



State of Nevada  
**MERIT AWARD BOARD**



**“Good Government, Great Employees”**

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

*Steve Sisolak*  
Governor

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**MERIT AWARD BOARD**  
**August 17, 2022 – 1:30 PM**

**Nevada State Library**  
**Archives & Public Records**  
**100 North Stewart Street Board Room 101**  
**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**  
**(pending Board approval)**

**Merit Award Board**

**Members**

**Present:** Rachel Baker, Division of Human Resource Management  
Karen Hall, Governor's Finance Office  
Lorayn Walser, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)  
Gordon Milden, Representative, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

**Members**

**Absent:** Monica McJoy, Office of the Governor

**Other**

**Attendee(s):** Jade Bonds, Personnel Analyst, Division of Human Resource Management

**I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL**

**Secretary Rachel Baker:** Called the meeting to order at 1:47 p.m. and extended a welcome to the new Board members.

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**III. ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 20, 2018, MEETING – FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

**Rachel Baker:** Stated that since only two members of the Board were there for the meeting, and two members did not constitute a quorum for the purposes of approval, the minutes of this meeting would have to remain unapproved/unadopted.

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

**A. Approval of Board Chair**

**Rachel Baker:** Stated that historically the Board seated the Governor’s representative as the Chair, but there was no statute stating that the Chair had to be from the Governor’s Office. Since Monica McJoy was not present at the meeting, this particular agenda item would be tabled.

**V. OLD BUSINESS – FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

Agency updates on realized savings

**A. Haaland McIntire**

**B. Cassandra Shelton**

**C. Linda Lamm and Cheryl Puckoris**

**D. Erich Drakeley**

**Rachel Baker:** Stated that she believed all hear them all together and then vote.

**Haaland McIntire:** The subject of the suggestion was to eliminate duplication from paper direct deposit advices for state employees’ travel advances, and other reimbursements to save on material costs, postage, labor and time. According to Amber Law, this suggestion was not implemented.

**Cassandra Shelton:** The subject of the suggestion was improving the bank statement procedure process. The Board did get some information from the Deputy Treasurer who stated that the suggestion was not a clear and specific part of her job responsibilities, but according to Amber Law, this suggestion was not implemented.

**Linda Lamm and Cheryl Puckoris:** The subject of the suggestion was electronic payments for Fast Track claims in the Unclaimed Property Division in the Treasurer's Office. Per Amber Law, this suggestion was not implemented.

**Erich Drakeley** The subject of the suggestion was a \$10 dollar late fee on expired driver licenses after 30 days. Currently their system does not automatically charge this late fee unless a box is checked during the renewal transaction. The agency was still considering implementing the suggestion and was recommended to be tabled until further notice.

**Gordon Milden:** Stated that if the agencies say they can't implement the suggestions, we can't force them to, so we need to go by the agency decisions and deny the suggestions.

MOTION: Moved to deny Agenda Items 5A-C and to table Agenda Item 5D until more information is received.  
BY: Gordon Milden  
SECOND: Karen Hall  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

## VI. EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS – FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

### A. Ylexis Sizemore

**Rachel Baker:** stated her the suggestion was when an ineligible claim stays in an ineligible status until someone withdraws the claim, when the claimant is eligible, they cannot open a claim on CSS until the previous ineligible claim has been withdrawn. There was some discussion in 2018 and the representative indicated that the agency wouldn't provide that kind of personal information outside the agency. Christine Boggs, in a recent conversation stated that after all of the data was pulled, it determined that the system worked. There were no problems with it, and the agency stands by their denial. To consider the employee's suggestion would take away a claimant's due process.

MOTION: Moved to deny Agenda Item 6A.  
BY: Karen Hall  
SECOND: Lorayn Walser  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

### B. Elizabeth Moore

**Rachel Baker:** stated this had been reviewed. **Karen Hall:** wanted to clarify that there has been no additional notification from the department on their lack of support or this not moving forward again. **Rachel Baker:** responded no, per Mike Strom, Administrator, the suggestion led to guidance being added to their procedures. However, the suggestion was for the statewide implementation of reducing office supply wasted, and he said that statewide implementation program will not be implemented. Continuing, he stated that it would cost more in the long run to implement it. **Gordon Milden:** questioned why a

friendly email to let them know that when submitting documents for archiving, to not include paperclips or binder clips couldn't be sent out. **Rachel Baker:** stated the response indicated that it was the archivist's job to remove any metal.

MOTION: Moved to deny Agenda Item 6B  
BY: Gordon Milden  
SECOND: Lorayn Walser  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion

### **C. Alexander Filatov II**

**Rachel Baker:** said the subject of the suggestion was to accept automated digital versions of tax forms for processing. The response from the agency was that while the agency appreciated his suggestion, they have already made an effort to modernize the online filing process with those steps having been taken prior to his submission to the Board.

MOTION: Moved to deny Agenda Item 6C  
BY: Karen Hall  
SECOND: Gordon Milden  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion

### **D. James Rutski**

**Rachel Baker:** explained that the suggestion proposed to replace the senior correctional officer rank with corporal, to reduce the amount of sergeants statewide from 60 to 70. Sergeants responsible for training, coaching and mentoring subordinate corporals.

The response provided by John Borrowman, Deputy Director Support Services, Nevada Department of Corrections (NDOC) indicated that this suggestion did not appear to have merit. NDOC would need to be the agency that would choose to implement this suggestion, if warranted, and would work with the Division of Human Resource Management (DHRM) in the revision of the relevant class specifications DHRM also provided a response stating that it did not have the authority to revise the class specifications and/or change the way the agency managed the affairs of the department absent a request by NDOC. The only change for this classification was the title only which would not reduce costs to the agency. Senior positions are fully occupied and are unable to assume more duties, already perform the work specified in the class specified in the class concept, and already perform the duties recommended be assigned to the re-titled corporals. In response to the second suggestion, the reduction recommendation to staffing, did not provide for the capacity to avoid cost of additional staffing. The suggestion has not been adopted.

MOTION: Moved to deny Agenda Item 6D.  
BY: Lorayn Walser  
SECOND: Karen Hall  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### **E. Mary Pizzariello**

**Rachel Baker:** stated that the employee's suggestion was for covered parking via solar panels. The response from Aaron Wike, Management Analyst IV, Public Works Division, said that there was nothing suggesting that operations will be improved by installing a solar panel system at Grant Sawyer Building; and with the limited financial incentives available for these solar power systems, the State Public Works Division feels that the total cost of the solar panel parking structures outweigh the economic benefit received by the State.

MOTION: Moved to deny Agenda Item 6E.  
BY: Gordon Milden  
SECOND: Lorayn Walser  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### **F. Marty Elzy**

**Rachel Baker:** said that the subject of his suggestion is to create an on-line program for WPS' and appraisals. The response from DHRM was that the suggestion must be rejected. An online version of the NPD-14 form was implemented in NEATS in May, 2017, so was being implemented at the time of the receipt of his suggestion in 2018. An online performance evaluation function had already been designed and was awaiting testing due to begin in Calendar Year 2019.

MOTION: Moved to deny Agenda Item 6E.  
BY: Karen Hall. She wanted it known for the record that the Board's movement or non-movement of those suggestions that departments' have denied was standard practice, and that Board would not move against the department's decision.  
SECOND: Lorayn Walser  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### **G. Lynn Purvis**

**Rachel Baker:** The suggestion regarded shared mobile Lidar resources between the Location Division and Roadway Systems for NDOT. The agency's response was that this merit award suggestion was already being considered prior to the employee's submission and should be rejected.

MOTION: Moved to deny Agenda Item 6G  
BY: Gordon Milden  
SECOND: Karen Hall  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### **H. Ashley Balducci**

**Rachel Baker:** stated that her suggestion from the PCU was on-site childcare for State employees and the response from the agency was that with limited space available, Public Works is concerned that allocating Grant Sawyer square footage to a daycare would displace one or more state agencies. So, they have rejected that suggestion. **Lorayn**

**Walser** moved to deny the suggestion, however, added that it was unfortunate that it could not go through.

MOTION: Moved to deny Agenda Item 6H  
BY: Lorayn Walser  
SECOND: Karen Hall  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

### **I. Reginald Gregory**

**Rachel Baker:** stated the suggestion was to make access Nevada more accessible and user-friendly to customers by using a smartphone app. The agency does not recommend adoption of this suggestion because it was under active consideration. The agency recently modernized the Access Nevada Application, and it can be used by any mobile device. They were monitoring the adoption rate of the new application and would determine whether a phone app was necessary. They have rejected the suggestion based on that. **Lorayn Walser:** asked if not recommending (the adoption) was the same thing as denying it. **Rachel Baker:** responded that it was because it had been under active consideration before the submission.

MOTION: Moved to deny Agenda Item 6I.  
BY: Lorayn Walser  
SECOND: Gordon Milden  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

### **J. Brandon Charles**

**Rachel Baker:** stated the subject of the suggestion regarded restructuring the upper to middle management within NDOT crews. He believed that the State would save money by having one Supervisor I over two maintenance crews or a Supervisor I over no less than 12 fulltime - give or take a couple - of employees. The current procedure was that each maintenance crew had a Supervisor I. Some crews had as little as three to four people. Each crew had a Supervisor I and a Highway Maintenance Worker IV. Some crews only had two full-time employees under the Highway Maintenance Worker IV. At NDOT there were Supervisor IIs over four crews.

The agency rejected the suggestion because each maintenance crew is responsible for a distinct geographical area or specialized in a trade utilized district wide such as landscape, bridge maintenance, storm water, etc. Crew sizes vary based on area assigned considering difference in maintenance needs such as rural highways versus urban freeway. These crews work independently on the field about 90 percent of the time, using heavy equipment and various tools. A Supervisor I was responsible for the work crew, making sure that the maintenance task could be carried out considering employee and public safety. Supervisors I were on the jobsite not only supervising, but performing manual labor approximately 80 percent of the time, providing on-the-job training to junior staff. Based on previous experience the department believed that assigning multiple crews to a Supervisor I would lead to inadequate training, increased inefficiency and accident rates due to lack of

supervision, increased overtime and increased travel time. **Karen Hall:** moved to deny but wanted to put it on the record that it appeared that NDOT's span of control for their supervisory staff was really stressed out at the max and with a lot of people per supervisor.

MOTION: Moved to deny Agenda Item 6J.  
BY: Karen Hall  
SECOND: Lorayn Walser  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### **K. Sara Batey**

**Rachel Baker:** stated that her suggestion regarded inputting of documentation into AVATAR for electronic records. The current procedure was writing all documentation out on a hard copy of paper and then manually inputting documentation into electronic records at a later time. The agency responded that efficiencies could be realized in that DCFS staff could enter information into the system during time spent with the child and family however, Medicaid allows 10 minutes of a 60-minute appointment to be dedicated to documenting the service provided. It was best practice to document the service after the session was completed with the client, so the staff member was giving the client their focused attention on the mental health issue they were presenting with.

The reason for the rejection was that it had been considered by the department in the past. There was a past attempt to implement the use of laptops with the Mobile Crisis response team as they provide services in the community. However, clinicians found the use of laptops cumbersome and intrusive in their therapeutic process. They indicated there was not sufficient information contained within this request to demonstrate that the increased efficiency would offset the cost, while not creating a potentially negative effect in therapeutic intervention to children and families. **Gordon Milden:** understood that the reason for rejection was that laptops were found to be cumbersome and intrusive. He remarked that laptops were quite efficient especially if they were going to see clients out in the field. Instead of coming back and dictating all the notes later on paper, or at a desktop at work, once they leave the patient they could go in the car and type up the notes really quick and go on to the next patient.

MOTION: Moved to deny Agenda Item 6K  
BY: Gordon Milden  
SECOND: Lorayn Walser  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### **L. Debra Hollis**

**Rachel Baker:** stated that the subject of suggestion was "Applications" and added that employee was from the Division of Welfare. She suggested the wording on the applications should be updated; most people don't read the first few pages of the instructions on the SNAP applications. There should be a highlighted box informing the client that would be calling them for a phone interview and a valid phone number would speed up the application process.

Continuing, the employee's suggestion indicated that above the employment information there should be a highlighted box informing client that 30-60 days of paychecks were required. This would eliminate the need to pend for this information. Above any expenses such as daycare, child support payments, etc, there should be a statement asking for proof of these expenses. She believed that these small changes would have a tremendous impact on saving the time the client would have to wait for benefits, the time the Family Services Specialist workers would have to pend for information, and the expense of mailing appointment letters, pending for information, etc.

The response from the agency was to reject this it's not allowable by CFR or best business practices.

MOTION: Moved to deny Agenda Item 6L.  
BY: Gordon Milden  
SECOND: Karen Hall  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

### **M. Guy Puglisi**

**Rachel Baker:** stated that his suggestion was that the State of Nevada should standardize certain supply items to reduce costs statewide instead of relying on each individual person who has access to order supplies to shop around for the lowest costs. *“Recently, when the cost of copy paper increased in the format we were purchasing it at my office. I located the same paper packaged in 2500 sheet boxes instead of 500 sheet reams in cases of 10. Our agency is mandating at a saving of 54 percent. I shared this suggestion with my agency and they now mandate this item to be purchased agencywide when plain white letter size paper is ordered. This will realize a 54 percent saving for agency 407 which is Welfare with an annual savings of \$70,00 savings.”*

The suggestion was intended for statewide consideration and since the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services has already adopted the suggestion; however, because they've already officially adopted the suggestion *prior* to the submission, he would not be eligible per NRS 285.030.

In correspondence with the DAG, it was agreed that Mr. Puglisi was not eligible for an award per NRS 285.050 for his suggestion which had already been adopted by DWSS, but he may be eligible for an award to the extent that the requirements of NRS 285.050 and NRS 285.060 are met for his suggestion submission that affected other agencies. Submitting the suggestion for Statewide consideration involved submitting the suggestion to state agencies potentially affected. Providing that those agencies affected are not already considering the suggestion. NRS 285 does not rule out the possibility of an award simply because an employee's suggestion has already been adopted by another agency.

The suggestion was also submitted to State Purchasing and their response was that the suggestion was sound and represented the direction that State Purchasing had been moving in for the past several years. Per NRS 333.210 State Purchasing has the responsibility to



establish standards for those goods and services used across the state. With the adoption of Nevada Epro, our new statewide eProcurement system, they rolled it out to state agencies in January with a completion date of February 2020. It appeared that the suggestion was already being implemented prior to the employee's submission. **Lorayn Walser:** remarked that it sounded like the DAG said this was not completely ruled out and asked if it could be tabled to get more information from some other agencies who might adopt this. **Gordon Milden:** remarked he had no problem with tabling the suggestion if it meant the possibility of an award for the employee.

MOTION: Moved to table Agenda Item 6M in order to obtain more information.  
BY: Lorayn Walser  
SECOND: Gordon Milden  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### **N. Maria Alberto**

**Rachel Baker:** stated that the subject of suggestion was reducing returned mail expense on notices that were mailed to the client. Currently, the client needs to be pended in order to process their case or if they need to have an interview, a notice is mailed. She believed that if notices included a small dash on the left and right side of edge of the page it would alert the case managers where to fold so the client's address was fully visible.

The response from the agency was that the suggestion was not recommended for adoption. While the agency does concur with the employee that adding these dashes would remove guesswork from the folding of the forms and notices, the cost of updating each form would be extensive. Considering all forms, notices, printers, font size, etc., throughout the agency were not necessarily exact in size, the suggestion would be extremely problematic and expensive to implement with current technology. Each employee was provided with window envelopes at their desk. There was an expectation that the employees double check the address window to ensure the entire address was visible to the post office. While there was no charge to the State of Nevada for returned mail, sending mail with addresses not fully visible would cause the mail to not reach the intended customer. Technology changes, while convenient, cannot necessarily replace an employee's good judgement. At this time, it would not be cost effective, and the agency does not have the ability to make the change.

MOTION: Moved to deny Agenda Item 6N.  
BY: Karen Hall  
SECOND: Lorayn Walser  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### **O. Gina Mick**

**Rachel Baker:** stated her suggestion was to increase Modified Business Tax (MBT) revenue, which contributes to the State's General Fund, and decrease spending on bulk mailing materials, postage, long distance phone charges and labor costs. The present

condition or procedure was that all businesses subject to Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation, Employment Security Division's (DETR-ESD) Unemployment Insurance Tax were also liable to register and pay Modified Business Tax administered by the Department of Taxation. When an employer registered for Unemployment Insurance Tax there was no mention on DETR-Employment Security Division's online registration website page that businesses were also required to register with the Department of Taxation and pay the quarterly Modified Business Tax which was based on total gross wagers reported to DETR-ESD for unemployment insurance taxes.

The response from the agency is the Department of Taxation was that they were appreciative of Ms. Mick's suggestion, but the department's current process was efficient in registering businesses for Modified Business Tax accounts and notifying the business of the responsibility of the filing requirements for this tax type. The implementation of the suggestion could increase workload of the department in having duplicate accounts. Therefore, the department would not be implementing the suggestion.

MOTION: Moved to deny Agenda Item 60  
BY: Gordon Mildner  
SECOND: Lorayn Walser  
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### **VII. DISCUSSION OF DATES FOR THE NEXT MERIT AWARD BOARD MEETING...FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

**Rachel Baker:** stated she would email some dates and times to the members to ascertain a good day for the next Merit Award Board Meeting.

#### **VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

#### **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 2:51 p.m.