



State of Nevada  
**MERIT AWARD BOARD**



“Good Government, Great Employees”

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

**Joe Lombardo**  
*Governor*



**MERIT AWARD BOARD**  
**May 15, 2025 – 1:00 PM**

**EICON Building**  
**515 East Musser Street,**  
**First Floor Conference Room**  
**Carson City, NV 89701**

and

**Eureka Building**  
**7251 Amigo Street, Room**  
**120 Las Vegas, NV 89101**

**MINUTES - Approved**  
**Merit Award Board**

**Members Present:**

Shayne Powell, Governor’s Finance Office, Chair  
Tracey Cook, Representative, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 4041  
Carries Hughes, Division of Human Resource Management (DHRM) Secretary  
Brian Miller, Representative, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 4041

**Members of the Public:**

None

**DHRM Attendees:**

Kelsey Walsh, Human Resource Analyst

**Members Absent:**

None

**Members Absent:**

None

POWELL: Yes. Great. All right. In that case, let's go ahead and call to order today's merit award board meeting. It's May 15th, 2025, 01:00. Welcome everybody. We'll start with roll call. I'm Shayne Powell, I'm chairman. I am here. Carrie Hughes, are you here?

HUGHES: I am here.

POWELL: All right. Brian Miller, you here?

MILLER: Present.

POWELL: All right. Tracey Cook, are you here?

COOK: I am here.

POWELL: Welcome. And then we also have Kelsey Walsh. And I guess that's about everybody, right? Announcements. I don't have any announcements. Anybody have anything they wish to announce?

MILLER: Negative.

POWELL: Doesn't sound like it. I guess the only thing that's been of interest lately is the potential consolidation of all the boards, which the merit award board was included, but from what I'm hearing, that bill might not be going anywhere. So, business might be continuing as usual for us in the next biennium unless something interesting happens. But I don't even think it's leaving committee, so I just let that one die perhaps. With no other announcements, I'll take a minute. I don't see anybody from the public here or online, but just a reminder that 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 which an 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 and to spell their last name. That being said, we'll move on to the action items and that section three, action item 3(A) is approval of minutes from previous meetings. If anybody has reviewed them and wants to make any sort of substantive changes, let me know. Otherwise I would like to ask for motion to approve those minutes with the exception that any clerical errors can be handled by any staff member who handles these minutes. Is there a motion?

HUGHES: Carrie Hughes. I motion that we adopt the minutes from the November 14th, 2024 meeting and the minutes from the February 5th, 2025 meeting.

POWELL: Great, thank you Carrie. Do we have a second?

MILLER: Brian Miller, second.

POWELL: All right. That sounds like motion 3(A) and (B) are carried. With that being said, if there's any remaining questions or comments about those two, go ahead and let me know. Hearing none, we'll move on to action.

HUGHES: Don't we have to vote?

POWELL: Oh, sorry. Please state your affirmation or otherwise as to the approval of the meeting minutes items 3(A) and 3(B).

ALL: Aye.

POWELL: Aye. Okay. Great. All right. It looks like action item four. There's just (A) here, this is a tabled suggestion from October 23rd, 2024, meeting from Femmi Rhose McGuire. All right. And just to recap, what was tabled for this is that basically the agency in charge of this recommendation, which is Aging Disability Services Division, they fax and Femmi's suggestion was they change from a paper fax system to an E-fax system and ASD contends that they already had that and just hadn't trained Mr. or Ms. McGuire on the procedure. So in their response it said that they had already possessed those capabilities prior to Femmi's suggestion date of 9/25/23. Does anybody interpret any of that differently as read? All right, great. In that case, with that being said, I'd like to see if there's a motion to concur with the suggestion of ADSD to deny Mr. or Ms. McGuire's suggestion to implement the E-fax system.

MILLER: Brian Miller, motion to deny.

POWELL: Thanks Brian, do we have a second?

COOK : I second, Tracey Cook.

POWELL: Thanks, Tracey. With that being said, the motion carries, please state your affirmations or otherwise if you wish to.

ALL: Aye.

POWELL: Aye. All right. So that one would concur with ADSD's decision.

MILLER: Just real quick, is that an agenda packet up there? My computer is not downloading digital copies so I'll just reference that.

POWELL: Sure.

MILLER: Thanks.

POWELL: All right. So with that being said, we have concurrence for action item 4(A). Moving on to action item 5(A) and that is a suggestion from Phillip Moralez, and this is DPS, Records Communication and Compliance Division. And this suggestion, if we remember from November was that Philip wanted to change the process in which they vet and do clearances. And I think our problem the first time is we didn't get any sort of data as to how much time or money was being saved. And it looks like our most recent response, it also says, yes, we have implemented this person's suggestion, but once again, I have no way into which to calculate any type of reward if I don't know how much time or money is being saved. And it's kind of out of my purview to make those calculations on my own. I just do the calculation of how much money they should be awarded. So I hate to table this once again, but I just don't have enough data to make any type of calculation, especially when the emails I see here say, yes, we have implemented this. So it does sound like this suggestion does have merit. We just don't know how to quantify this merit without any data. So with that being said, if anybody has any other opinions as to how they've read this?

HUGHES: Well, I'm looking at the May 21st email from Sherry Brueggemann and her initial statement is, in this case there is no dollar savings. But at the end she says basically it results in efficiency.

POWELL: Right.

HUGHES: So, is that kind of what you're thinking seeing if they can quantify that?

POWELL: Yeah, I would argue that efficiency means increasing productivity and improving service. And so those are two meritorious criteria. And so I would hate to say yes, we improved, but yeah, your process is better, but it doesn't save any money. So how can you say it's better? Like better because it feels nice, but obviously it's better because it's doing something. Either the quality of the work has improved or it's more efficient or you know, any of those types of things maybe. So, I hate to table this once again,

but I will call for motion to table this one more time. We'll draft an email together that says exactly what we're asking for in terms of, can you tell us if it's better, how? If it's faster, well then that means the employee doing this does five an hour instead of four or five a day. So there's obviously some sort of quantifiable savings there. So we'll just have to really set the parameters in how we correspond with them just to make sure that they can't really just freestyle their answer and say, yeah, it's good, but don't know why it's good. We just think it's good. So. All right. So do we have a motion to table this and get an additional bit of correspondence from DPS.

MILLER: Brian Miller, motion to table.

POWELL: All right. Do we have a second?

HUGHES: Carrie Hughes, I second the motion.

POWELL: All right. With that being said, please state your affirmation or otherwise if you'd like to table action item 5(A) one more time to get some additional data for this suggestion from Phillip Moralez.

ALL: Aye.

COOK: Aye. I do have a question though.

POWELL: Yes, ma'am.

COOK: Do you see the second or the third e-mail technically I believe, that says that they've already implemented it. Can you be advised that the suggestion on Philip Moralez has been implemented. We suggest that the agency division do their own background checks on temporary contractors.

POWELL: Yeah.

COOK: So they already put it in motion, right?

POWELL: Yeah. So it sounds like they've used this individual's suggestion put it into place because it's a good one, but we've corresponded with them multiple times saying why is it good? Has it made things better? And they're like, yes, it's made things better, but we don't know how faster, cheaper, better quality control. So we're just gonna write a really focused message to them saying, you say you've

implemented this suggestion, but how did it make your office work better? Was it time, money, quality, something like that? And then finally we can put this one to bed and calculate some type of award based on that number. I mean, even if it just saves eight hours a month, that's still something that can be calculated. We just need to get a number from them, essentially.

COOK: Oh, okay. So we're looking for the financial?

POWELL: Yeah. In terms of operational efficiency or cost savings or just better customer service, anything like that. Because I can't award them arbitrarily, I have to base it off of how much money this suggestion saves them.

COOK: Okay. So it's more by financial?

POWELL: Yeah.

COOK: Okay. Because I'm looking further, instead it's thereby saving time in the background unit to concentrate on background for permanent employees which takes quite a bit longer.

POWELL: Right.

COOK: It's going to take longer.

POWELL: All right. With that being said, we have yays on tabling 5(A) one more time. So then we will move on to action item 6(A), Yo Lee. And this was about the red law requirement to warn. So this suggestion was to set a protocol in place for the State of Nevada and SNAMHS the Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services for a mass shooter. In this suggestion form, they're claiming that the not adhering to this duty to warn was partly in some way responsible for this lawsuit. So our response from the administrator, DPBH, Division of Public and Behavioral Health said they reviewed this and the responses for the recommendation of the adoption has been fantastic, so on and so forth. Unfortunately, our interpretation of the statute does not allow us to implement duty to warn, and that statute is part of Assembly Bill 291. And so, I guess deferring to the expertise of a DPBH administrator and not having any type of law background that I would have to defer to their decision that based upon the limitations of the bill itself, does not put them in some sort of legal quandary when it comes to duty to warn. So with that being said, does anybody have any other opinions based on the response from administrator, if any?

HUGHES: I just wanted to comment, I appreciated the thorough answer. And the protocols that they outlined, that even if they don't have the authority, they have some protocols in place to try to address that limitation.

POWELL: Yeah, that is fair. And I do appreciate this was actually not just a one sentence answer, especially when, you know, the person did take the time to write the merit award board suggestion. So, it's polite of them to give it just as thoughtful of a response. And so with that being said, I would say that Cody's response does indicate that they are going to deny that there's any type of savings to be had or preventing waste accidents, productivity or duplication. So I would motion that this tabled item we now move to concur with DPBH'S decision to deny this suggestion.

MILLER: Brian Miller, motion to deny.

POWELL: Thanks Brian, do we have a second?

HUGHES: Carrie Hughes, I'll second that motion.

POWELL: All right. The motion carries. So please state your affirmations or otherwise with our decision to concur with DPBH's choice to not implement this merit award board suggestion.

ALL: Aye.

POWELL: Aye. All right. So 6(A), concur. Moving on to 6(B), this is Kevin Meyer and this is a doozy just because of all the backup, which we did ask for, but I'm also not a lawyer, not an engineer. And so what we saw if recollecting our previous meeting with Kevin was that he saw some opportunity for savings with UNR and the Truckee Meadows Water Authority and their sewage use fees. And so his calculations were that there was roughly \$148,000 to be saved per year. And what UNR's response was, they're already receiving credits based on a number of factors in terms of quantity and the nature of their business and things like that. So if UNR was being charged, like the standard rate there were would be savings, but at the rate they're paying right now, it's actually cheaper for them to not implement the type of billing change that Kevin had suggested. So there's quite a bit of backup of this and so, I mean, a lot of it is duplicates. And so after reviewing this, I see that there has been some back and forth in terms of calculating as to whether or not this would save them money. There's correspondence with the Truckee Meadows Water

Authority, and the city of Reno in terms of the sewer. And so with that being said, if they're contending without showing me an actual bill, that they're paying a better rate than what Kevin has suggested that I would have to err on the side of UNR. But at the same time, like I said, there's a lot of backup here. So, if anybody has really been able to make any sort of better educated discernment, I guess, of what's going on here, then I'm open to suggestions. I guess what I'm saying is I need help on this one.

MILLER: I was hoping Kevin would actually be here, but he's no longer employed with the State of Nevada.

POWELL: Oh.

MILLER: He's in the private sector, but he did submit it. So what was the clarity on that? Is he still eligible or?

POWELL: Yeah, we have paid another employee, I can't think of their name. Well, former employee something. But yeah, she was with the State Controller and then left. So, yes, that is a possibility. They don't have to be employed as long as they're employed at the time of the suggestion and the years of savings that were realized afterwards. But this being said, I don't see any savings and if I have to err with the side of UNR that they've given this the due diligence to calculate that, then I don't know, like I said, willing to defer to the opinion of the board as to how we proceed with this one and the 146 pages of backup that accompany it.

MILLER: Yeah. If the committee was to make an attempt to contact Mr. Myers again and it was tabled, would that be something to propose? If not, then I would propose to dismiss.

POWELL: Okay. That being said, if we brought him back, what would be our questions?

MILLER: Yeah, Kevin's the expert on the subject matter. I came from the carpentry sector, he came from the HVAC sector, so he's the expert on that. But as far as savings go, that's what we need some follow-up on some specifics regarding what savings are being implemented, if any at this point.

POWELL: Yeah.

HUGHES: So, what I saw in his added packet was that not only Joseph Pelletti who's the senior director but someone else also said. I'm with Shayne in that I can't determine whether this is a good

idea or not, but what I'm seeing, even in the documents that he submitted, is that UNR said, we're not doing what you're suggesting. So even if it creates savings, they've both said, the other one was Phoebe Judge, we're not doing it.

POWELL: Okay. I guess that's fair then. Maybe we're kind of beyond the scope of.

MILLER: In the event that it is tabled and substantiate evidence is presented, that they did implement that, would that be something to possibly bring to the board or is that completely off the table at this point?

POWELL: I mean, I guess if they implement it in the future and somebody's aware of it, but I think it's beyond our purview to monitor these people to say, "Hey, two years later did you actually implement this?" And if so you owe Kevin something so I guess.

MILLER: If it's been implemented not in a matter of years.

POWELL: Yeah.

MILLER: That would have to be Kevin's perspective because I don't wish to pry outside of the context of what Kevin has an expertise insight regarding.

POWELL: Okay. So how about this? Carrie made a very good point. And so I'll ask for a motion to table and then we may not have enough yeses to do so we may not have a second or we may vote no. And then if I don't have a motion to table, I'll ask for a motion to deny and then we'll vote on that.

MILLER: Well, that's fair.

POWELL: And that way we'll just use democracy to decide how we're going to proceed with that.

MILLER: Absolutely. I agree.

POWELL: All right. So in that case, I will ask if there is a motion to table this to get more information from Kevin to see if there are any merits, even if there are savings, if it weren't approved.

MILLER: Brian Miller, motion to table.

POWELL: All right. We have a motion to table from Brian. Do we have a second? Not hearing a second. Do we have a motion to deny, aka, concur with UNR's decision that while it might be good, they are not implementing it? Don't have a first on that one.

HUGHES: Carrie Hughes, I motion to deny based upon the documentation indicating that UNR has not implemented the idea.

POWELL: All right. I'll second that motion. With that being said, please state your affirmations or otherwise as we choose to concur with UNR to deny.

POWELL, HUGHES, COOK: Aye.

POWELL: All right. The ayes have it. So with that being said, action item 6(B), which was once tabled. We now concur with UNR to deny the suggestion from Kevin Meyer. All right, so moving on. Action Item seven, possible action, employee suggestions. Our first one is from Patricia Mae Ezidiegwu, I apologize in advance for that. The suggestion was how to reduce the cost of electricity, aka, the office lights. This one is there are 12 LED fixtures, which are 29 watts maxed are turned on at 04:00 a.m. and the custodian should turn off the meeting room lights immediately after cleaning to reduce the cost of electricity that the state pays monthly. The estimated savings or benefit, I went through this. If these lights were on four hours early per day, there's 12 of them at 29 watts, that's 348 some odd watts. And at that rate that early in the morning, it's about seven cents per kilowatt hour. So I believe the savings is kind of overstated by a magnitude of a thousand. It's about \$35 a year, roughly. So if somebody wants to challenge me on that, feel free to do so. But that's just based on quick math and our NV energy rates that we pay. So they may pay something different. I don't know the particulars about this building, but I'd say as an average at 04:00 in the morning, the rate is seven cents, 7.14 cents per kilowatt hour. So that's a thousand watts. So they're using basically a quarter of a thousand watts, which is 1.80 cents four hours a day. And so while there is savings, it is negligible and I don't think the electric bill would be 30 percent of the current cost as stated in there. So with that, we'll go ahead and read the response. Regardless of the math, it's part of the contractor's duties anyway to turn these lights off. So it should be implemented already prior to the suggestion. It's just a matter of human compliance at that point. So I appreciate the suggestion to save money, but it's not that

much and it's already an existing policy, if you will, more of a contractual issue between whoever they hired to do the cleaning and ADSD. So after reading all that, I'd like to ask for a motion to concur with ADSD's decision to deny this suggestion.

MILLER: Brian Miller, motion to deny.

POWELL: Thanks Brian, do we have a second?

COOK: Tracey Cook, second.

POWELL: Thanks Tracey. So please state your affirmations or otherwise with the board's decision to concur with ADSD's decision to deny the suggestion from Ms. E.

ALL: Aye.

POWELL: Aye. All right. The ayes have it. So action item 7(A), we concur with the agency. This next one, this is from Femmi Rhose McGuire, who is also a tabled, so that's not a typo. Once again, ADSD, Desert Regional Commuter Center Community Nursing. This is for a hybrid work environment where nurses work from home four days a week and come to the office one day a week. And it says, currently our team operates with traditional office environment with assigned cubicle, and there is an attached document to calculate the savings. What do you think it can improve please? Work life balance, distraction, reduce personalized workspace, better work life balance. For employers, increase productivity, talent pool, reduce cost, employee retention for both communication culture. To explain further the productivity, we can go into that. The one that's I guess most important is the estimating savings for benefits. And so for the employer, reduced office space, renegotiating leases, and eliminating office space altogether savings can range from \$10,000 to \$11,000 per employee. Lowered operating costs, no numbers mentioned here. Decreased absenteeism and presenteeism, no calculations. Increased productivity, there is reference of a study, and it says they gained equivalent of 16 workdays per year in productivity. And then improved retention. Hybrid work is a highly sought after perk. For employees, we're not so concerned about that. We can go through them real quick because commuting, childcare, more time, and work life balance. And then of course the environmental impact of not driving to work. So we have a response from the ADSD Administrator, Dena Schmidt, and they have received the request and they have not considered it, and it

will not be implemented because it is in direct conflict with the governor's executive order 2023-002. And if everybody recalls or does not, that is the executive order expecting employees to be back into the office for the normal NRS stipulated work day of 08:00 to 05:00 and ADSD's special because they have a number of 24/7 facilities. So that even expands upon that purview of that executive order. So while I appreciate the thoughtful submission from Femmi, we have it just cold concrete that they're not implementing that. And I think we've gone through enough of these before that we also realize that especially this position as a nurse, that's probably caring for patients, and you can't necessarily, if you're in a hands-on role in ADSD, I would imagine many cases that's true you're taking care of patients, you can't do that remotely. So I will ask if there's a motion for us to concur with ADSD'S decision to deny the suggestion by Ms. McGuire.

HUGHES: Carrie Hughes, I motion to deny the suggestion.

POWELL: Thank you, Carrie. Do we have a second?

MILLER: Brian Miller, second.

POWELL: Thanks Brian. Oh, and Tracey, we have a second and a third. Motion carries. Please state your affirmations or otherwise if as it relates to concurring with ADSD's decision to deny the suggestion from Ms. McGuire.

ALL: Aye.

POWELL: All right. So the board concurs with ADSD's decision to deny. Next we have action item 7(C), Karen Metcalf. And then this one is Therapy Days, and I believe this is with dogs. So, this is from Karen Metcalf. This is to bring in Paws for Love Therapy Dogs, to bring dogs into the workplace, having therapy days so that employees can de-stress on breaks or lunch. Says increase productivity and release stress. So, I see a suggestion or it's almost like an order form, I guess, but what we don't have is how it's going to quantitatively improve productivity and prevent waste in terms of time being written in. So going beyond the order form, did we get a response from the agency for this one?

POWELL: Here it is. Okay. Yes. Okay. So from Robert Thompson, Division Administrator, the reason for the rejection, this employee's suggestion is vague and lacks any consideration of a defined reduction, elimination, or avoidance of expenditure, nor does it address any improvements in operations.

The merit award program recognizes that ideas demonstrate measurable cost savings, process improvements or operational efficiencies. While therapy dogs offer benefits, the suggestion does not quantify any cost reduction or efficiency gain and does not account for how much this program would actually cost. So this might be something that actually costs rather than saves. And so I would ask for a motion to concur with the decision to deny based on Robert Thompson's reply.

MILLER: I motion to deny.

POWELL: Thanks Brian. Do we have a second.

HUGHES: Carrie Hughes, second.

POWELL: Thanks, Carrie. We have a second. So motion carries. Please state your affirmations or otherwise as it relates to concurring with the motion to deny this suggestion.

ALL: Aye.

POWELL: All right. The ayes have it. So action item 7(C), we concur with the agency's decision to deny.

POWELL: Moving on action Item 7(D) Tyreese Price, psychiatric nurse two, ADSD at the Desert Regional Center suggestion. What is the present condition? A five day, 40-hour work week. And I believe this was to reduce it to 32. Yes. Allowing 40 work week, eight hours. They contend that would save the State of Nevada approximately \$23,512 using their psychiatric nurse grade and step. I think we've gone through a number of these before, so for every, you know, four people that opt out of that shift that we have to add one FTE to maintain caseload. So just mathematically this would actually cost more because in addition to the salary that we're replacing, we have the fringe package. But we can go ahead and read the response from Dena Schmidt. Yes. And they say the same thing. If we were to add a four-day 32-hour work week it could cost the state money because you would need additional staff to cover that day. And since ADSD operates a number of 24 hour facilities, that would actually be more than one position if more than one pack of people took that on. So they're not going to implement that decision. And so I would ask if there's a motion to concur with the administrator's decision to not implement the suggestion from Tyreese Price.

MILLER: Motion to dismiss.

POWELL: Thank you. Brian. Do we have a second?

COOK: Tracy Cook, second.

POWELL: Thank you, Tracey. So, the motion carries, please state your affirmations or otherwise as relates to concurring with the agency's decision to not implement the suggestion from Tyrese Price.

ALL: Aye.

POWELL: Aye. All right. Sounds like the ayes have it. That being said, action Item 7(D), consider denied or concur with their deny. Moving on to action 7(E), Joel Tynning. This DMV Emission Control Officer, solar power bill savings benefits to employees in public. Currently the state pays local power providers for electricity. Mr. Tynning's suggestion is turn every state billings parking lot into a solar field. This will allow for solar generation powering the buildings and selling access power to the power provider. Also create shaded parking for staff, state vehicles in public. In this suggestion, there is no calculated savings so it's easy for someone who would want to oppose this to say that actually buying the power is cheaper than implementing solar. And so, I believe that's exactly what Deputy Director Ragar has said. This was originally sent to DMV, but B&G would do this type of work. So that's why it went to the Deputy Director of Administration in this case then. Projected the current photovoltaic technology of a high initial upfront cost in the data unlocked longevity and time to recuperate the initial upfront costs are not always clear cut. The financial risk of implementation of such a program statewide could be expensive. And as such, this implementation has not been considered. On a state by state basis, this may become a more viable opportunity as technology improves. So this is another one where they appreciate the suggestion, but with no savings calculated, it doesn't appear just at face value that it would save any money or at least in a reasonable measurable period of time, for our sake if it took 20 years.

MILLER: Yeah.

POWELL: The NRS for merit award board says we have to calculate the two years of savings. And so this might end up being no realized award unless we amortize it. And so I think that's actually

beyond the scope too because I wouldn't attempt to calculate 20 years of savings and then front load that into a payment for the first two years.

MILLER: Yeah.

POWELL: Because we wouldn't get in the black for at least a decade. So, I would have to ask the board if there's a motion to concur with DMV by way of Department Administration's decision to deny this.

MILLER: Brian Miller motion to dismiss.

POWELL: All right. Thanks Brian. Do we have a second?

HUGHES: Carrie Hughes, I'll second.

POWELL: Second. All right. Please state your affirmations or otherwise with the board's decision to concur with DMV/ DOA's decision to deny or not implement this suggestion from Joel Tynning.

ALL: Aye.

POWELL: All right. Sounds like the board concurs with those two departments' assessment. With that being said, it looks like we are done with action items seven and all its sub items. So moving on to action item eight, discuss administration monies in budgets.

HUGHES: So I wanted to comment on this one.

POWELL: Okay.

HUGHES: The Merit Award Board has its own budget account.

POWELL: It does.

HUGHES: And there was a budget closing. It doesn't necessarily guarantee because it was prior to the financial economic forum finance forecast. But we did close with actually being funded. So at this point, what was closed on was that we would receive 5,000 for awards and 3,000 for administrative fees. So, assuming we get that and assuming SB78 doesn't go through, because there's some interesting clauses in SB78 about having to pay B&I to do certain things. But if it's not, what I was hoping is we could start thinking about how we can use those \$3,000. I was thinking we maybe could use it in some way to market.

POWELL: Advocate for the program.

HUGHES: Yeah. The award.

POWELL: I think that's a great idea actually because I think we've all kind of commiserated before that. There's probably a lot of good ideas that don't ever get mentioned because they don't know this program exists. And then we get 75 percent of these that are -- let's go to a 32-hour work week. So I think we could also spend some time explaining what a novel and worthwhile award would be. So just not for our time, but for the people that submit these and review them at the agency to say, this is actually worthwhile and you can earn some money from this. And yes, I'm in a weird spot because I approved the decision to revert all of our money, not as a board member, but as a member of GFO. So, sorry, but, I don't know how to separate those two. So we gave back \$28,000, I guess, roughly I think we had.

HUGHES: I think that was the number that I saw because I was talking with my deputy about it. But then the legislature said, no, they need funds.

POWELL: Yeah. So we got a little bit back, but we gave back all sorts. But I guess if it really comes down to it, and we use some of that administrative budget and we do give out more awards then we can always go to the IFC and say, we made good use of your money, can we have a little bit more? Because we have a track record of 10 years of barely giving out anything. So I think they'd like to actually give some money away for making the state operate better. So yeah, I mean, I think that's a great idea.

MILLER: Okay. Is an investment to promote the committee to make it more -- because I was on the -- I didn't even know what the committee was and I was part of it. I didn't even find out how it all worked. So, it's not like we're standing on the rooftops announcing things. So, a little funds spent towards like Carrie is stating, I think would be a great idea.

COOK: Mm-hm. I agree.

HUGHES: So, this isn't an action item, so we can't, and certainly the legislative session hasn't ended yet and there's still possibility of changes.

POWELL: Sure.

HUGHES: But maybe for the next meeting, we can put something on as an action item.

POWELL: I think that's a great idea too. Utilize some portion of that budget to purchase, design, spread the word somehow. I don't think anybody would be disappointed to see the money being spent not on in-state travel somewhere, but on actually publications.

MILLER: We'll pack the convention center.

POWELL: Okay. Everybody gets a lunch and then we'll be in the hall. So, yeah. I guess there is nothing to vote on other than moving on to action item nine. I suppose our next meeting will be after LOI becomes our budgets and then we can see exactly how much we have to work with and what we'd like to do with it. So I appreciate the suggestion. So do we vote to move to act on number nine or do we just move on since there's really no. Okay. How about this? Is there a motion to move on to action item nine? Are we satisfied with our discussion in action item eight.

MILLER: Aye.

POWELL: All right. We have a motion from Brian. Do we have a second?

HUGHES: I second.

POWELL: All right. Please state your affirmation otherwise, if we have satisfied everything we wanted to in action item eight.

ALL: Aye.

POWELL: All right. Moving on to action item nine, discussion of upcoming meeting. So as it relates to item eight, we shouldn't do it any time before June 2nd because we'd like to see what we have in terms of a budget.

MILLER: Amen.

POWELL: I mean, but that's a drop in the bucket compared to six billion dollars. So I can't imagine they'd claw that back. But who knows? Upcoming meetings. I guess it once again relates to how many suggestions we actually have. And I think we did table Philip Moralez one more time, so I hate to keep him waiting. But it'd also be weird to convene an entire meeting just to settle the idea of Philip Moralez if we don't have any more suggestions. So do we have any in the queue?

WALSH: Yes, there are.

POWELL: Enough?

WALSH: Oh, like there's none that are like ready.

POWELL: Okay.

WALSH: But I'm working on getting responses on quite a few.

POWELL: So would there be enough to possibly hold one early July or?

WALSH: Possibly.

WALSH: It just depends when they get an answer.

POWELL: Yeah. Okay.

MILLER: There's no emergency sessions. I'm just thinking out loud.

WALSH: End of mid-July, August.

POWELL: Okay. I'm on a lot of leave in August, so we'll have to work that out or do it without me. But other than that, I'm open to most any dates. So, I can defer to everybody else's schedule. Just keeping in mind that August is probably my worst month. I use all my leave in August for the year.

MILLER: I'm cool with July because I hope to take a vacation. Hope to take a vacation in August as well.

POWELL: So maybe late July or early September, maybe we'll shoot for something around that.

MILLER: Talk to the board and see what sticks.

POWELL: Unless we get inundated and requests that we get responses to.

HUGHES: So we hopefully can also bring the meeting minutes for this meeting. So there'll be a couple items.

POWELL: Okay. Great. All right. In that case we have tentative meeting sometime late July, early August. Nothing set in stone, but we will share that as it gets nearer and the workload substantiates the need or available workload that's been processed or gotten responses or things of that matter. So is there a motion to consider action item nine settled at the moment?

MILLER: Motion to tentatively scheduled for late July, early August.

POWELL: All right. Thank you. Brian, do we have a second?

HUGHES: Second.

POWELL: All right. Please take your affirmation. Otherwise, we consider item nine satisfied.

ALL: Aye.

POWELL: All right. In that case, moving on to action item 10, board comments. Anybody have anything they'd like to say regarding any previous action items or anything else we might have discussed today?

COOK: I just like to say we've done like impeccable from where we started from to where we are now. It's incredible. Beautiful.

POWELL: I'm glad we agree. We're getting there. It's just funny that they become farther and farther apart. So I get rusty and rusty and rustier.

COOK: Right -- right.

POWELL: So our efficiencies are lost based on the stumbling of new words repeatedly. But thank you for the kind compliments, same for everybody else. Anybody else have anything else to say?

MILLER: Well, I like the PR idea. The more people know, the more ideas will come in and the stronger committee will grow and monies will be appropriated to great ideas.

POWELL: Yeah. I concur with that. I'd like to see some, you know, I get excited when I see good ideas.

MILLER: Yeah.

POWELL: So maybe the word getting out there will help us see some things that we've never thought of.

MILLER: Yeah. It gives workers a voice and I know they appreciate that. So that's good.

POWELL: Anybody else have any board comments? All right. Can I have a motion to consider item 10 settled? Settled, we'll use the word settled.

MILLER: Motion to consider item 10 settled.

POWELL: Thank you. Brian. Do we have second.

HUGHES: Carrie Hughes, second.

POWELL: Great. Please state your affirmations, otherwise you consider action item 10 settled.

ALL: Aye.

POWELL: All right. Action. Item 11, public comment. No vote or action may be taken upon a matter raised during public comment until the matter itself has been specifically included on the agenda as an item upon which an action may be taken. Comments will be limited to five minutes per person and person's making comment will be asked to begin by stating their names for the record and spell their last name. And for the record, we have nobody from the public in any of our locations, be it DHRM south nor in Tracy Cook's office. So that being said, motion to consider Item 11 satisfied.

MILLER: Brian Miller, motion to consider public comment, item 11, satisfied.

POWELL: Thank you. Do we have second?

COOK: Tracey Cook, second.

POWELL: All right. Please state your affirmations or otherwise as it relates to action item 11.

ALL: Aye.

POWELL: All right. Moving on, that's item 12, adjournment. Motion to adjourn. Carrie Hughes, I motion to adjourn. Great. Do we have a second?

MILLER: Brian Miller, second.

POWELL: Thank you both. With that being said, please state your affirmation. Otherwise, if you wish to adjourn this May 15th, 2025 meeting of the Merit Award Board.

ALL: Aye.

POWELL: Great. We are adjourned.