



**2019-2021 Member Services Committee – Conference Call  
Tuesday September 14, 2021 – 3:00 pm-3:50 pm**

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<http://www.nahro.org/content/nahro-member-services-committee>

**Attendance Member Services:**

Those on the call: Denita Johnson, Milet Hopping, Rickey Bouffard, Donna Brown-Rego, Eric Chubenko, Kathy Walter, Keon Jackson, Peggy Rice, Dannie Walker, Cynde Smith, Beverly Banks, Billie Shelburn, Sharon Dixson, Jhaila Brown, Liz Morales, Andy Rodriguez, Lori McGowan and Lisa Stevens

Those absent: Randy Waters, Dale Gravett, Gary Centinaro, Joseph Anderson, Anna Judge, Jake Oglesby, Lillian Stringer, Shauna Boom, Karen Reynolds, Larry Guanzon, MaryLiz Paulson, Michele Poletti, Zach Bale, Zachary Guerin, April Thompson, and Revonda Stordahl

**NAHRO Staff:**

Mike Gerber, Interim CEO  
Lori Myers-Carpenter

Denita Johnson welcomed everyone and asked if anyone wanted to share a ripple effect. Kathy Walter said hers was the Alaska Knowledge Exchange she attended, which she'd talk about later in the meeting. Milet Hopping said her agency received a grant from "Your Shot Texas" TX Equitable Vaccine Uptake Fund/Episcopal Health Foundation to provide cash incentives for residents to get vaccinated. She said they are going to offer approx. \$40 per person and local businesses might also donate gift cards to entice others to get vaccinated as well. Liz Morales said about three weeks ago NAHRO coordinated meetings for them to meet with their representatives, which provided them an opportunity to work with other agencies in the area. They are now having additional conversations they never would have had before without these meetings.

Denita said this meeting was bittersweet since it was their last one, and she felt like she never really got to do what she hoped to accomplish this term. She said it was the most unique one ever, not only because of COVID and not being able to meet in person, but because at the first meeting, she no longer had a vice chair and we had to elect a new one. She said she looked for ways to provide the committee with a sense of connection through the ripple effect and somehow, they were able to move forward. They did accomplish a lot of great work even though she was never able to make the changes she anticipated making. She also mentioned she was a bit stretched since after her promotion, she also continued to do her previous job, as well. As so, she thanked staff for helping keep her on track. She said the transitions plan speaks for itself and the committee members should be proud of the work they achieved. She knows the good work will continue as she, hopefully, passes the baton to Milet. She said if she learned anything from 2020 its that you aren't in control and you have to play the hand your dealt. Milet said it was a challenging time, and she felt Denita met the challenge, and she made it easy for

them to continue the work through her strong leadership. Other committee members shared similar comments in the chat.

Next on the agenda staff provided highlights from the Transition report. She said the report covered areas the committee was responsible for such as communicating with members, dues, awards, Emerging Leaders, marketing, the Fellows, IT, the DEI framework, more. She touched on some of the highlights, such as the number of awards of merit increased each year, the names of the individual awards were changed so they represented what the award stood for, and changes were made to the merit scoring process so it would provide additional points to those entries dealing with DEI concepts. A bench market study was created to compare other organization's benefits to NAHRO's in the hopes it would improve benefits and services. The study was shared with the PD committee, which will hopefully create more opportunities for collaboration between the two committees. IT upgrades and proposed new technology was discussed and the IT subcommittee was poised to beta test the new system, which was delayed so their work was put on hold. Emerging Leaders discussed DEI issues, ways to improve communication, and build partnerships. They held a knowledge exchange with the Fellows, and new Fellows were inducted both terms. The committee also discussed the DEI framework, suggesting ideas, which could possibly be used to create an online DEI toolkit. The report also covered the strategic plan and provides recommendations for the next committee. Donna Brown-Rego made a motion to accept the transition report and Milet Hopping gave the second. The motion passed unanimously.

Mike Gerber, NAHRO's Interim CEO, congratulated the committee for their work this term, especially since they were not able to engage like they normally would. He said the issues they are dealing with are right in the forefront and a sign of that is the remarkable amount of money they were able to secure for the capitol fund and the increases they are seeing in other programs. They should give themselves credit for holding everything together in these really challenging times. He said NAHRO needs to keep going now more than ever with money on the table and new professional development programs and conferences. He asked for their help in promoting the conference on October 7-8, and he encouraged them to attend and keep up their role as an ambassador for NAHRO. He said we need our members to be seen and one way to do that is to attend the conference even if its virtually to show we are committed to our industry. He mentioned the committees have been asked to meet in September for their final meeting and the BOG will meet on October 6th. At that time, we will know who the new President is, and he encouraged everyone to vote. He also mentioned during the week of the 11<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> the new committees will come together and hold their elections. The hope is to hold the first BOG meeting under Patricia Wells leadership the following week so they can select the new NAHRO CEO. Finally, he mentioned he was impressed our members sent over 43,000 letters to Congress, and he encouraged them to keep using their voices to make sure our perspectives are heard in policy-making circles. He was also impressed that people at all levels of the organization participated in the letter campaign this time since they knew how important it was. He then thanked the committee again for their work and for Denita's leadership.

Denita asked the members who attended the NAHRO Study Exchange in Alaska to share their experience. Kathy Walter said the trip was amazing, and she learned a lot. She said over the next year there will be sessions on the trip and articles in the journal. She was impressed with

what they have done since basically they only receive grant money once a year, the amount of which hasn't been increased in more than 20 years. She was in the Anchorage group, so she was able to see the work Carol Gore did in the area, most of it through funds she raised outside of the grant. She said in her agency she's heard solar will never work and its hard dealing with two or three different languages, so she was impressed that in Alaska, which has months with no daylight, they have solar energy, and they deal with 100 different dialects. It was eye opening. She also found it interesting they must travel by plane or boat to visit many of their developments since they are so far apart, and that they have a different view of homelessness. Homelessness to them means too many people live in the same unit, not that they are living on the street. Liz Morales said she went to understand the challenges of native American housing in Alaska since she works with native American housing in Arizona. She said they don't have reservations like they do in Arizona, but instead have regional housing authorities. She learned some of the rural locations don't have water or sewage and most don't have roads, so it is expensive to do any type of construction, and if they do it, it has to be tightly planned. She said it made her appreciate the work she can do, and she was very impressed with the work Carol has done. She said when Carol took over, they had around 370 units and now they have over 1700. Liz said it made her want to connect more with her local native American housing authorities because even though its different funding, they do share a lot of the same issues and struggles. Andy Rodriguez said he was impressed with how methodical they were about their buildings and how they involved the community. They have a saying about not doing things to them, but with them. He said at first, Carol had push back since she incorporated a lot of color in the housing and local authorities didn't like it, but now other buildings are doing the same, which shows buy-in from the community. Andy also mentioned they had a chance to do some fishing while they were there, and he caught halibut, rockfish, and salmon. Lisa Stevens added the thing she took away most was the effort and the emphasis they placed on community and making sure the residents felt they were involved and how they included tribal unity to make sure the housing included their heritage. Denita thanked them for sharing, and she said it was good to hear how they dealt with those major issues.

Denita asked if there was any other business. Hearing none, the call ended at 3:50.