

The RI CDHH Commissioner approved the minutes for the 02/13/2013 meeting on March 20, 2013.

Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

February 13, 2013

MEETING MINUTES

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

Commissioner(s) not Attending: *Paul Hughett and Todd Murano*

Staff Attending: *Steve Florio (Executive Director)*

Public Attending: *None*

Communication Accommodations:

Interpreters: Maureen McEntee and Jessica Morgan

CloseVision Interpreters: Carol Fay and Lindsey Medeiros

CART service: Shelley Deming

Support Service Provider: Margaret Molloy (volunteer)

Location: *Conference Room A at the Department of Administration building, 2nd Floor*

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Jordan Sack at 6:24pm.

Chair Sack conducted the roll call and then declared that the quorum was met so the meeting may proceed. He welcomed a newly appointed Commissioner, Julia Gold. He hoped that everyone was safe to drive since the weather outside had very strong windy. He reviewed the meeting agenda as to what to expect for the evening.

Review of Meeting Minutes (01/16/2013):

- 1) Julia Gold made a motion to approve the **January 16, 2013** meeting minutes as corrected. Betsy Beach seconded. The motion was carried 7-0.

Correction(s):

- Added "Chafee" to Governor Lincoln on Page 3.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Steve apologized for not having monthly statistics information and Executive Director's reports ready for distribution as our office were busy juggling around due to weather conditions (Blizzard) and office coverage since the last meeting. He will have all information ready for the Commissioners for their review at the next meeting.

One of the best highlights for the Commission was that Governor Lincoln Chafee introduced his budget plan for FY2013 and FY2014 during the State of State Address last month. One of the 25 articles, Article 17, as part of Governor's Budget Plan for FY2014 is about the Emergency and Public Communication Access Program (EPCAP). As for the agency budget, RICDHH's budget is recommended to remain at the level of funding plus a new \$80,000 from the Relay fund (Article 17). He reminded that the Commissioners needed to send the letters of support to both House and Senate Finance Committee on Agency's budget and Article 17. The Senate Finance Committee had scheduled the hearing for Article 17 on February 14th but it was recently cancelled and he was waiting for a new date. The House Finance Committee scheduled the hearing for Article 17 on Tuesday, Feb. 26th at the Rise. He encouraged the Commissioners to attend to show their support. He will keep them posted.

He followed up from last meeting about the healthcare reform activity. He announced that there will be a forum hosted by the Economic Progress RI of RIC on the Healthcare Reform. There would be the opportunity for people to ask questions and to discuss on a number of issues related to Medicaid and other benefits affected by Federal's Affordable Care Act that will be effective in 2013 and 2014. The event will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 27th from 6:00pm to 8:00pm at Warwick Public Library. Communication Access services will be provided.

He informed the Commissioners that the Eastern Schools for the Deaf Athletic Association (ESDAA) Division II Girl Basketball Tournament will be held at RISD this coming weekend. They were supposed to host it last weekend but because of Blizzard storm, they postponed it to this coming weekend.

He reported that TV local news did not do a good job at delivering access to information for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community about the blizzard storm. However, after Day 1, they improved their responses because of a good number of complaints from the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community were sent to these local TV news, mostly related to captioning and interpreter appearance problems.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES:

Steve gave the latest updates on legislation. He met with Representative Arthur Handy to discuss about the legislative bills that RICDHH wishes to pursue.

1. Emergency and Public Communication Access Program – it is already part of Governor's Budget Plan for FY2014.
2. Theaters with at least 10 screens must provide captioning and audio describing - The senate bill was introduced and the number was assigned. It is now known as Senate Bill 277. However, the house bill was not yet introduced. Rep. Handy said it should be introduced in a number of days.
3. Court-ordered classes, trainings, meetings, - He was told that both Senate and House sides should be introduced in a few days.

Like the last month, as soon as the number is assigned to each legislative bill, he would let the commissioners know via e-mail so they can start preparing to conduct the campaign to support these bills.

He gave the Commissioners the heads up that he will be away on vacation from Feb. 18th to 25th. Both Pamela and Holly will be in the office during his absence in case anyone needs immediate assistance.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: Interview Questionnaires

Jim Simon reported that the sub-committee met today at 5:00pm to review the questions that they have for interviewees for the vacant seats going forward. He hoped that they would discuss on membership recruitment but they did not get to that second item.

The questions were read by Jim to everyone. The commissioners were in agreement with a number of new questions and they had very constructive discussion on two particular questions whether they were appropriate to ask the candidates. The commissioners spent a good quality of time on improving the questions. The Sub-committee agreed to have another meeting to follow up on a couple of questions and have Jim Simon to send the final version of draft for the Commissioners to approve at the next meeting.

STRATEGIC PLANNING:

Chair Sack explained as to what to expect going forward with 4 initiatives. A few commissioners were confused as to how this is going, to what process they are in, and to what outcome they would like to see from these initiatives. The strategic plan is not yet fully completed, the commissioners have two strategic initiatives to implement but they need to come up with the "implementing" plan as to how to execute the initiatives and to identify stakeholders to be part of the "implementing" plan of each initiative. The commissioners debated as to how to proceed. They decided that:

The commissioners will focus on Initiative #3 first at the next meeting, either as a whole group or as sub-groups. Once they go through the discussion, identification of stakeholders, and list of implementable actions as part of implementing plan, then if time is permitted, they may move on to Initiative #4.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: Interview Questionnaires

Because the Commissioners had about 40 minutes left to 9pm, they agreed to return back to questions and to continue discussing on questions until they were satisfied.

The Commissioners submitted the final vision of draft for them to approve at the next meeting.

Chair Sack thanked the interpreters and the membership subcommittee for their dedication for staying for four hours. He was impressed. Have a good night. Then he adjourned the meeting at 9:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven A. Florio
Acting Secretary