

The RI CDHH Commissioner approved the minutes for the 08/22/2012 meeting on September 19, 2012.

Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

August 22, 2012

MEETING MINUTES

Commissioners Attending: *Jordan Sack, Christine Thompson, James Simon, Heather Niedbala, and Betsy Beach.*

Commissioner(s) not Attending: *Paul Hughett, Paul Molloy, and Travis Zellner*

Staff Attending: *Steve Florio (Executive Director), Pamela Zellner (Program Manager), and Holly St. Pierre (Interpreter/CART Referral Specialist)*

Public Attending:

Communication Accommodations:

Interpreters: Jon Henry

CloseVision Interpreters: None

CART service: Jennifer Milette, BS, RPR

Service Support Provider: None

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

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Christine Thompson at 6:10pm.

Chairperson Thompson conducted a roll call. She announced that the quorum for tonight was met with 5 commissioners presented. The meeting would be short (30 minutes) due to the interpreter situation. A close-vision interpreter was sick. A team interpreter for close-vision could not do it without the new replacement for close-vision. Because of this, second interpreter was not comfortable because of lack of access for Paul Molloy. So in that 30 minutes time, she re-arranged the meeting items that would cover all,

the review and approval of the meeting minutes, review and approval of FY2013 and FY2014 Budget, review and approval of FY2011 Annual Report, and minor change to the board policy manual. The Commissioners were in agreement with her suggestion.

Review of Meeting Minutes (06/20/2012):

- 1) Jordan Sack **made a motion** to approve the **June 20, 2012** meeting minutes as amended/corrected. Jim Simon seconded. The motion was carried 5-0.

A correction was made as follows:

- Revised the language to "Chair Tina thought that Travis Zellner would be good to be the chair of the legislative committee. However, she did not know if he would be available." In Page 3 under Emerging from Discussion.

NEW BUSINESS: 1 item. Please see below.

NEW BUSINESS ITEM #1 – Review and Approval of FY2013/2014 RICDHH Budgets

Steve explained the budgetary process. The RICDHH was informed by the Governor's Office that each agency and department must submit two different budget plans, one is at the budget level and the other is at 7% budget cut. The impact of 7% must be clearly described so the Governor will decide which programs and/or services are considered to be affected based on this information.

The commissioners discussed the concerns of impact of 7% budget cut and what service or program should be targeted in order to have the 7% saving.

- 2) Betsy Beach **made a motion** to approve the **FY2013/2014** Budget Plan as proposed and discussed. Jordan Sack seconded. The motion was carried 5-0.
 - a) Budget Plan for FY2014 – Level funding at \$396,813.
 - b) Budget Plan for FY2014 with a 7% Budget cut – It will be at \$372,689 including an entirely elimination of Emergency Interpreter Referral Service, 24-Hour Emergency Answering Service, \$6,000 reduction for communication access services (Interpreter and CART).

OLD BUSINESS: 2 items. Please see below.

OLD BUSINESS ITEM #1 – Approval of FY 2011 Annual Report

The Commissioners reviewed and liked how the Annual Report was produced, simpler and to the point.

- 3) Heather Niedbala **made a motion** to approve the **FY2011** Annual Report. Tina Thompson seconded. The motion was carried 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS ITEM #2 – Minor Change to the Board Policy Manual.

- 4) Heather Niedbala **made a motion** to approve adding “partner/significant others” next to spouse throughout the Board Policy Manual. Betsy Beach seconded. The motion was carried 5-0.
- 5) Jordan Sack **made a motion** to create a separate section for the strategic planning in the Board Policy Manual. Jim Simon seconded. The motion was carried 5-0.

Chair Tina Thompson closed her remark (excerpt from CART note), *“Basically, this is my last meeting as a commissioner, as the chair. And I wanted to take the time to thank you, as I enjoyed working with all of you very much and as I was thinking back, you know, Jim and I were on the healthcare committee for a long time. And we established that contact with hospital association of Rhode Island and that turned into a great program that put Steve to all the hospital training on communication access, you know. And Betsy was part of the consumer education training committee. That was an excellent committee. We came up with an excellent design. My hope is that, you know, there will be a way to find funding for that program. But I think, you know, we should feel good about that design. It’s a very, very good design. And Jordan, Jordan is the longest serving commissioner, second longest serving commissioner. However, when he was 15 years old, he volunteered to work at the commission. So I will say that he is the oldest. And, so I really appreciate your commitment and your passion. I’m sorry (Heather) we didn’t get to spend more time to work together on the commission. But you have shown, you know such passion for the cause of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and hearing, so I’m happy that you are on the commission, and I look forward to hearing good things coming out of the commission as time goes along. Now, unfortunately, we didn’t get to do the strategic planning initiative. My goal was to help you start that, you know, get you going in the work group. And so -- but circumstances prevented us from doing that. If you feel the need to invite me, come back and help you get the initiative work groups off the ground. I would be happy to do that. Even though I may not be involved with the commission, but I will be involved as a member of HLA Rhode Island, you know, I am not going away. I just won’t be participating in the commission. But again, I thank all of you, especially Steve, Pam, you know. We have known each other for quite some time. And Holly, in the short period of time, you have been great.”*

Chairperson Thompson adjourned the meeting at 6:49pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven A. Florio
Acting Secretary