

The RI CDHH Commissioner approved the minutes for the 07/21/2010 meeting on September 22, 2010.

Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

July 21, 2010

MEETING MINUTES

Commissioners Attending: *Travis Zellner, Ed Rawlings, Andrew Knight, Christine "Tina" Thompson, James Compton, Sean Gill, James Simon, Mary Wambach, Lisa Lieberman Sack, and Jordan Sack.*

Commissioner(s) not Attending: *John Dunsmore*

Staff Attending: *Steve Florio (Executive Director)*

Public Attending: *Dorothy Hodge, Karen Davis, Jeannie Desmarais-Valdez, Jesus Colon, and Dr. Steven Sack*

Communication Accommodations:

Interpreters: Elizabeth Nadolski and Heather Piasczyk
CART service: Shelly Deming

Location: *Conference Room A at the Department of Administration building (One Capitol Hill) in Providence, RI*

The meeting was called to order by Chair Travis Zellner at 6:10 pm.

CHAIR' REPORT:

- 1) Chair Travis wanted to bring two updates to the Commissioners about the Rhode Island School for the Deaf. This month, the RI Dept of Education Board of Regents approved the transfer of power from the RIDE to the Board of Trustees. Two vacancies of the Board should be filled shortly as told by the RIDE not a long ago. Secondly, the new building will be open for the academic year this fall.

The Blue Ribbon Cutting Ceremony is tentatively scheduled on September 29th. More detailed information will be announced once they become available.

- 2) Chair Travis announced that Commissioners' vote on the recommendation for all commissioners' "hearing" seats on June 23, 2010 is an automatic out of order. He said the commissioners were not supposed to enter the executive session to discuss on candidates' qualifications before they made decision to vote on the recommendation for the "hearing" seats because the candidates chose their interview to be held in the open session. He suggested that we hold this until the old business as to how we proceed with this.

- 3) Questions/Answers:

Lisa Sack asked how many students currently enroll at the RISD. Chair Travis did not have the definite number but he assumed it is somewhere between 80 and 90 students. Mary Wambach added later that RISD has 68 students as of yesterday.

Tina Thompson asked what time the Blue Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will be held. Chair Travis said he does not have the exact time at this point.

Lisa Sack asked if the RISD serves all students from pre-K to 12th Grade. Chair Travis said yes.

Lisa Sack asked if there are any support services to the community such as audiologist, etc.? Chair Travis said it is a good question. There is still a process and opportunity for stakeholders to participate or give feedback about the future of school. There are some ideas as to how to fill up the capacity of school.

Lisa Sack commented suggesting that RISD let students with hearing loss who attend public schools or private school know that the new building is going to be open and their support services are available that they can take advantage of.

SECRETARY:

Mary Wambach reported that she was very busy with her obligations and commitments and she found difficult to complete the Meeting Minutes of June 23, 2010 as well as May 19, 2010. Steve Florio offered to volunteer to do the meeting minutes going forward. Mary Wambach agreed to let Steve to take over this role only.

OLD BUSINESS:

Chair Travis asked that the Commissioners to go into the "interview the candidates" subject.

After a situation on June 23rd was discussed and decided as to how to proceed:

1. Mary Wambach made a motion that all "hearing" candidates will not be interviewed and will not make a brief statement today because the commissioners had heard them on June 23rd. Tina Thompson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 4. Result of votes is as follows:

Aye (5) – Travis Zellner, Andrew Knight, Mary Wambach, Tina Thompson, and Jim Compton.

Nay (4) – Ed Rawlings, Sean Gill, Lisa Sack, and Jordan Sack.
Abstained (1) – Jim Simon

The commissioners who were at the meeting on June 23rd shared their thoughts on both “hearing” candidates (Karen Davis and Dr. Steven Sack) with commissioners who were not at the meeting. Then the commissioners discussed on their qualifications and experiences that are in the best interest of the commission.

2. Tina Thompson made a motion that Karen Davis, a “hearing” candidate, be named in the recommendation for the Governor Cariceri to appoint to serve on the Commission. Mary Wambach seconded. Motion carried, 4 to 1. Result of votes is as follows:

Aye (4) – Travis Zellner, Sean Gill, Mary Wambach, and Tina Thompson.
Nay (1) – Ed Rawlings
Abstained (2) – Jim Compton and Jim Simon
Recused (2) – Lisa Sack and Jordan Sack

The meeting was on break at 6:55pm declared by Chair Travis.

The meeting was resumed at 7:04pm called by Chair Travis.

- 5) Chair Travis explained the situation on the “Deaf” and “Hard of Hearing” candidates that was held on June 23rd, 2010 and what was agreed how to proceed. He suggested starting with the “Hard of Hearing” seats. He confirmed that Kevin Blais did request for the open session to do the interview On June 23rd. He was the only one candidate interviewed on June 23rd. Ed Rawlings and Betsy Beach were the other two remaining candidates who would be interviewed today. They also requested that their interviews be in the open session. As they agreed, Ed Rawlings would make a brief statement as to why he wanted to serve for another term, then interview with Betsy Beach using standard questions for the candidates, then the commissioners who were at the meeting on June 23rd would share general thoughts about Kevin Blais as candidate. After all of them, they may start to vote.

1. After hearing comments and interviewing “Hard of Hearing” candidates, Tina Thompson made a motion that the Commissioners vote on each “Hard of Hearing” candidates to determine which candidate to be in the recommendation for the Governor Cariceri to appoint to serve on the Commission. Jordan Sack seconded. Result of votes is as follows:

Kevin Blais – 0
Ed Rawlings (9) – Travis Zellner, Jordan Sack, Andrew Knight, Tina Thompson, Jim Compton, Jim Simon, Lisa Sack, Sean Gill, and Mary Wambach.
Betsy Beach – 0

The meeting was on break at 8:00pm declared by Chair Travis.

The meeting was resumed at 8:07pm called by Chair Travis.

- 6) Chair Travis explained about the “Deaf” candidates similar to the situation for the “Hard of Hearing” candidates and confirmed that all “Deaf” candidates requested for the open session. Jesus Colon was interviewed on June 23rd and Andrew Knight was scheduled to interview today.

1. Lisa Sack made a motion that Jesus Colon is given a 2-minute statement about his candidacy if he wants to. Jordan Sack seconded. Motion carried, 6 to 0. Result of votes is as follows:

Aye (6) – Jordan Sack, Tina Thompson, Ed Rawlings, Jim Compton, Lisa Sack, and Jim Simon.

Nay – 0

Abstained (2) – Travis Zellner and Mary Wambach

Recused (1) – Andrew Knight

3. Mary Wambach made a motion that the Commissioners vote on each “Deaf” candidate to determine which candidate to be in the recommendation for the Governor Cariceri to appoint to serve on the Commission. Tina Thompson seconded. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Jesus Colon (6) – Mary Wambach, Ed Rawlings, Jim Compton, Lisa Sack, Jordan Sack, and Tina Thompson.

Andrew Knight – 0

Abstained (2) – Travis Zellner and Jim Simon

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1) Tina Thompson made a motion to approve the Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to become an official member and part of the National Association of State Agencies of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing effective immediately. Ed Rawlings seconded. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.
- 2) Jordan Sack made a motion to have the Healthcare Task Force team become the RICDHH Healthcare Committee that reports to the Commissioners. Ed Rawlings seconded. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.
- 3) Mary Wambach made a motion that the Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing establishes a committee in regards of interpreting issues in the State of Rhode Island.
[Nobody seconded.]

Lisa Sack made a motion to amend the language by inserting, “two task forces, one on the interpreter referral services and one on the communication access for the hard of hearing which would include CART, F.M. systems” into Mary Wambach’s main motion. Ed Rawlings seconded.

After a brief discussion, Lisa Sack withdrew her amendment and Ed Rawlings withdrew his second.

Lisa Sack made a motion to amend the language by omitting, “a committee in regards of interpreting issues”, and inserting, “a task force for interpreter referral services and communication access” into Mary Wambach’s main motion. Ed Rawlings seconded.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please see the votes below but it was not clear if it were for Lisa Sack’s amendment or Mary Wambach’s main motion including Lisa Sack’s amendment. Either way, the vote should have been made on an amendment before it became a part of the main motion. It did not happen.

Votes were counted as follows:

Aye – Andrew Knight, Mary Wambach, Ed Rawlings, Jim Compton, and Lisa Sack
Nay – Travis Zellner, Jordan Sack, Tina Thompson, and Jim Simon

The meeting was adjourned at 9:06pm declared by Chair Travis.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven A. Florio
Executive Director
(Secretary for the July 21, 2010 meeting).