

The RI CDHH Commissioner approved the minutes for the 07/17/2013 meeting on August 21, 2013.

Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

July 17, 2013

MEETING MINUTES

Commissioners Attending: David Abell, Julia Gold, Paul Molloy, Todd Murano, Heather Niedbala, James Simon, and Travis Zellner.

Commissioner(s) not Attending: Betsy Beach and Jordan Sack

Staff Attending: Steven A. Florio (Executive Director)

Public Attending: Cassandra Capraro

Communication Accommodations:

Interpreters: Maureen McEntee and Elizabeth Nadolski
CloseVision Interpreters: Jonathan Henry and Lindsey Medeiros
CART service: Shelley Deming (Allied Reporters)
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 Vice Chairperson Travis Zellner at 6:05pm.

Vice Chair Zellner reported that the quorum was satisfied after conducting the roll call of Commissioners. Only two Commissioners were absent tonight. Jordan Sack had to fly in Philadelphia to take an examination for his medical degree and Betsy Beach was in California to be with her new granddaughter.

Review of Meeting Minutes (06/19/2013):

- 1) Heather Niedbala **made a motion** to approve the **June 19, 2013** meeting minutes as amended (Spelling Jonathan incorrectly). Todd Murano seconded. The motion was carried 7-0.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

1. Budget News:

- o FY2013 Budget concluded at the end of the day of June 30, 2013.
- o FY2014 Budget begun on July 1, 2013.
- o RICDHH's FY2014 Budget, which was approved by the general assembly and signed by Governor Chafee, is \$471,609, including new \$80,000 for Emergency and Public Communication Access Program (EPCAP) known as Article 17. \$80,000 is from the Relay Fund which is the same fund used for Relay Service, Newspaper service for the blind, and Adaptive Telephone Equipment Loan program.
- o The contracting position will be advertised within the 1st Quarter of FY2014 after all necessary paperwork is done.
- o The process of the FY2015 Budget Submission cycle will begin in August 2013.

2. Legislative News:

- o RICDHH had a great year in FY2013.
- o SB 277 (Access to Movies) was passed with amendment that the special joint commission be established to study accessibility at the movie theaters in RI. One of 13 representatives will be the executive director of RICDHH.
- o HB 5830 (Access to RI Courts) was passed with amendment, recognizing a few areas of accessibility in RI courts especially for people with hearing loss, deaf-blind, and interpreters.
- o The Commissioners are encouraged to think about the legislative items to be pursued for the 2014 legislative sessions. i.e. to review hearing aids bill, whatever outcome from the special joint commission on accessibility for movie theaters, and to enhance deaf and hard of hearing children's bill of rights.

3. Miscellaneous News:

- o RIRID representatives were scheduled to meet with Steve tomorrow, July 18th. Any information would be shared at the next meeting.
- o The Friends of RISD will host its 38th Annual RISD Golf Open at Triggs Country Club in Providence on August 5th.
- o The survey questionnaires will be distributed to the consumers, requestors, and independent contractors seeking their feedback on RICDHH Interpreter and CART Referral Services at the end of this month.
- o One significant milestone coming from the RICDHH Interpreter and CART Referral Service is that it broke its record in receiving the number of requests for sign language interpreters. In FY2013, 3,164 requests for sign language interpreters were received. 92% of these requests were successfully filled. The second highest was 2,761 requests received in FY2011. Only 900 requests were received when the Interpreter Referral Services moved in-house with the Commission in FY2003.

SUB-COMMITTEES' REPORTS:

Membership –

- A 2-hour orientation session for newly appointed commissioners was being planned. This would be for Todd Murano, Julia Gold, and David Abell.

RICDHH Awards –

- No report but the commissioners were encouraged to convene to review the applications for the awards in September/October.

Healthcare –

- The commissioners would like to re-activate the committee as there is a good number of issues that need to be addressed such as hospitals, mental health, Affordable Care Act, etc.

Break – 6:47pm

Meeting Resumed at 6:55pm

INTERVIEW WITH CANDIDATES FOR THE COMMISSIONER SEATS

Vice Chair Zellner reported that we had a candidate for the deaf seat but she was not here tonight. The commissioners needed to consider two candidates who were here for the hearing seat tonight. Both candidates requested closed session for their interview.

Julia Gold **made a motion** to go into executive session to discuss on questions for interviews and to interview with the candidates. Todd Murano seconded. The motion was carried, 6-0 (James Simon recused himself)

The executive session meeting started at 6:56pm.

Candidates:

James Simon seeking for re-appointment (Hearing)
Cassandra Capraro seeking for appointment. (Hearing)

Heather Niedbala **made a motion** to adjourn the executive session. Julia Gold seconded. The motion was carried, 6-0.

The executive session meeting ended at 7:24pm.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Hearing Commissioner:

David Abell **made a motion** that the Commission recommends **James Simon** for Governor Chafee's consideration to be **re-appointed**. Paul Molloy seconded. The motion was carried, 6-0.

COFFEE HOUR PLANNING

After a lengthy discussion and brainstorm of ideas, the commissioners decided to form a committee to focus on Coffee Hour activity. The committee members are as follows: James Simon, Todd Murano, Julia Gold, Travis Zellner, and Jordan Sack.

UPDATE ON SPEAKERS (i.e. Amtrak)

Steve reported that he went to the Amtrak Providence Station in person to get the contact information because there was no way for him to find information through internet. Once he received the information, he made a few contacts. He was referred to contact Gary Talbot by a Principal of Amtrak Northeast Region as he is in charge to ensure that the Amtrak is in compliance with the ADA in the Northeast region of US. He was unable to get a hold of him prior to tonight's meeting but as soon as he connected Gary, he would let the commissioners know whether he can come at the next meeting on August 21st for a presentation about the renovation project at the Amtrak Providence Station.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The commissioners agreed to discuss about strategic planning at the next month meeting. Their goals at the next month meeting are to identify the timeline of strategic planning, to understand what the process of strategic planning would look like especially for those who were newly appointed, and to identify the stakeholders as to who should be part of the process. Once the plan is established, then the work shall begin.

James Simon **made a motion** to adjourn the meeting. Paul Molloy seconded. The motion was carried, 7-0. Travis adjourned the meeting at 8:22pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven A. Florio
Acting Secretary