

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE UNITED STATES

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PRESIDENT'S MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD

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MINUTES

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THURSDAY  
DECEMBER 19, 2013

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The Board met telephonically at 3:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Beth Cobert, Chair, presiding.

PMAB MEMBERS PRESENT:

- BETH COBERT, Chair
- SAM GILLILAND, Member
- JEFF KINDLER, Member
- GAIL McGOVERN, Member
- SHANTANU NARAYAN, Member
- ENRIQUE SALEM, Member

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT STAFF PRESENT:

- STEVE BROCKELMAN, PMAB Executive Director and Designated Federal Officer, General Services Administration
- DUSTIN BROWN, Office of Management and Budget
- KATIE MALAGUE, Office of Management and Budget

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## **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Katie Malague, a Performance Manager at OMB, called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

### **Reminder about FACA Guidelines**

Ms. Malague said the President's Management Advisory Board operates as a committee under the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act. The meeting was recorded and will be available on the White House's website.

### **OMB Updates/Transitions**

Ms. Malague introduced the new Chair of PMAB, Beth Cobert, OMB Deputy Director for Management. Chair Cobert said that, in recent months, OMB has taken on a new Director, Sylvia Mathews Burwell, as well as new Deputy Directors, Brian Deese and herself. Chair Cobert's long experience at McKinsey and Associates was wide-ranging but often focused on customer service and talent management. A focus on better management practices is shared across the OMB leadership team, which is working together to maximize the management and budget missions of the organization.

### **Member Introductions**

Members of the President's Management Advisory Board introduced themselves.

## **MANAGEMENT AGENDA UPDATE**

### **Outline of Management Agenda Themes**

Chair Cobert provided an update on some of the key themes of the President's second-term management agenda. OMB has been working with agencies to develop management-effectiveness improvement strategies, and the design effort is still under way. OMB has focused on four pillars of the second-term management agenda: 1) effectiveness, 2) efficiency, 3) economic growth and 4) people and culture. OMB is searching for ways to reach across and within agencies with respect to each of these pillars, especially in terms of tangible, measurable impacts. Management and budget efforts have been integrated to ensure continued progress against these pillars in an environment of continued fiscal constraint

### **Anticipated Implementation Approach**

Thus far, OMB has focused on the design of the approach to drive progress against the pillars. In the new year, efforts will shift toward implementation. Chair Cobert's team is focused on integrating the focus of PMAB with the goals of the President's management priorities through the GPRA Modernization Act, realizing measurability and accountability will be very important in this phase. OMB is determining near-term goals and making progress toward them, as well as identifying follow-on initiatives that should be implemented to maximize success.

**POTENTIAL FOCAL AREAS FOR PMAB**

OMB staff has developed proposed focus areas for PMAB that they believe will help advance the goals of the President's Management Agenda. The proposed focus areas were designed to leverage the valuable experience and lessons learned of the PMAB membership.

OMB suggests that PMAB focus in 2014 on Customer Service and creating a Culture of Excellence.

**Customer Service**

Oftentimes, federal service providers operate in an environment where no alternative provider exists. Therefore, the government should find ways that it can "raise the bar on itself." How can we foster great systems and processes? How can we elicit customer feedback to drive improvement? Citizens and customers of federal agencies increasingly expect government's customer service to match that provided by private organizations. The resultant systems should be user-centric, measured according to pertinent and reliable metrics, and characterized by well-designed systems of accountability.

Member Gilliland asked where PMAB might focus its energies more specifically in order to develop effective approaches. Chair Cobert said design and use of metrics would be helpful. PMAB can also help develop cross-agency process tools. Member McGovern suggested focusing on one agency with one set of customer service activities. PMAB has been most effective when it was given a clearly defined challenge and end-state for which to develop solutions. Member Narayan said PMAB needs to be able to visualize success in order to accomplish its goals. Chair Cobert said the focus area will become more refined in the time before the next PMAB meeting. Member Narayan asked what came of PMAB-suggested focus areas, especially with respect to finding efficiencies in federal facilities and fostering innovation. Chair Cobert said work on facilities has continued, and OMB staff can report back what has happened there. OMB believes innovation-fostering will be promulgated amid a culture of excellence, effectiveness and engagement.

**Culture of Excellence**

Chair Cobert said a federal workforce that is focused and engaged will be

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necessary to accomplish the President's Management Agenda. Managers need to figure out how to foster these attributes in a climate of fiscal constraint. The pay freezes, furloughs and shutdown of the past few years have taken a toll on employee morale. The Federal Employment Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) helps identify areas to address, and recent designs of the Survey have enabled managers to drill down to views held at the program-unit level. How can we leverage the FEVS to engage the workforce, recognizing that different agencies will have different needs? OMB seeks to learn the individual experience of PMAB members in terms of engaging their workforces in building a culture of excellence.

Member McGovern asked whether the various agencies are widely divergent in terms of employee satisfaction and engagement, "or is it more shades of gray?" Chair Cobert said the range is wide. The Partnership for Public Service, which gauges federal workforce satisfaction, has found a range of approximately 30% across federal agencies. Member Gilliland said PMAB has worked on improving the system for SES performance appraisal, as well as instituting training sessions for SES employees to help them get the most from their workers. How is this new focus area different from these prior efforts? Chair Cobert said the goal is to broaden the principles underlying the PMAB's SES work and apply them across the larger workforce. PMAB can help by properly defining the role that top leadership can play, and by laying out how the members facilitate best-practices implementation.

## **PLANNING AHEAD AND NEXT STEPS**

### **Membership**

Member McGovern requested updates at the next meeting on the results of all of the PMAB's prior efforts from past years: performance appraisal, improper payments, strategic sourcing, etc. Chair Cobert said OMB would be happy to provide such an update, as work in these areas is ongoing. Member Salem suggested splitting small groups of the PMAB between focusing on the new areas and continuing to make progress on the prior focus areas. "There's a lot more that we can get out of those initiatives."

New members of the PMAB will be added to the Board on an ongoing basis. Nominees will possess the knowledge, skills, and experience to advance the President's second-term Management Agenda. Current members are encouraged to recommend peers for service on the PMAB.

### **Meeting Schedule for 2014**

Staff are working with PMAB member schedulers to arrange a meeting in the spring. OMB staff are grateful for the PMAB's input and encourage its members to continue providing input for more effective use of time at the upcoming meetings.

Chair Cobert adjourned the meeting at 3:47 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.