



State of Nevada
MERIT AWARD BOARD



“Good Government, Great Employees”

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

Brian Sandoval
Governor



**STATE OF NEVADA
MERIT AWARD BOARD
June 2, 2015 – 9:00 a.m.**

**Blasdel Building, 209 E. Musser Street,
1st Floor, Room 105
Carson City, Nevada 89701**

and

**Grant Sawyer State Building
555 East Washington Avenue
Room 1400
Las Vegas, Nevada 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:

Chairperson Rosa Mendez – Chairperson and Representative, Governor’s Office
Sherri Barkdull – Representative, Budget and Planning Division
Angelica Gonzalez – Representative, Division of Human Resource Management (DHRM) and Secretary to the Merit Award Board
Neil Lake – Representative, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
Harry Schiffman – Representative, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairperson Mendez – She called the meeting to order.

II. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 18, 2014

Chairperson Mendez: Asked for comments or questions.

MOTION: Move to approve board meeting minutes for November 18, 2014.
BY: Chairperson Mendez
SECOND: Neil Lake
VOTE: The motion passed.

Chairperson Mendez: Reported on some of the individual motions made at the November 18 meeting, which are essentially action items for the board. The first motion, regarding NRS 285, will be tabled and discussed at a more appropriate time later in the meeting. The next item was the motion for the board to research and analyze existing process of the divisions. She stated she would like to table action on this item until the next meeting, since they are awaiting more information. Regarding the action item for the meeting from the agencies, Ms. Mendez has only received input from DHHS and would like to get more input from additional agencies. This action item should be moved to the next meeting.

III. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Discussion of NRS 285 - Awards to State Employees

Chairperson Mendez: Stated that there has been lively discussion in recent meetings about possible changes to NRS 285, such as adding time between adoption and implementation, and she asked for further comments suggestions. **Sherri Barkdull:** Stated she would present a written document at the next meeting.

B. Merit Board Frequently Asked Questions - Online

Chairperson Mendez: Reminded attendees that this was a document that was discussed at the last meeting regarding a FAQ that could be provided to employees to facilitate understanding about the program. She asked for comments or questions. **Harry Schiffman** stated he thought the FAQ was well done and easy to read. **Neil Lake:** Said he liked the way it was written. **Chairperson Mendez:** Said that additions and/or corrections can be made, but she feels this is a good start and provides good information. She stated she received comments from Theron Huntamer regarding this document. He suggested changing the format for readability, for example changing italics to bold, but did not suggest any substantive changes.

MOTION: Move to approve posting the existing document today with the defined changes.
BY: Chairperson Mendez
SECOND: Unidentified Member.
VOTE: The motion passed.

C. Merit Board Suggestion Matrix - Online

Chairperson Mendez: Stated that this document will also be posted on the website. She related comments she received from Theron Huntamer, which were format changes consistent with the changes recommended for the Merit Board FAQ document. **Ms. Barkdull:** Stated that it may not possible to change the wording of submissions. Mr. Huntamer also suggested providing a link to the submissions themselves so as to clarify

expected format. **An unidentified member:** Suggested adding additional instructional detail. **Chairperson Mendez:** Said there were some potential negative consequences to providing links to submissions and instead suggested providing an example of a completed suggestion form. **Ms. Barkdull:** Agreed with providing an example but not actual submissions or denials. **Chairperson Mendez:** Suggested adding a note at the end of the log stating some of the potential reasons for rejection. **Chairperson Mendez:** Stated that emphasis should be placed on the quality and practicality of the suggestion, adherence to NRS 285 and determination of novelty instead of writing style or other subjective information. She suggested they put together a sample submission form to be posted with the matrix, which will remain as it is.

MOTION: Move to approve the suggestion log as-is and create a document that shows an example of the suggestion form to be supported to the board and also on the website.
BY: Chairperson Mendez
SECOND: Unidentified Member
VOTE: The motion passed.

D. Employee Suggestion Discussion - Erin Gardner

Chairperson Mendez: Stated that the first suggestion is from Erin Gardner. She relayed that that has come to fruition after a second letter to the board is that Captain Tom Jackson determined that Ms. Garner's suggestion is part of her daily duties, which precludes reward under NRS 285.

An unidentified member: Asked whose responsibility it is to determine whether a suggestion is within the scope of an employee's duties. **Chairperson Mendez:** Answered no. **Angelica Gonzalez:** Confirmed that this information is contained in work performance standards and similar documentation. **An unidentified member:** Asked to confirm that a mechanism is in place to resolve a dispute of this sort. **Chairperson Mendez:** Confirmed. **Ms. Barkdull:** Asked whether Chairperson Mendez would like to provide a brief response to Ms. Gardner in addition to a copy of the letter from the director. **Chairperson Mendez:** Said to provide a copy of the letter with a brief explanation.

E. Employee Suggestion Discussion - Jason Giesler

Chairperson Mendez: Stated that the second suggestion is from Jason Giesler and provided a summary of input received from various agencies. She related that some agencies felt that Mr. Giesler's suggestion is already being implemented by some agencies or departments. Chairperson Mendez added that since different agencies may handle uniform procurement differently, the suggestion may have limited applicability. **Ms. Barkdull:** Stated she got an email from a payroll supervisor, who mentioned since a majority of the payments from the account inquiry are paid to outside vendors, with very few paid to employees, it could be very difficult to discover actual cost savings. **An unidentified member:** Clarified that some employees receive a uniform allowance up front to allow for the cost of uniform purchase or replacement and not a reimbursement. **Chairperson Mendez:** Reiterated that the suggestion seems to identify an issue but does not provide a resolution to the issue. **An unidentified member:** Stated that the uniform allowance is provided by statute, and Mr. Giesler seems to be suggesting something akin to an audit to determine what employees may be erroneously receiving an allowance. **An**

unidentified member: Agreed that this seems to be a policy and/or audit issue. **Chairperson Mendez:** Stated that if Mr. Giesler is suggesting a change to the allowance statute, that would mean a change to legislation. **Mr. Schiffman:** Reiterated that no exact savings are determined at this point, which is something that needs to be shown. **An unidentified member:** Stated that even if Mr. Giesler were to provide a savings estimate, there should not be a reward for a mistaken payment that was corrected prior to his suggestion. **An unidentified member:** Wondered whether Mr. Giesler's job duties in central payroll would already include reporting of erroneous payments to employees such as the four that were made and subsequently corrected by DPS.

Chairperson Mendez: Agreed that identification of payment errors already seems to be part of Mr. Giesler's regular job duties. **An unidentified member:** Agreed and added that this suggestion relates to a policy decision. **An unidentified member:** Stated that he doesn't believe Mr. Giesler should receive a reward but is unwilling to say that this was part of his existing job duties. Rather he would point to the lack of estimated savings. **An unidentified member:** Agreed that Mr. Giesler didn't follow the rules and requirements necessary for an award. **An unidentified member:** Stated it is not up to the board to determine actual savings, and no savings are listed. Therefore, this award application should be rejected.

MOTION: Move that Mr. Giesler's suggestion be rejected based on the
aforementioned discussion.

BY: Chairperson Mendez
SECOND: Unidentified Member
VOTE: The motion passed.

F. Meeting Minutes Format

Chairperson Mendez: Stated that she received a suggestion from Mr. Huntamer that state employees be provided with either a recording of the meeting or that the minutes format be changed to verbatim. **Angelica Gonzalez:** Directed the members to a copy of the Open Meeting Law, which were provided. **Chairperson Mendez:** Said she believed recordings are provided on request but not made available on the website, which is a common practice. **Ms. Gonzalez:** Added that she in the past provided CD recordings at no cost upon request, for example to Mr. Huntamer. **Chairperson Mendez:** Stated her opinion that since the recording is available upon request, there is no need to change the format of the written minutes. **Chairperson Mendez:** Added that there is no requirement to provide either verbatim minutes or a digital recording of the meeting. **Chairperson Mendez:** Stated she will respond that the board already offers a recorded copy of the meeting upon request and is not required to provide verbatim minutes. **Ms. Gonzalez:** Clarified that meeting minutes are provided on the website. **Chairperson Mendez:** Added that all meetings are open to the public.

Chairperson Mendez: Provided an update on the last awardees. She has been working to coordinate payments for Mr. Strong and Mr. Geraldo, the first of which should be awarded within the month. She is arranging a presentation ceremony and meeting for Mr. Huntamer, Mr. Strong and Mr. Geraldo with Governor Sandoval. The ceremony is tentatively scheduled for August.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT – (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.)

Angelica Gonzalez: Noted there was no public comment.

V. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Motion to adjourn
BY: Chairman Mendez
SECOND: Unidentified member
VOTE: The vote was unanimous by motion

The meeting was adjourned.