

The RI CDHH Commissioner approved the minutes for the 09/19/2012 meeting on January 16, 2013.

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

September 19, 2012

### MEETING MINUTES

**Commissioners Attending:** *Jordan Sack, Travis Zellner, James Simon, Heather Niedbala, Paul Hughlett, Paul Molloy, and Betsy Beach.*

**Commissioner(s) not Attending:** *None*

**Staff Attending:** *Steve Florio (Executive Director)*

**Public Attending:** *Julia Gold, Cheryl Zarrella, Theodore Zarrella, Beverly Kinder, Donald Kinder, Sr., Paul E. Francis, and Neil Leahey.*

**Communication Accommodations:**

*Interpreters: Maureen McEntee and Jon Henry*

*CloseVision Interpreters: Carol Fay and Fatima Silvestre*

*CART service: Tammi Burnham*

*Service Support Provider: Margaret Molloy*

**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 Vice-Chairperson Jordan Sack at 6:07pm.

Vice-Chairperson Jordan Sack conducted a roll call. He thanked the board of commissioners that the quorum for tonight was met with all commissioners presented. He reminded the board of commissioners that the meeting was scheduled for 2 hours, not 3 hours.

## Review of Meeting Minutes (08/22/2012):

- 1) Travis Zellner **made a motion** to approve the **August 22, 2012** meeting minutes as written. Heather Niedbala seconded. The motion was carried 7-0.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Steve Florio reported on several items below:

- Updates on Deaf Awareness Month activities. It went very well so far. He thanked to Pamela Zellner, Program Manager, for her creative arts skills that created three different advertising materials, the postcard, the flyer for each event, and the brochure that included all events in the month of September. The website and facebook had all information about Deaf Awareness Month activities. It was a huge success because two presenters came here from out of state to make impacts on two fronts. They were here for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community and also, they were here for the public or designated groups such as RI Broadcaster Association and Emergency group at the Department of Public Safety headquarter. Thomas Holcomb, who wrote many publications, focused on Deaf Culture and Gregory Hlibok, Chief of Disability's Rights Office at Federal Communication Commission, talked mainly about the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Communication and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA). Steve learned that the Rhode Island 911 Center recognized the importance of making text call to 911 for emergency but they do not have current plan or at least do not take initiative on "Text to 911" at this time. Steve would like to push this up on their priority list because it would tremendously benefit the constituents who are deaf and hard of hearing during emergencies. Not many states have adopted this initiative. He knew Tennessee and North Carolina have done this already but he was not sure whether it was operated regularly or it was just beta testing or on a trial basis.
- Budget Submission for FY2013 and FY2014. It was not ready as he was still working on it. It was tough because he was busy with the Deaf Awareness Month activities at the same time. He anticipated that it would be done within a week. He would discuss with a new chairperson (Election of the Officers) after the meeting to identify the dates to meet for her/his signature on the cover letter of Budget Submission.
- Performance Management Team – RICDHH was scheduled to meet with the Performance Management Team on August 31<sup>st</sup>. However, the interpreter was not found so they re-scheduled the meeting until sometimes in October.
- Annual Coffee Hour – Steve Florio reminded the Board of Commissioners that this year is the 20<sup>th</sup> Statutory Anniversary and some of them preferred to include 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as to when the Commission was born. The number of ideas and suggestions were made by the Commissioners for the Coffee Hour. The Board of Commissioners wanted the coffee hour to be held at the State House. The tentative theme of the event is "Past, Present, and Future". The updates will be reported at the next month meeting in October.

## Strategic Planning Workgroups:

The Board of Commissioners discussed on how the strategic planning workgroups are conducted going forward. They agreed that two initiatives can be led by the staff at the office and meetings can be conducted during the business hours. The reports on these initiatives can be given at the meeting. The other two initiatives, Prioritize Awareness and Access and Improve Commission Relationships, can be conducted during the board of commissioners' meeting. They agreed that all commissioners will focus on ONE initiative at a time until it is ready for implementation then they can move on to the 2<sup>nd</sup> initiative.

Jordan Sack called for a break at 7:05pm.

The meeting was resumed at 7:15pm.

#### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

Jordan Sack explained how the election process works, who is eligible for the officers, and each officer position's roles and responsibilities (Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary). The board of commissioners questioned and discussed about the process of election.

The candidates who were interested in running for the office were as follows:

1. Chairperson – Jordan Sack – Medical Student at Brown University, his schedule will be improved in this fiscal year.
2. Vice-Chairperson – Travis Zellner – Willing to support Jordan Sack in case of his absence and give guidance if necessary. Has been served on RICDHH and RISD Boards.
3. Treasurer – Betsy Beach – a math teacher in RI (adult education math and GED teacher).
4. Secretary – None

Results from the election:

Chairperson – Jordan Sack (6 votes and 1 abstention)

Vice-Chairperson – Travis Zellner (6 votes and 1 abstention)

Treasurer – Betsy Beach (6 votes and 1 abstention)

Assistant Treasurer – Jim Simon

Secretary – one person voted for Heather Niedbala but it was out of order according to RICDHH's election rules that a commissioner who was appointed by the Governor less than a year is not eligible for the officer position.

Newly Chairperson Jordan Sack adjourned the meeting at 8:01pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven A. Florio  
Acting Secretary