

Technology Modernization Board

Meeting Minutes

July 16, 2018

Attendance

PRESENT

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Suzette Kent | Chair |
| 2. Mark Kneidinger | Permanent Member |
| 3. Maria Roat | Permanent Member |
| 4. Charles Worthington | Term Board Member |
| 5. Matt Cutts | Term Board Member |
| 6. Grant Schneider | Alternate Board Member |
| 7. Dr. Erwin Gianchandani | Alternate Board Member |
| 8. Margie Graves | Alternate Board Member |

OTHER ATTENDEES

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. Elizabeth Cain | GSA TMF PMO |
| 2. Jennifer Hanna | GSA TMF PMO |
| 3. James Johnson | GSA TMF PMO |
| 4. Lane Becker | GSA TMF PMO |
| 5. Allison Brigati | General Services Administration |
| 6. Cory Cooke | General Services Administration |
| 7. Andrew Abrams | White House Office of Management and Budget |
| 8. Ben Skidmore | White House Office of Management and Budget |
| 9. Somer Smith | Office of the Federal Chief Information Officer |
| 10. Kasia Chmielinski | The United States Digital Service |
| 11. Julie Meloni | The United States Digital Service |
| 12. Edward Hartwig | The United States Digital Service |

Meeting Minutes

1. USDS gave an overview of the current Visa process
2. The Board reviewed and discussed the ATARC event details for July 26, 2018
3. The Board received an update from the TMF PMO on Phase II projects
4. The Board received an update from the TMF PMO on the TMF PMO outreach strategy
5. The Board approved meeting minutes as presented with the exception of an editorial modification
6. The Board adjourned.

Action Items

1. The TMF PMO will continue to monitor ATARC registration information and do an update on the industry and government split.
2. The TMF PMO will put together talking points for the board moderated panel and provide an answer in response to industry submitting proposals.
3. The TMF PMO will look for other dates for the GSA conference center for government no press conference.
4. The TMF PMO will work with Mark Kneidinger to connect with his EA about the calendar information for the fellows events.

Meeting Deliberations

1. **Welcome and Opening Remarks** – Suzette Kent, Chair (5 minutes)
 - **SK**- Thanks to USDA for coming in and agreeing to do a TMF Board educational event for the visa process.
2. **Outreach to Congressional Stakeholders Discussion** – Suzette Kent, Chair (5 minutes)
 - **SK**- The senate bill will go to the floor this week and it looks like they will do good on our request. We have provided all of the information they were looking for. They [the appropriators] complimented the TMF website. Maybe we can figure out some sequence where through direct distribution or media where we state that the Board wants more proposals.
 - **SK**- When we intend to make awards going forward we told them [the appropriators] that we would make them aware of what was being funded. If someone came back and asked for repayment change congress would also be notified of this. One of the questions they hit hard on is how do they know we didn't fund a project that they had turned down. Our response was we are using RMO for this and OFCIO team, but if we miss something we will come back and we will ask them specifically.
3. **Visa Process Overview**—Board (30 minutes)
 - **MC**-USDA had asked USDS to look at the H2A process. Turns out whenever farmers want to submit an application for a visa its hard and complicated. As a result of this sprint there were different recommendations made (technical, process legislative, etc). There are some folks like DOL who want to revamp entire visa process. This will not be an easy one stop shop. But the lower hanging fruit is the H2A visa process.
 - **SK**- Federal leadership would like to update the entire visa process. Some agencies involved in the process have more access to funding than others. On 7/16 there was a be separate discussion on the overall Visa process which is a separate initiative. We have the same problem about who is actually going to own it. They recommended GSA. The important part here is that the scope for H2A is controlled, and to know that other initiative is separate.

- **MC-** [Starting the visa process overview] If something doesn't make sense please stop to ask questions to make sure everyone understand how this process it fits into the whole picture.
- **JM-** USDS has an H2A specific process with USDA that requires DOL and USCIS. But there is this greater overarching VISA modernization that is separate. It starts with level setting and understanding what all H visas are. They are all vastly different but have 3 similarities (they all run through DOL, CIS and State). The purpose is to fill gaps in the workforce. H2A and H2B are temporary agriculture and non-agriculture workers. A non-agriculture example is oyster farms or crabbers. H3 visas are for non-immigrant trainees like internships. H4 is for dependent spouses of workers. H visas all go through same general process. DOL needs to specify there is a job or industry that has a worker shortage. After this is adjudicated, USCIS gets petitioned for these workers. These are all for unnamed workers. The H2A and H2B visas have a very employer centered focus. The Employer initiates this need with DOL and states that they need X number of works. They work with the recruiters to gather folks and send them to the consular offices from the country they are coming from. This is different from H1, H3, and H4 where it's the worker that initiates.
- **SK-** from a statutory perspective only DOL is empowered to collect the employee data. The mechanism for storage and quality verification needs to be at DOL. On the individual side only USCIS has this authority. They need to own the data models, etc and all things regarding management of the data. If this changes the law will need to change.
- **JM-** USDA has no statutory authority to do anything with this process except they have oversight and advisory role. It does say in the law that they have advisory capacity. USDA is singularly focused on helping to create a better interaction for the growers needing to hire workers through H2A program. The reason it is difficult is because theres a lot of forms and things to keep track of. Farmers need to farm and not be visa experts. They shouldn't need to hire a lawyer to hire a farm worker. 90% of this year's H2A job workers have come from growers using lawyers/agents to fill out the forms. USDA wants to solve this problem for individual growers.
- **SV-** It's also an issue with the timeline. It takes so long. Last year they had industries where they couldn't get crops off the field, etc because they weren't able to get workers because of this process. They hit the crop insurance quota.
- **JM-** One grower we talked to bought \$80K in special equipment so they could roll the pumpkins so the workers they had could pick them up before their visas expired. They lost 30% that year because of this. This process is onerous because the forms are overpublicated.
- **JM-** I believe DOL is the most capable in terms of their in house tech expertise, who they are contracting with, and their project plan. I trust what they are saying and it looks fine. USCIS is operating under different mandates. They are working on e-processing by 2020. CIS is focused on their internal digitalization of forms and have said they don't care about passing of information between agencies and its not a priority for them.
- **MC-** CIS has a new director and wants to go paperless by 2020. Collateral damage of going paperless by 2020 means they aren't hearing the priority operationally.

- **JM**- For all of the H visas the I-129 form is central to all of them. This is a 14 page document that needs to get filled out for all visas. Last week one of USCIS representatives said they are working on segmenting out the I-129 into parts A and B. So if you are only getting one type of visa, you need to only fill out a specific part. If there is a single tool that combines this process into one the number of paths the user needs to take is much smaller.
- **SV**- OIRA is changing the requirement to run the advertisement in the newspaper. I directly asked each of secretaries if they want to own it and they all said no. we are going to continue the conversation. USCIS is reconsidering because part of the discussion is who has the authority and who is empowered. We did propose a governance board like geo-spatial model where every agencies that has equities is involved and its chaired by OMB. Proposals to own it was GSA or like the geospatial model which could work but it moves very slowly. These discussions are ongoing but have senior attention. In short term probably will fund a PMO while we continue discussions about operating model.
- **MR**- What are they scared about?
- **JM**: It's all about tech but it doesn't change any adjudication process. They are changing the interface and interaction with the public and with that comes issues with training and call center... which they aren't ready to do. Also, it's a lot of moving pieces and dependencies on each other. If DOL can't make the connection to CIS it all falls apart.
- **JM**- There was something said in the last meeting minutes of the working session. This is a H2B issue [referring to the mention of oysters]. Also, as far as we can tell only DOL is building something and we think it's not smoke and mirrors. If USDA wants to create a better tool, okay, but if the goal is to turn the 90% of growers using lawyers/agents into 0%, the technical solution will be different. What USDA wants to achieve is the most crucial question to this. USDA will not be able to authenticate proxies and DOL has this covered. USDS will not put USDA in a position to spend money for the wrong thing. We don't know if USDS is prepared to write anything for phase 2 for USDA because they have no authority in the H2A process.
- **JM**- I will ask Kristie Boswell [if the goal is to create a better tool or reduce the % of growers using lawyers to fill out the visa forms]. Depending on the answer it may change the technical solution.
- **AA**- If USDA doesn't have the base capability how are they able to do this? What is their repayment case?
- **MC**- Good argument. Money gets saved but it's hard to put finger on how exactly can the funds can get paid back.
- **CW**- Why would be build a new better way to fill out the form for an agency that has no role?
- **MC**- USDA wants one stop shop.
- **MG**- Why not have a URL on farmers.gov that ports them over to DOL?
- **JM**- The growers do this [visa applications] year over year. All they are doing is changing the dates of need. If you can fill out one form and house the data in one place and use it

year over year you have reduced the cost to the farmers and increased efficiency of the process. None of this has to do with saving money for USDA. Chad Sheridan said they don't know why they have a TMF proposal. USDA would have done something to help their users anyway. It will be hard to write a phase II proposal.

- **SK-** They [USDA] used the TMF to bring everyone else to the table.
- **MC:** Does everyone have a good understanding now of the visa process?
- **SK-** There are other processes carried about by USCIS like making sure workers are where they are supposed to be and leave they should. There is argument that their mission extends to the backend.

4. **ATARC Event Discussion-** Board (10 Minutes)

- **EC:** For the event we are planning to kick off the opening and then a panel, break, and a last panel with industry. We are interested in making this a board event. Suzette do you want to kick us off with your thoughts?
- **SK-** There is multiple purposes. Part of purpose is for us to continue to get the message out about the vehicle and opportunity to create shared information with the agencies and transmit the information and get more proposals in. Then we talked about if we flipped industry and board members, would it be worthwhile to say in one of these sessions we ask the press to leave so people could ask questions? We don't want the CIOs, CFOs, etc to be hindered and we don't want potential misunderstandings about how questions get asked. If the second purpose is to encourage proposals is this best to do with or without press? When press is there I see people not asking questions.
- **MK:** The press may get a kernel and run with it and exploit it. Pulling the press out at the end makes sense.
- **SK-** Other thoughts? Agreed.
- **SS:** Most people registered are from industry (80%). Small amount are feds.
- **EC-** We can also run one event and then we can do a different event along a similar theme where it is more Q/A
- **MR-** So you're thinking do this as a press event and then do a separate event?
- **SK-** Lets do a watch on that attendance
- **EC-** We want to make sure we are still on track with this event and then maybe hold another event and narrow it down to soliciting.
- **SK-** Can we have an agreed on board statement for questions [from industry] like "How would I get an idea in?" Some well worded [answer] like "you need to work with an agency, etc."
- **EC-** We will clean up the TPs and circulate in preparation of the event. We can also do a moderated panel where we choose not to do QA from audience but talk about the points we want to touch on.
- **SS:** Also [we should think] about the PMs. [For instance] As a PM I might need \$5M for cloud and can go to CIO and say, how about TMF?

- **MC:** Isn't there a joint CIO and CTO meeting [coming up]?
- **EC:** If we can piggyback on that existing event that would be great
- **SK-** There is a joint CIO and CTO meeting in August
- **SK:** Going back to discussion on appropriations....can we ask each of panelists to talk a little about their experience and perspective that they bring to the board as part of their opening? This really resonated with the appropriators as I talked to them about your backgrounds and how we have multi perspective expertise. This would be part of telling a great story. We can do a 3 minute piece of unique perspective. G
- **EC:** We can build that into the sample. For CIO and CFO council meeting can we pulse availability and turn the short time we have on TMF into a QA session.
- **SK-** Yes, it would be good to let people ask questions and hear perspectives.
- **EC:** We will set up second conference in August at the CIO/CFO event.

5. **Update on Phase II Projects-** GSA PMO (5 minutes)

- **EC:** [For the] USACE proposal, the project team connected with their CFO they found an alternate way to fund and withdrew. The GSA team for PMIS completed their pilot for last week and determined they would need to go an alternate path. We are giving them time to sit and figure out the path forward.
- **AB:** They are asking for 6 weeks
- **EC:** [For the] DO: and USDA ones you guys got an overview. There really is the question about should USDA be doing anything? Any thoughts or advice for how we can partner with these agencies to untangle it?
- **SK:** After the conversation with Kristie [Boswell] can we do an update back to this group?

6. **TMF PMO Planned Outreach Activities-** GSA PMO (10 Minutes)

- **JH:** We have a good pipeline of potential proposals. We have about 10 proposals in the pipeline. Of the 10, we have 2 concepts that were submitted recently. One of the concepts is interesting- it's a joint proposal between HHS and VA for a patient care portal that allows for clinical staff and the individual to interact with patient health care records for behavior health. The PMO met with the project team last week to give them our feedback, and they are updating the concept. We should see that back in the next couple of week. Also, as a follow up from the OMB roadshow the PMO has developed an outreach strategy which we will be kicking off in the next two weeks. Initially we will be targeting the CIOs and Deputy CIOs and doing a TMF overview and deep dive sessions. We have termed these "TMF Ask Me Anything Sessions" and have blocked off Tuesday and Thursdays. Also, we would like to meet with the CIOs to have strategy sessions for how they will solicit proposal ideas from within their agency. From these meetings we hope to get referrals to the project working level teams that are dealing with legacy IT or have great ideas for modernization efforts. From there, we plan to meet with these teams and work with them on their ideas. If they are good candidates for TMF we will help them to get it written in a proposal. The last part of our outreach includes working directly with you, the Board members. We know the CIO community is

a tight knit community, we would like to partner with you in some of those discussion. We don't have to do this but it may be a good tactic to take.

- CW- We are giving a brief to the president management fellows [soon], etc. They have connections to the C suite. Might be good for them to know this is a place that exists.
- LC- We would love to connect with that community as well.
- SS- Also, the PMC fellows. It's a 6 month cohort of SESers. I will send you the program information.
- MK- We meet twice a year with the CFO Act CIOs. Also, at least once a year meet with the non-CFO Act CIOs. My EA will give you the calendar [information].
- SK- This is something where if we have a meeting when we have extra time we can talk about. We have another request from the railroad board. They 10M lines of cobolt code. They were asking for oversight and direction which I know we didn't want to do originally.
- EC- We can connect them with 18F and centers [Centers of Excellence at GSA]
- MG- Recommend connection them with HUD [who was just awarded TMF funds for a similar project]
- SK: this not the first time we've been asked this. How do we make it so we aren't a weapon of high risk projects. We should think about how we want to formulate a response. I told him I would reach out afterwards to figure out what the path forward is.

7. July 9 Meeting Minutes review and approval- Suzette Kent (2 minutes)

- Approved with the exception of an editorial change to modify "oysters" to "strawberries" in reference to H2A visas.

8. Next Steps and Confirmation of Action Items- Board (3 minutes)