budget and or directly from the General Assembly.

So I think probably all of you know how this works, but each year the government the governor presents his governor's budget to the General Assembly.

Then the General Assembly takes it up and they do.

To all the meetings and then they do the appropriations.

And and usually the the appropriated budget is pretty close to the governor's budget. In most ways. I mean, sometimes they add more money here or take some money away here or there, but generally they're pretty aligned.

So we could ask for more money.

In the state budget, now part of the problem is that the next state fiscal year. Begins in a couple months and so.

It would.

It would be difficult to get more state money.

For July 1 of this year, because they've already done the appropriations and I mean the General Assembly is is gone.

They they they're not going to come back in session just to give us more money. So essentially what's been appropriated right now for volunteer Tennessee?

Terry Silver 46:46 Yeah.

Jim Snell 46:53

Is what's going to be available for the the entire next state fiscal year.

Here.

But the Commission could request, as part of the annual budgeting process, each state agency.

Puts forward their request that goes to their department.

Their department then shares that with the Budget Office. The Budget Office takes all those requests and generates the governor's budget.

So through that executive branch process.

We could request more money now. It would have to go through a couple steps to actually get in the governor's budget, but that's that's possibility.

But then again, I mean the the Commission could, through just directly approaching the General Assembly, say, you know, please give us more money than what's in the governor's budget. I mean that that that's also a possibility.

That, that, that could potentially create some friction with the the administration for a Commission to be asking for more money.

Money than what's in the budget.

But but it is something that that the Commission could do.

I I think though I mean if if we are in the situation where we're trying to do this kind of thing, we would I think go through the state budgeting process 1st to see where that comes out. At least that would be my recommendation before trying to appro. The General Assembly directly.

- Ts Terry Silver 48:26 Good.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 48:26
 I feel like now I mean it again. It doesn't solve the July one problem right.
 This wouldn't help us for the next year and we've got and hopefully we won't need it, but thinking long term, I feel like now's the time.
- Js Jim Snell 48:31 Yeah, right.
- FJ Farnor, Nathaniel James 48:38

I mean we if we've demonstrated anything, it's that we need to be planning not just not just one step ahead but like 12 steps ahead, right. And and some of these initiatives that that people are really leaning, you know we talked about want to salvage the the G.

- Terry Silver 48:43 Yeah.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 48:53

As really important to us.

We've talked about the statewide volunteer management portal, which is directly tied to the, you know, First Lady's office.

Granted, she will not be in that position for much longer, but right. It's like several of these initiatives that people are really relying on that have been uplifted and supported by the state are some of the things potentially that if we lose funding are gonna have to either.

Get cut, or at least significantly scaled back, right?

So even being able to step up and say, hey, maybe it's not even, you know, meet the full other \$400,000 match.

Maybe that's not the ask, but if we could even get another hundred or another 200 right?

- Terry Silver 49:29 Yes. Yeah.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 49:29

So I definitely think as we think from our, when I think about day on the Hill and I think about and again maybe that's not quite the right Ave. but trying to just think through over this next year as we go into our state Service plan as we.

Go into all of these prioritizing for the next upcoming year. I feel like funding needs to be a part of that conversation.

I think historically it's mainly been focused on programming.

But programming is irrelevant if you don't have the dollars.

- Terry Silver 49:52 Yeah.
- FJ Farnor, Nathaniel James 49:55
 To go with it right?

- Terry Silver 49:56
 That's right.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 49:57

So I think I think we should be having that conversation.

The worst thing we get to know, and we're back to where we're at.

But we're not in worse shape, right?

I mean, we have what we have.

Terry Silver 50:04

Yeah.

Well, we're. We're at 2 minutes before 5 and I want to respect everyone's time.

And I know Eileen's got her hand up.

I do want to know how the staff is doing.

And and I don't.

I don't know if you're having conversations about things that are happening, but I just want to know how how that's playing out for the staff.

JS Jim Snell 50:28

Yeah, yeah. I mean, we're we're continuing to meet on a regular basis.

I mean I I think the the staff is concerned obviously about what's happening.

Terry Silver 50:35 Yes.

Js Jim Snell 50:38

I've done my best to try and give them my honest assessment of where I think things are probably gonna go, which is I think that we're gonna be OK with our our operational grants, I think, but also making sure that they understand that.

Until Doge is completely done.

You know, I can't promise them that we're going to be OK.

Terry Silver 51:04
Yeah.

- JS Jim Snell 51:05
 - So so I think they are understandably concerned and will continue to be concerned until all of this until Doge has completely moved on and is no until we get our until we get our money.
- Terry Silver 51:10 Yes.
- Jim Snell 51:21

I think everybody's gonna still be a little bit concerned.

Fortunately though.

Again, that those new grants, the grant period starts July 1, so they're going to have to be awarding those grants pretty soon.

- Terry Silver 51:39
 Mm hmm.
- Js Jim Snell 51:40

At the federal level.

Just so that they're in the federal grants are in place for the start date.

- Terry Silver 51:48 Mm hmm.
- Jim Snell 51:48

So we're going to know within the next couple weeks, I think with certainty whether or not the operational money is there.

Now that that doesn't mean that this conversation shouldn't continue.

And like Nathan said, we it's like now's the time to be planning for the future.

Ts Terry Silver 52:01

Yeah.

Mm hmm.

- Js Jim Snell 52:06
 - So I think everybody's OK but concerned.
- Terry Silver 52:09
 Yes. Thank you, Eileen.
 You got your hand up.
- Jim Snell 52:11 Yeah.
- Eileen Wollam 52:14

Yes. So I think my my question is I think pretty basic.

Should the worst happen.

Which is that all federal funding goes away.

All the programs are terminated.

All the everything you know, support grant. Everything goes away.

Can we?

Can we?

Do do we have to?

Plead with the governor's office or with the state to continue what's now considered a match.

Is, you know like is, is. Is there a given that state funding will stay with us and that we might be able to do, you know state oriented things like the gdsa, the conference, the portal or would we have to make a presentation that?

At that point and say, OK, well, the original, you know, the original purpose to, you know, be this conduit for for federal funds that's gone.

But we have all this other stuff that that we do in the state that's really worthwhile, you know.

Will you please consider continue to fund us? Is that something that we're gonna have to do?

Jim Snell 53:42

Assessment is that yes, if all of the federal funds, all of it, were to go away, that the

Commission would probably have to make a case as to why it needed to continue to get that money.

Eileen Wollam 53:44 Hmm.

Jim Snell 53:54

I mean, I think fortunately we're in the volunteer state, that's volunteer Commission. So I think there's a pretty good argument to continue, you know, to continue the governor's Volunteer Stars awards to continue the the statewide portal to continue the conference to continue.

The corporate social purpose.

Work to continue the the award of excellence for schools.

I mean, we've got a bunch of programs that don't have anything to do with AmeriCorps, and I think there's there is a good argument to continue those things.

Eileen Wollam 54:20 Right.

Jim Snell 54:29

Now how much money we could convince?

The administration and the General Assembly to give to the Commission is another story, but I I think I think the Commission would have to make that argument, but I think there's a pretty good argument.

To be made.

Ts Terry Silver 54:44 Good, good.

Eileen Wollam 54:46

I think that, you know, conceivably.

Maybe one of the things that we wanna put into our our plan.

Is to put together a document or a slideshow or presentation of some kind that encapsulate encapsulates all the things that we do for the state.

That would justify the continuation of our existence, even without federal funding. For anything.

- Terry Silver 55:17 Hmm.
- Js Jim Snell 55:18 Hmm.
- Terry Silver 55:18
 Good point.

Very good point, Eileen.

Any other comments, questions that we're at 5:03 and I want to respect your evening.

- Eileen Wollam 55:27 Hmm.
- Terry Silver 55:31

 Jim, do we have any requests for public comment questions?
- Js Jim Snell 55:37
 No, we did not get a request.
- Terry Silver 55:39 OK.

Well, we do need to continue to have a conversation. I know we've got the road show that maybe we can discuss some ways that we can talk about, you know, reminding people that we do need money and then a friends, a volunteer too, with the fundraising. So we.

Farnor, Nathaniel James 55:50 Mm hmm.

- Eileen Wollam 55:56 Hmm.
- Terry Silver 55:59

 We definitely need to continue to have a conversation and maybe we need to meet again as we're walking this tightrope up to July 1st. If we could just.
- Eileen Wollam 56:07 Mm hmm.
- Terry Silver 56:08

 Keep those outside out the door.
- **EW Eileen Wollam** 56:11 Yeah.
- Terry Silver 56:12

 Moving forward, you know that's my hope.

 And so thanks for the encouragement, Jim, that you gave us.
- Js Jim Snell 56:17 Yeah.
- **Ew Eileen Wollam** 56:17 Yeah.
- Terry Silver 56:18

 Any other comments questions.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 56:20

 If if I can throw out there, this is not something we have to talk about right now.

 But maybe something, Jim, if you've in your all of your free time.

 That I know you don't have.

 Are if there's any opportunity even to some quick looking to see if other state service

commissions have any kind of additional revenue streams outside of right? Like I am thinking back to corporate social purpose and the conversation we had with Eileen, I think it was either maybe last.

- Terry Silver 56:38 Hmm.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 56:47
 Week, you know, around funding and.

And of course, those people are going to be paying dues, right, as as there and I think Eileen brought up the point of, you know, is there, you know, when I think about some of these programs and the staff that's supporting them as potentially being the ones that.

- Eileen Wollam 56:54
 Mm H.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 57:03

 Are on the chopping block.

Is there a way to utilize some of the funds from those things to actually help offset the overhead right?

So is there some opportunities to generate some revenue and you know some membership models some you know?

- Terry Silver 57:11
 Yeah.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 57:17

I'm a fan of keeping everything free, but I also know in our current.

Climate it's not always possible if we want to continue to offer the services, so something worth asking, right?

Are there some innovative, creative things that others are doing that is creating money?

So that's the question.

- **EW Eileen Wollam** 57:32 Yeah, it would be, it would.
- Jim Snell 57:32 Yeah.
- Eileen Wollam 57:34

It would be interesting to see too if other if other commissions have a dues model 'cause we have, you know we've we've given Commission members ample opportunity.

To to donate they they get the link all the time and you know just small dollar amounts. You know, \$5.00 a month or so.

You know.

It adds up.

- Terry Silver 58:03
 Yeah.
- Eileen Wollam 58:05 And you know, I would.
- Terry Silver 58:05 Yeah.
- EW Eileen Wollam 58:06

I would love to see that happening because we I know that even you know before when Donovan was was heading up friends. He tried all kinds of things, contests and all kinds of things to get Commission members to.

To donate a bit and we haven't had a whole lot of luck with that.

Terry Silver 58:30

Yeah. Well, thank you guys for your time and sounds like we've got some work to do and some funds to raise.

- **Eileen Wollam** 58:38 Yeah, yeah.
- Farnor, Nathaniel James 58:40
 Thank you.
 Thank you for pulling this together in a fairly timely manner.
- **Eileen Wollam** 58:42 Yeah. Thank you. Appreciate it. Yeah.
- FJ Farnor, Nathaniel James 58:43
 So it was very educational. So this is good.
- Ts Terry Silver 58:43
 Yes.
- Eileen Wollam 58:46 Yeah.
- Terry Silver 58:46
 Yes, definitely.
 OK.
 I guess that's it for us.
- Eileen Wollam 58:51 OK.
- Terry Silver 58:52

 Do I have a motion to adjourn?
- Eileen Wollam 58:55
- Terry Silver 58:56

Thank you, Eileen.
We don't need a second right, Jim?

- Js Jim Snell 59:01
 You need a second, but not a vote.
- Ts Terry Silver 59:03
 Oh, I need a second.
- **Ewon Wood** 59:05 2nd.
- Terry Silver 59:06
 Thank you, Yvonne.
 All right.
 Everybody have a great evening and we will see you soon.
- Eileen Wollam 59:12
 OK, talk to you soon. Bye bye.
- **Ewon Wood** 59:13 Thank you for all you do, Jim. We appreciate you.
- Js Jim Snell 59:13
 Thanks everybody. Bye.
- Terry Silver 59:14
 Thank you.
- JS Jim Snell 59:14
 Thank you all.
 Appreciate you.
 Thank you so much.

- Terry Silver 59:17
 Bye bye.
- **Eileen Wollam** 59:18 Aye.
 - Jim Snell stopped transcription