

The RI CDHH Commissioner approved the minutes for the 02/16/2010 meeting on March 9, 2011.

## Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

February 16, 2011

### MEETING MINUTES

*Commissioners Attending:* Travis Zellner, Ed Rawlings, Christine "Tina" Thompson, James Compton, James Simon, Karen Davis and Jesus M. Colon.

*Commissioner(s) not Attending:* Jordan Sack, Sean Gill, and Mary Wambach

*Staff Attending:* Steve Florio (Executive Director)

*Public Attending:* Courtenay Petracca, RI Hamilton Relay Outreach Coordinator

*Communication Accommodations:*

*Interpreters:* Jessica Morgan and Rosa Norberg  
*CART service:* Tammi Burnham

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

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The meeting was called to order by Chair Travis Zellner at 6:19 pm.

#### CHAIR'S REPORT:

Chair Travis Zellner announced that two people notified him that Jordan Sack and Mary Wambach could not make it today. He had not received a message from Sean Gill which he assumed Sean would show up later in the meeting. He recognized that 7 commissioners were presented, therefore, the quorum was met.

Chair Zellner updated with the Commissioners about the Rhode Island School for the Deaf.

1. Lori Dunsmore, Director of RISD announced that she would not seek for a new contract after her current contract expires on June 30, 2011.

2. The Board of Trustees met last night and they will gather more information in order to form a Director Search committee. They have not yet designed the format of the process and who are the stakeholders that will be part of the committee. Either a refined group or a large group involving various community leaders and teachers.
3. Rhode Island School for the Deaf is still considered as a low-performing status determined by the Rhode Island Department of Education.
4. The Board of Trustees and school wide community had gone through strategic process to develop Mission/Vision statements and to identify categories of school functions.
5. The Board of Trustees learned that at least 7 people were given pink slip as part of the bargaining agreement (The deadline is March 1<sup>st</sup>.) and there might be more layoffs if required to meet the budget. RISD may face up to 10% budget cut.
6. Currently, the student enrollment at RISD is 75 but Lori Dunsmore predicted that RISD will have about 60 students next year.
7. RIDE Commissioner Deborah Gist will visit RISD on Friday, Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> for an hour. She will observe one of the classrooms and will have the question/response opportunity with teachers and staff afterward.

Chair Zellner changed the subject to the RICDHH Strategic Plan. He was pleased to learn that 6 Sigma Experts completed the Output Work Product report and that is ready for distribution. The commissioners were in agreement that they would receive a copy of the Output Work Product report via electronic as soon as possible and they also would like to invite Beth Wilson, one of 6 Sigma Experts, to come and walk through the report next month.

Chair Zellner reminded the Commissioners that the agenda was pretty heavy loaded so please keep attentive through the evening.

Chair Zellner informed the Commissioners that Andrew Knight who is here for an interview wished to have an interview in the closed/executive session.

**VICE CHAIR'S REPORT:** No Report

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:** No Report

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** No Report

**Review of Meeting Minutes (03/17/2010 and 12/08/2010):**

- 1) Tina Thompson **made a motion** to approve the **March 17, 2010** meeting minutes as corrected. Ed Rawlings seconded. The motion was carried 4-0. (Only 4 were eligible to vote because they were at the meeting.)

**Corrections:**

- a) Last name of Mary Wambach on page 1 was corrected.
  - b) "**Laid off**" was added under number 5, Commission on Women, third lines on page 3.
- 2) Tina Thompson **made a motion** to approve the **December 8, 2010** meeting minutes as written. Jim Simon seconded. The motion was carried 5-0. (Only 5 were eligible to vote because they were at the meeting.)

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- 1) Steve Florio updated with the Commissioners on the budget news. He said he had not heard any new revisions on budget both for FY2011 and FY2012. He said the commissioners and staff have to wait until March 8<sup>th</sup> to learn whether the budgets for FY2011 and FY2012 are amended or not. March 8<sup>th</sup> is when Governor Chafee will have his first State of the State Address speech and he will introduce the overall statewide budget plan that evening.
- 2) Steve reported that he had submitted 6 out of 10 proposed legislative bills that was part of the 2011 Legislative Package approved by the Commissioners last December 2010. As for 4 legislative bills that were not submitted, there were explanations as to why he held back. He will keep the commissioners posted of any latest development on any of the legislative bills that were filed by the legislators.
- 3) He mentioned that the Governor Chafee Inauguration held on January 4, 2011 was very nice. An interpreter was provided. The CART service was provided but was positioned at the wrong place. He tried to re-arrange the position of CART service by moving from far left and back to the front of the audience but because of time ran out, it was impossible to re-arrange the position. The screen with tripod was used but it was useless because of daylight that all of us could not read anything on the screen. He specifically requested for Flat Screened TV used for CART service so we can see during the day and it would remain still through windy currents. The RI Coast Guard Official who was responsible to coordinate everything at the Inauguration did send an apology letter to our office acknowledging that they failed to set up the service according to the plan and they would not repeat the same mistake next 4 years. They would include specific communication access needs in the procedure guide for the next person to take in charge of future inaugurations.
- 4) He informed that he would be on vacation on the week of Feb. 21<sup>st</sup>. Pamela and Paul will remain in the office while he is on vacation.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

Tina Thompson **made a motion** to go into closed/executive session to discuss on the questions for interview with a candidate and to interview with Andrew Knight for the seat of the Commissioner. Karen Davis seconded. The motion was carried 7-0.

The closed/executive session meeting started at 7:03pm.

The commissioners discussed and chose which questions to ask a candidate for the seat of the commissioner.

The commissioners called Andrew Knight to come in. They interviewed Andrew Knight.

After the interview was completed and Andrew Knight left the room, the commissioners discussed on the answers they received from Andrew Knight.

After no further discussion is needed and no questions/concerns are addressed, Tina Thompson **made a motion** to adjourn the closed/executive session. Karen Davis seconded. The motion was carried 7-0.

The closed/executive session meeting ended at 7:40pm.

## OPEN SESSION

Ed Rawlings **made a motion** to recommend that Andrew Knight be appointed to serve as a commissioner for the remainder of the term for John Dunsmore who resigned from the Commission effective September 17, 2010. (John Dunsmore's term will expire on June 30, 2011). Jim Simon seconded. The motion was carried 4-3.

**AYE (4)** – Travis Zellner, Ed Rawlings, Jim Simon, and Jim Compton

**No (3)** – Jesus M. Colon, Karen Davis, and Tina Thompson

**Abstained (0)** - None

**THE MEETING WAS ON RECESS at 7:45pm.**

**THE MEETING RESUMED at 7:54pm.**

### COMMITTEES' REPORT:

#### BYLAWS:

Chair Zellner explained that there are two portions of revisions that we need to approve, one is to approve on procedures on the election of officers and the other is RICDHH bylaws. He further explained as to how to make motion on these revisions.

Karen Davis **made a motion** to approve all revisions on procedures on the election of officers recommended by the Bylaws committee. Jesus Colon seconded the motion. Discussion was held on this subject.

After the discussion, Karen Davis and Jesus Colon agreed to withdraw their original motion and second.

Karen Davis **made a motion** to accept and approve all revisions that were amended today by the current commissioners on procedures on the election of officers. Jesus Colon seconded the motion. The motion was carried 7-0.

All revisions amended are noted below by the commissioners at the meeting:

1. The *2<sup>nd</sup> sentence* of number 2 is eliminated. And "*Elections shall be conducted annually.*" was inserted after the 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.
2. Number 5.1, changed from "*two fiscal years*" to "*one fiscal year*".
3. Number 5.2, *a whole portion* was eliminated.
4. Number 5.3, *a whole portion* was eliminated.
5. Number 6.1, "*voting*" was eliminated.
6. Number 6.4, adding, "*according to the advice from the Rhode Island Office of the Attorney General*" at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence, with "*\*\*\**" for further reference.
7. Number 6.8, changed from "upon the conclusion of the *election*" to "upon the conclusion of the *meeting*."
8. Number 6.15, changed from "*refuse*" to "*unwilling/unable*".
9. Number 6.16-ballot, changed from "*calendar*" to "*fiscal*".

Chair Travis wanted to make a note in the meeting minute that he recognized three people, Ed Rawlings, Jordan Sack and Tina Thompson, of the Bylaws committee who had met several times working on the revisions. He appreciated their dedication and contribution. He wanted to stress that any changes that were not accepted by the Commissioners from the recommendation does not mean that the Commissioners would think any less or disrespect to their work. Their work did help us to realize what's right for the commissioners so he thanked them for their time and work.

Membership: No Report due to time limitation

Healthcare: No Report due to time limitation

Award: No Report due to time limitation

Interpreting Service Task Force:

No Report due to time limitation

#### **OPEN DISCUSSION:**

Statewide coordinating council on Education for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing: No discussion due to time limitation

Evaluation/Toll for CDHH Personnel: No discussion due to time limitation

**OLD BUSINESS:** 2 items. Please see below.

**OLD BUSINESS ITEM #1 – RICDHH Bylaws Revisions** - Tabled to next meeting due to time limitation.

#### **OLD BUSINESS ITEM #2 – RICDHH Meeting Dates and Locations**

Jim Simon **made a motion** to approve all dates and locations of RICDHH Commissioners' meeting provided that the locations are subject to change. Tina Thompson seconded the motion. The motion was carried 7-0.

**NEW BUSINESS:** 1 item. Please see below.

#### **NEW BUSINESS ITEM #1 – RICDHH Authorized Agent**

Travis Zellner **made a motion** to approve that Jim Simon be 2<sup>nd</sup> Authorized Agent to sign off on payroll. Tina Thompson seconded. The motion was carried 7-0.

Chair Travis introduced Courtenay Ptracca to the commissioners that she is now a new Rhode Island Hamilton Relay Outreach Coordinator.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm declared by Chair Travis Zellner.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven A. Florio  
Executive Director  
(Secretary for the February 16, 2011 meeting).