



NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MILITARY, NATIONAL, AND PUBLIC SERVICE

Public Minutes of November 2017 Commission Meeting

The National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service (the Commission) held a meeting on November 16-17, 2017. The meeting occurred at the Commission's offices at 2900 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA 22202. The meeting concerned organizational and other pre-decisional and deliberative matters and was closed to the public pursuant to Public Law 114-328, section 554(b)(3). The Commissioners agreed to make the following version of the minutes available to the public.

Attendance

Commissioners present:

- Mr. Edward T. Allard III
- Mr. Steve Barney
- The Honorable Janine Davidson (11/17 only)
- The Honorable Mark Gearan (arrived at 1340 on 11/16)
- Ms. Avril Haines (11/16 only)
- The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck
- Ms. Jeanette James (except for early part of 11/17)
- Mr. Alan Khazei
- Mr. Thomas Kilgannon (by telephone on 11/17)
- Ms. Shawn Skelly
- The Honorable Debra Wada

Others present:

- Kent Abernathy, Executive Director
- Paul Lekas, General Counsel
- Gregory Brinsfield, Director of Operations (present intermittently)
- Rachel Rikleen, Deputy General Counsel (present intermittently)
- Yolanda Hands, Operations Program Manager
- Peter Morgan, Deputy Director of Operations (present intermittently)
- Jill Rough, incoming Director of Research and Analysis
- Keri Lowry, incoming Director of Governmental and Public Engagement (present for portion of 11/17)

- LTC Marc Austin, OUSD(P&R), Office of Manpower & Reserve Affairs (present for portion of 11/16)

November 16, 2017 Session

At approximately 0900, Chairman Heck called the meeting to order. The Chairman then moved to make the meeting closed to the public because it would address pre-decisional and organizational matters. All Commissioners present agreed.

Approval of Minutes

The Chairman led a discussion about the proposed minutes for the Commission's October 2017 meeting. Following this discussion, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the October 2017 minutes as amended.

Administrative Update

Mr. Abernathy provided an update on the Commission staff. He informed the Commission that individuals had been selected for the positions of Director of Research and Analysis and Director of Governmental and Public Engagement. He provided an update on the hiring process and office setup, and then reviewed the agenda for this month's meeting. Mr. Abernathy introduced Jill Rough, who was selected to serve as Director of Research and Analysis.

Operations Update

Mr. Brinsfield introduced Commissioners to two new staff members: Peter Morgan, Deputy Director of Operations; and Yolanda Hands, Operations Program Manager. Mr. Brinsfield then briefed Commissioners on the status of operations.

Legal Update & Ethics Training

Mr. Lekas introduced Rachel Rikleem, the Commission's new Deputy General Counsel. Mr. Lekas explained that he and Ms. Rikleem would provide Commissioners with an ethics training module at each Commissioner meeting. Thereafter, Ms. Rikleem led an ethics training for Commissioners focused on outside activities. Following ethics training, Mr. Lekas provided various updates to the Commission.

Rollout Plan

Chairman Heck requested Commissioners' views on holding a rollout event in January, in the week of MLK Jr. Day, also known as the National Day of Service. Following deliberations, Commissioners decided to target a rollout event on Thursday, January 18, 2018, in the Washington, DC area. Commissioners further agreed to hold two public events: first, a rollout press event with guest speakers, to include members of the Senate and House Armed Services Committees and others; second, a public meeting. Following the public meeting, Commissioners would convene with staff in a closed session.

The Commission revisited these topics in a session on Friday, November 17.

DoD Report on the Selective Service System

Representatives from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) requested a meeting with the Commission to discuss the Commission's views on the report on the military selective service system (MSSS) prepared by DoD pursuant to the Commission's enabling statute. The statute further charged GAO with preparing an assessment of the DoD report.

The Commission scheduled a meeting with GAO for Friday, November 17, to discuss the DoD report. To prepare for that meeting, Commissioners discussed a series of questions provided by GAO.

CNCS Presentation

Acting Chief of Staff Mikel Herrington and Deputy Chief of Program Operations Erin Dahlin of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) briefed the Commission on CNCS' mission and programs. Ahead of the presentation, CNCS distributed the slide deck included in Addendum A.

SSS Presentation

Donald M. Benton, Director of the Selective Service System (SSS), provided the Commission with a briefing on the SSS. Mr. Benton was accompanied by John Prigmore, Deputy Director; Rudy Sanchez, General Counsel; Adam "AJ" Copp, Associate Director, Operations and Information Technology; and Wadi Yahkour, Executive Officer to the Director. Ahead of the presentation, SSS distributed the slide deck included in Addendum A.

Mr. Benton indicated that the SSS stood ready to help the Commission in any way and would provide the Commission with any information it required to make its recommendations. Mr. Benton then discussed the SSS' vision, mission, and strategic goals. Mr. Benton also briefed the Commission on the two main objectives of the SSS: registration and readiness.

Planning for December Meeting

Commissioners deliberated the structure and content of the next Commission meeting, scheduled for December 14-15. Commissioners identified a number of topics relating to selective service and to military, national, and public service requiring briefing at the December or other near-term meetings.

The November 16, 2017 session concluded at approximately 1800.

November 17, 2017 Session

The Commission resumed its meeting at approximately 0900 on November 17, 2017.

Meeting with GAO

Chairman Heck briefed the Commission on the meeting with GAO, which occurred earlier in the morning. In addition to the Chairman, Vice Chair Gearan and Vice Chair Wada attended the meeting. Chairman Heck informed Commissioners that GAO had completed its report and submitted it to DoD for comment. GAO would submit its report to Congress on December 1, and release the final version in the middle of January. GAO indicated that it did not intend to include anything provided by the Commission in its report but did believe it was helpful to get the Commission's opinion on the underlying report by DoD.

Meeting with Researchers at Kennedy School of Government

On November 1, 2017, Vice Chair Gearan met with MG (Ret) William E. Rapp, Faculty Chair of the National Security Fellows program at the Kennedy School of Government's Belfer Center, and three National Security Fellows – COL Tom Sarrouf, U.S. Army National Guard; LTC (P) Jason Edwards, U.S. Army; and Lt Col Ernesto DiVittorio, U.S. Air Force. Vice Chair Gearan informed the Commission that the Fellows had chosen to examine methods to incentivize military, national, and public service as their research project for the year.

Meeting with Senior Executives Association

Ms. Skelly briefed the Commission on a meeting she had recently with Bill Valdez, the President of the Senior Executives Association (SEA), and the SEA Executive Director. According to Ms. Skelly, SEA has a number of ideas to assist the Commission in its work, including ideas about connecting the Commission with other groups focused on national service. SEA also recently launched a program called Communities of Change that has relevance to the Commission's mandate.

Outreach

The Commission next held a discussion about outreach strategy.

Thoughts on Service by Robert Schraven

Robert Schraven, CEO of Vertige Consulting, LLC, briefed the Commission on his personal experience in service.

Executive Session

At approximately 1220, Commissioners convened an executive session outside the presence of staff. The executive session concluded at approximately 1320.

Prepared by Paul Lekas, General Counsel

Adopted by the Commission on December 14, 2017