

The RI CDHH Commissioner approved the minutes for the 10/19/2011 meeting on December 14, 2011.

Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

October 19, 2011

Commissioners Attending: Christine (Tina) Thompson, Karen Davis, Jesus (Jerry) M. Colon, Elizabeth (Betsy) Beach, Jordan Sacks (arriving at 7:30pm), Paul Hughett (arriving at 6:30pm), and James (Jim) Simon

Commissioner(s) not Attending: Travis Zellner

Staff Attending: Steven Florio (Executive Director)

Public Attending: Courtney Petracca

Communication Accommodations:

American Sign Interpreters: Mary Ellen Baxter-Breen and Jessica Morgan

Cart Service: Shelley Deming

Locations: Conference Room A at the Department of Administration building (One Capitol Hill) in Providence, Rhode Island.

Chair Tina Thompson called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

Chair Tina Thompson conducted a roll call. She declared that the quorum was met because at least five commissioners were presented.

Review of Meeting Minutes (10/6/2011):

1) The correction was that James Simon's name was added to this minute. Betsy Beach **made a motion** to approve the October 6, 2011 meeting minutes as written. Karen Davis **seconded** the

motion to approve minutes. The motion was carried 4-0 (Paul and Jordan were not presented at this time.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

1) Friendly Reminder- Steve reminded the commissioners that the position for the Director of Rhodes Island School for the Deaf has been posted. Steve reminds the group that the next Commissioner's meeting is scheduled for December 14th.

2) Budget News- Steve announced that the budget request was submitted and currently sits in the Office of the Governor; as well as in the possession of the House and Senate finance chairs. The immediate finance budgets director also has it. He informs the commissioner chairperson that he will also get a copy.

3) Annual Coffee Hour- Steve announced that the coffee hour plans are all in place and how well things are coming together. Among the guest list is Governor Chaffey, as well as Lieutenant Governor, who stated they would be attending. The Governor's Office has requested a certificate of appreciation for Ed Rawlings, acknowledging his years of service. Also, there should be a certificate of merit for Deb Raiche, but details on obtaining one for her are not complete, as there is difficulty in tracking CPN Rhode Island. As for event funds, Sprint, Purple Communications, and Hamilton Relay are sponsors for this year. In addition, Partner Interpreters would like to sponsor coffee hour. Final details for completing the sponsorship process are underway as responses, including that from Hospital Association of Rhode Island is still being waited on. Steve acknowledged and thanked Courtney Petrarca for her continued support with refreshments every year at coffee hour; then continues on, welcoming her back from maternity leave.

4) Performance Management News: Steve suggested that there remain four authorized signers for payroll, purchase orders, and personnel matters. Jim and Karen are primary signers, then Travis for backup (Ed has left). The group decided that for the payroll, Karen is the first signature, and Jim is the second. As for the purchase orders and other things, Jesus and Betsy are authorized signers. If Travis does not want to continue his role, then Betsy will fill in as needed.

ORIENTATION for NEW Commissioners and refreshing for current Commissioners:

1. Meeting was held as an orientation for the board policy manual. Tina advises Commissioners to use the Board Policy Manual as a source of reference, whether pertaining to the laws, mandates, the process, procedures, and etc.

2. Steve gives an at length history review of the commission.

3. Things that must be posted on the website are the agenda for the committee, work group, task force, and minutes. Minutes are to be given to Pam, who also posts them on the website. Now, according to the Attorney General's Office, one month is allowed from the date of the meeting to post the minutes on the website. Due to weather, interpreter unavailability, or other problems, in such case, Pam would submit un-approved minutes to the Secretary of State.

4. Items or topics of importance not originally included on meeting agenda that was already advertised to the public can be added on the agenda with an approval by a simple majority of the board of the commissioners presented at the meeting for further discussion and consideration to vote on. There is no rule about how much information each discussion should contain but the relevant information, the voting, who is present, and where the meeting was held, etc. In reference to meetings, commission business and/or issues cannot be held through email because it is not open to the public. When in an executive session for a specific issue, that is all to be talked about. No outside issues can be discussed.

5. It is unethical to disclose any confidential information that may be received from staff members, from Steve. We really need to be respectful of confidentiality.

6. Tina suggested that timelines be established for the completion of tasks in order to help from processes being too long and drawn out. This was in reference to the committee meetings.

7. The staff provides support to the committee, but technically, they cannot vote.

8. Four initiatives to be focused on by the Commissioners:

- I. To look at ways of improving the access and information in, within the information referral service.
- II. Improve American Sign Language Referral Service
- III. To deal with awareness and access, basically creating more visibility of the Commissioner's in the community.
- IV. Keener focuses on the legislative.

9. Coffee hour will be changing for 2012 as far as exhibitors and sponsorship is concerned. Steve will be in charge of handling all coffee hour-related matters for this year.

Chair Tina Thompson adjourned the meeting at 8:59pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jesus Colon, Secretary