



# State of Nevada MERIT AWARD BOARD



**“Good Government, Great Employees”**

209 E. Musser Street, Room 101  
Carson City, Nevada 89701-4204

Brian Sandoval  
*Governor*

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**MERIT AWARD BOARD  
June 21, 2018 – 1:30 PM**

**Nevada State Library  
Archives & Public Records  
100 North Stewart Street Board Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Carson City NV 89701**

**And**

**Grant Sawyer State Building  
555 East Washington Avenue  
Room 1400  
Las Vegas NV 89101**

**The sites will be connected by videoconference. The public is invited to attend at either location.**

## **MINUTES OF MEETING**

### **Merit Award Board**

#### **Members**

**Present:** Shannon Litz, Governor's Office  
Rachel Baker, Division of Human Resource Management  
Lynette Aaron, Governor's Finance Office  
Carol Larry, Representative, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)  
Gordon Mildan, Representative, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

## **I. CALL TO ORDER –**

Chairperson Litz called the meeting to order. Also present were: Linda Tobin with the Treasurer's Office, and Ylexis Sizemore with the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR).

## **II. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FOR MARCH 15, 2018 – FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

**Chairperson Litz:** Asked if there were any changes to be made to the minutes of the March 15, 2018 meeting. **Lynette Aaron:** Made a correction to her last name.

MOTION: Moved for approval of adoption of minutes for December 12th, 2017 Meeting.  
BY: Gordon Milden  
SECOND: Lynette Aaron  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

## **III. OLD BUSINESS —FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

### **A. Update on suggestions pending realization of savings from agency**

**Chairperson Litz:** Gave an overview of suggestions that are warranting awards pending receipt of agency savings. The first suggestion was from Haaland McIntire with the Treasurer's Office. The request was originally submitted in October 2015 and related to eliminating duplication from the direct deposit devices and the employees received a paper direct deposit slip through USPS. That information was currently available through the NEATS System. The agency had approved the suggestion and provided an estimated cost savings of \$11,784. Previously, the Board had agreed to wait for the agency to confirm that estimated savings with actual implementation; however, the agency needed to perform a system upgrade. The Treasurer's Office referred the Board to the Controller's Office who would be responsible for the implementation and would perform the upgrade to the bottom line server. The final number would be available the end of this fiscal year. Chairperson Litz asked if there were any questions or comments from any members. **Rachel Baker:** Stated she did try to contact James Starbuck at the Controller's Office to see if the agency had realized any savings pertaining to the suggestion but was unable to touch base with him. **Chairperson Litz:** Stated that the Board would hold off on this suggestion until they got the update from the agency.

**Chairperson Litz:** Detailed the next update on the suggestion from Eric Drakeley, with the Department of Motor Vehicles, which had been submitted in November 2016. The suggestion dealt with adding a \$10.00 late fee on expired licenses after 30-days. The agency had approved the suggestion but

was waiting to see how they would be able to confirm that savings. The agency responded they were unable to immediately allocate the resources to complete the upgrade to implement the idea but estimated it would have been implemented in March of 2018. In a previous meeting it was stated the estimated savings was \$55,818. This amount included the initial amount of \$74,818 minus \$19,000 cost that the agency would incur to implement the suggestion. **Chairperson Litz:** Asked if there were any questions or comments from any members. She noted it seemed like they would need until the end of the fiscal year to potentially have the amount of the realized savings.

**Chairperson Litz:** Updated the Board on the suggestion submitted in June of 2017 by Cassandra Shelton with the Treasurer's Office. The suggestion regarded improving the bank statement procedure process by creating a better tool or form for the agencies to claim their ACH wires. The agency supported that suggestion and had implemented it. At that time, the agency estimated that it could save \$3,712.81 in hard costs of paper, ink, etc., and \$14,898.30 in employee hours, overtime, comp time and just additional staff to perform that task. The agency also had stated that they would not have the actual amount of the savings calculated until the completion of the pilot program in June. The Board did also learn that the project was put on hold due to IT vacancies in the agency. Amber Law, who is the Deputy Treasurer, said they would not have the documented savings in Fiscal Year 2018 but did plan to proceed for Fiscal Year 2019. **Rachel Baker:** Reported that in correspondence with the Deputy Attorney General, Tiffany Breinig, she asked if the realized savings included both hard costs and soft costs to which Ms. Breinig stated that pursuant to NRS 285.070(7), the employee cannot receive the award based off his/her suggestion until the Agency has realized a reduction, elimination or avoidance of State expenditures. Based on the plain meaning of NRS285.070(7), the employee would be awarded after savings, reduction, elimination or avoidance of an agency expenditure was realized or had occurred. In this case, the agency reported a reduction in the paper and ink cost, which was considered "hard cost" savings, as well as elimination of employee hours work performing the task and avoidance of employee overtime hours, which were "soft cost" savings; therefore, both the hard and soft cost savings were realized by the agency and should be included in the realized savings. **Gordon Milden:** said the Board would just have to wait for the numbers to come in.

#### **IV. NEW BUSINESS.....FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

##### **A. Welcome new Board Member**

**Chairperson Litz:** Welcomed new Board Member Carol Larry, representing both DETR and AFSCME Local 4041.

**V. EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS — FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

- A. Rick Gimlin and Tina Padovano (tabled)**
- B. Jeff Doucet**
- C. Wade Peterson**
- D. Cheryl Ponton**
- E. Melkeya Brown-Williams**
- F. Alexander Greenbaum**
- G. Ylexis Sizemore**
- H. Linda Lamm and Cheryl Puckoris**
- I. Julie Peterson**
- J. Michael Carroll**

**A. Rick Gimlin and Tina Padovano (tabled)**

**Chairperson Litz:** This suggestion regarded researching and collecting the unclaimed State property in other states, which had been previously tabled from another meeting. The suggestion also recommended a position be created, or each agency could assign someone, to research any unclaimed property located in other states. It was felt this could potentially increase income and prevent waste. The Treasurer's Office reviewed the suggestion and rejected it stating that each agency could assign someone to review that property, since an agency would better know which vendors they worked with and where unclaimed property might be located. The Treasurer's Office pointed out that, per their NRS, they were unable to pursue the collection. As a result of comments from the Board at a previous meeting, the suggestion was sent to the Division of Human Resource Management. Administrator Peter Long reviewed the suggestion and stated that without more information on the projected savings, he did not think the suggestion would necessarily result in savings to the State due to potential employee time allocated to that research. Chairperson Litz noted there were no representatives present and asked if there were comments from members. **Rachel Baker:** added that the response also included a classification issue that it was unknown whether duties would be delegated to an existing position and, depending on the level and detailed involved in the duty, the agency could potentially be encumbered with additional cost in salaries due to potential reclassifications. **Gordon Milden:** concurred that it would be much more reasonable to have each department look for their own property. **Chairman Litz:** opined that there was not a mechanism to quantify it in a way that the Board would require and stated that the potential cost of searching for the property could be more than the savings.

MOTION: Reject this motion.  
BY: Gordon Milden  
SECOND: Lynnette Aaron  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

**B. Jeff Doucet**

**Chairperson Litz:** Mr. Doucet's suggestion regarded the recruitment and use of existing applicant lists for employees and suggested improving the HR system and adding pre-screening questions to better recruit for some certifications. The Department of Administration reviewed the suggestion and noted that it was a good idea; however, a similar idea had been under review by the agency since December 2017 and had been implemented in January 2018. Chairperson Litz noted there were no representatives present and asked if there were comments from Members. **Gordon Milden:** noted that since the agency had already implemented the suggestion, he suggested the Board reject this proposition.

MOTION: Reject this suggestion since the Agency had already implemented the suggestion.  
BY: Gordon Milden  
SECOND: Lynnette Aaron  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

**C. Wade Peterson**

**Chairperson Litz:** Introduced the next suggestion from Wade Peterson with the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation. Mr. Peterson had suggested that a training called "Lean, Six Sigma" could provide for greater opportunities for professional development for employees, improve customer service and reduce costs. Mr. Peterson reported that the state of Washington had saved more than \$33 million, and between 2011 and 2016, the state of Ohio had reportedly saved \$156 million. The Department of Administration was able to review the suggestion and said that although the idea was supported, a budget concept to implement "Lean Nevada" in 2016 but was not included in the budget. Director Cates indicated the State was working with University of Nevada Reno, to develop a curriculum and plan to include the idea for the next biennium.

MOTION: Reject this suggestion based on the agency response that it was already under active consideration, by the agency.  
BY: Lynnette Aaron  
SECOND: Gordon Milden  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

**D. Cheryl Ponton**

**Chairperson Litz:** Ms. Ponton suggestion related to bins used for collecting documents to be shredded. The suggestion was to ensure that materials in bins were not shredded unless the being three-quarters full. The agency responded that although the suggestion may be of some benefit to other

agencies, limiting removal of bins to those at least three-quarters full was current already part of shredding policies and procedures.

MOTION: Reject the suggestion based on the agency response that it is currently in their training policies and procedures.  
BY: Lynnette Aaron  
SECOND: Gordon Milden  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### **E. Melkeya Brown-Williams**

**Chairperson Litz:** Introduced the suggestion from Melkeya Brown-Williams, which related to saving the State of Nevada money by reducing mileage, reducing building operational costs and reducing turnover rates pertaining to surveyors. Ms. Brown-Williams suggestion it was more effective for the surveyors to be scheduled to locations closer to their homes, which would reduce mileage costs and increase efficiency. Additionally, she had suggested that surveyors could become home-based after six months and recommended only using nurses for evaluations of skilled nursing facilities. The agency had responded that it had looked into facility scheduling to increase the efficiency but had not considered all the factors that Ms. Brown-Williams had suggested. The agency explained that that scheduling was based on a home address, it would be logistically problematic and potentially cause the same surveyors and teams to evaluate the same facilities multiple times, which was not desired, and would also affect the arrangement of the teams. With regard to the surveyor being home-based after six months, the agency clarified that was a privilege which could be earned based on skill-level, knowledge and demonstration of ability to work independently. Regarding the suggestion to only use nurses for the skilled nursing facility reviews, it was indicated by the agency that the operational manual for skilled nursing facilities recommends using a multidisciplinary team which was currently the process for other federal facility types. The agency noted that although several changes were attempted in the past, a multidisciplinary team was the most effective and well-rounded for their purposes.

MOTION: Reject the suggestion based on the agency response.  
BY: Lynnette Aaron  
SECOND: Gordon Milden  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### **F. Alexander Greenbaum**

**Chairperson Litz:** This suggestion regarded the use of Rapid Rewards Points through Southwest Airlines when a youth is released. Currently the booking was done through the agency but because there was no account, no airline miles were being accumulated for free flights. The agency responded that per NRS 281.160, State Administrative Manual 0214 and a Statewide Agreement with

Southwest Airlines, Rapid Rewards as well as similar programs for other airlines allowed for points to be used only for the individual traveling.

MOTION: Reject the suggestion based on the information per the Department and the airlines.  
BY: Gordon Milden  
SECOND: Lynnette Aaron  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### **G. Ylexis Sizemore**

**Chairperson Litz:** The suggestion related to ineligible claims in the system and proposed developing a procedure to automatically withdraw the claim after a set time period. The current procedure was that if a claim was ineligible, the claimant was unable to submit a new claim electronically unless the former claim was removed was the system. An automatic withdrawal would increase the efficiency and improve customer service. The agency had responded that many times a claim was considered monetarily ineligible pending receipt of wages from military, federal government or another state which could take up to six months. If the claim was withdrawn before those wages were received, the Claimant would be required to restart that process. **Ylexis Sizemore:** explained that she had emailed the monetary department, within the Unemployment Insurance Division, who said the longest period of time in which a claim is resolved would be eight months. They did not see any issue with withdrawing it after that time period. Ms. Sizemore stated that her basic suggestion was to set a cut-off period when the claim would drop from the system. She stated claimants that call a year later cannot open a claim online because the ineligible claim was still in the system. She noted that call numbers and wait times could potentially improve if claimants did not need to be on hold to resolve the issue. **Carol Larry:** asked if she needed to recuse herself because she works in the same Department. **Chairperson Litz:** responded that they did have a similar circumstance in the past where the representative from that agency did abstain just for the potential conflict. **Carol Larry:** thanked the Chair and said she would abstain. **Chairperson Litz:** said she appreciated Ms. Larry bringing it up and asked if there were any questions for Ms. Sizemore. **Gordon Milden** inquired if the suggestion was to include a cutoff date where after so many months, the claim would automatically close or, if the time period was so large and the suggestion proposed to narrow it down to which Ms. Sizemore indicated that currently there was no time period. The claim sat in the system indefinitely until a request to withdraw the claim has been received. **Rachel Baker:** expressed concern that representation from the agency was not present and proposed tabling the suggestion until the next meeting when agency representation was able to explain the current process. **Chairperson Litz:** agreed and stated it seemed that part of the conflict was a timeline that Ms. Sizemore proposed versus what the agency felt was a better timeline. She concurred with tabling the suggestion until more information could be obtained from the agency.

MOTION: Table suggestion until the Board get more information from the Department's side.  
BY: Gordon Milden  
SECOND: Lynnette Aaron  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### **H. Linda Lamm and Cheryl Puckoris**

**Chairperson Litz:** This suggestion related to moving to an electronic review process for the "Fast Track" in the Unclaimed Property Division. The agency issued approximately 380 checks per week with 10-15 being returned. It was proposed that if electronic banking information were to be included when a claim was created, a payment would be made directly. The actual savings would then come the physical check stock, postage and the staff time to manage and reroute returned checks. Chairperson Litz continued by stating the agency had supported the suggestion but would need to work with the vendor to create an EFT payment function and the bank. It was anticipated that a cost savings could be realized upon the full implementation and savings amounts had been provided. **Linda Tobin:** stated the agency was moving forward with the suggestion and felt it was definitely a very quality idea being suggested. **Lynnette Aaron:** inquired if there would be a cost for the vendor to develop the EFT payment function as well. **Linda Tobin:** responded that there will be some costs. The agency did not have those figures yet; however, a service level agreement with the vendor was being renegotiated into a contract.

MOTION: Moved to change to an electronic review process for the "Fast Track" in the Unclaimed Property Division.  
BY: Gordon Milden  
SECOND: Lynnette Aaron  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

**Chairperson Litz:** Stated there had been a comment that we would need to have the motion, be for it to be tabled until the savings are realized and implemented. She asked is the motion could be restated.

MOTION: Moved to table this agenda item until the accurate cost savings information is received.  
BY: Gordon Milden  
SECOND: Lynnette Aaron  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### **I. Julie Peterson**

**Chairperson Litz:** Ms. Peterson's suggestion related to expedited shipping for driver's licenses and proposed that for a fee of \$20.00, the DMV could provide



a two-day delivery for a license or ID card compared to the seven to 10 days that it regularly takes. The agency responded that although it's not public knowledge, the vendor used provided that option to expedite for \$10.00.

MOTION: Reject this suggestion since the agency had already implemented the suggestion.  
BY: Carol Larry  
SECOND: Gordon Milden  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### **J. Michael Carroll**

**Chairperson Litz:** Stated this suggestion proposed changing the "Forensic Specialist" job classification to "Mental Health Security Technician". Mr. Carroll suggested that Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) certified personnel only be retained as shift supervisors which would increase the recruiting pool for the position and reduce turnover. Mr. Carroll said that the cost-savings would come from a reduced turnover, overtime and the insurance costs. Information from the State of Oregon where a similar change was made had been included with the suggestion. A response from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) had been received which pointed out that through NRS 489.240, Forensic Specialists had powers of a peace officer and NRS 489.550 required anyone with the power of a peace officer to be certified with the POST Commission within one year of beginning employment. Additionally, the Nevada Administrative Code 289.120 currently stated that each peace officer must satisfactorily complete a course approved by the Executive Director. Further NAC 289.160 defined the minimum standards of training for the forensic technician classification. DHHS had stated that a reclassification would reduce the level of training provided to employees and would impact that quality of care and the overall safety of clients and staff.

MOTION: Reject this suggestion per the comments from the agency and statute.  
BY: Gordon Milden  
SECOND: Lynnette Aaron  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

### **VI. GENERAL BUSINESS**

#### **A. Next meeting date**

**Chairperson Litz:** determined the date to be in September. The Board would be surveyed closer to the meeting date to secure a date and time.

### **VII. PUBLIC COMMENT & DISCUSSION – (Note: No vote or action may be taken upon a matter raised during public comment until the matter itself has been**

specifically included on an agenda as an item upon which action may be taken. Comments will be limited to five minutes per person and persons making comment will be asked to begin by stating their names for the record.)

#### **VIII. OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

#### **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION:	Moved that the Merit Award Board meeting be adjourned.
BY:	Gordon Milden
SECOND:	Rachel Baker
VOTE:	The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.