

**RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**One Corliss Park**  
**Providence, Rhode Island 02908**

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**MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** October 14, 2004

**Time:** 6:00 PM

**Minutes recorded by:** Jake Camara

**Minutes Approved on:** November 4, 2004

**Interpreters:** Jonathan Henry, Jennifer Maloney, Rosa Norberg

**Minutes**

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting of the RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees was called to order by **Trustee Florio** at 6:03PM in the RI School for the Deaf Cafeteria.

**II. Roll Call of Board of Trustees**

In Attendance: Bonnie Abols, Carol Dorros, Steve Florio, Tracy Karasinski, Phil Wheeler, Travis Zellner

Excused: Maureen McEntee, Bill Walker

**III. Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes**

**a. September 9, 2004**

- i.** Trustee Dorros asked to include "Parents and Students" on the list of interested parties on page 3, section E.
- ii.** Trustee Wheeler suggested capturing all motions from meeting minutes and creating an action list.
- iii. Motion** was made by Trustee Wheeler to accept the minutes of September 9, 2004 as amended. Seconded by Trustee Dorros. Approved unanimously.

**b. September 29, 2004**

- i. Motion** was made by Trustee Wheeler to accept the minutes of September 29, 2004. Seconded by Trustee Zellner. Approved unanimously.

**IV. Reports**

**a. Interim Director**

- i.** John Plante gave an update on his Interim Director's report.
- ii.** Mr. Plante informed the Board that a correction on the 2<sup>nd</sup> page of the Interim Director's report is that G-Tech donated 3 Acer Tablet Laptops to the RI School for the Deaf. They also donated 25 conference room chairs.

- iii. Trustee Dorros suggested the students send a thank you note to G-Tech.
  - b. Coordinators
    - i. Trustee Dorros asked to identify specifically what needs that could not be addressed at the school which was mentioned in the Early Childhood report.
    - ii. Cheryl Hollingworth explained in addition to her coordinator's report that during the summer several people interviewed for the Job Coach position. She met with several individuals and selected one person. She then found out that she could not accept the position. The search was reopened, and there were two applicants. The consensus of the interview team was to select one of the two applicants.
  - c. Finance Director
    - i. Trustee Florio asked for an update on the audit report for the next Board of Trustees Meeting.
  - d. Chairperson
    - i. John Plante gave an update he received from Chairperson Maureen McEntee that there have been no responses yet from RIDE regarding a new chair.
      - 1. Sharon Osborne from RIDE said that she has not heard from Maureen but she will take this item back to RIDE and call John Plante tomorrow.
      - 2. Sharon Osborne explained the appointment of a Chairperson:
        - a. She informed the Board that the Chairperson serves at the pleasure of the commissioner. The Chairperson has a term limit, but if the person is reappointed to serve another term, the commissioner will decide whether they want to continue with that person or choose someone else. It is solely the Commission who decides who will chair.
        - b. They must receive a letter of resignation to the commissioner and they would make the change at that time.
    - ii. Trustee Florio let the Board know that he had recently been invited to and attended a meeting at American School for the Deaf at their campus called "Island Isabella".
  - e. Sub-Committees
    - i. Finance/Budget: No report.
    - ii. Personnel
      - 1. Trustee Zellner said the committee met in June and suggested the general responsibilities of the committee be put on hold and focus on search for a director.
      - 2. The committee does not have a chairperson.

3. Trustee Florio said that he and Trustee Dorros did express interest in being part of a committee.
  4. Trustee Dorros informed the Board that she would like to participate but more on an informal basis.
- iii. Policy
1. John Plante informed the Board that the lawyer did have changes to make to the Student Handbook but they were more language changes; no policy changes.
  2. It was suggested that a Committee be formed representative of the school to review the handbook on an ongoing basis.
  3. Trustee Florio asked that when the handbook is printed a copy be sent to all Board members.
- iv. Architectural and Engineering
1. Trustee Dorros gave an update on the Architectural and Engineering report (*attached*).
  2. John Plante informed the Board that two weeks ago when they met with Senator Alves, Wayne Hannon told them he was hoping for \$50,000 for a site and Architectural and Engineering study.
    - a. They felt that might be a little on the low side. They were hoping for \$100,000. Today that number changed to \$200,000. They are looking to make a promise that it will be in the '06 budget so this project can get off the ground and we could have an architect do a site study and an Architectural and Engineering study.
    - b. The site study would look at a number of potential sites. There has been talk about knocking this building down or a new building on the Davies and CCRI complex in Lincoln.
    - c. The feeling is that the process for these studies could start on July 1.
  3. Trustee Dorros said they want to set up their next committee meeting after the Budget meeting. They also want to gather as many groups as they can to participate in this meeting.
  4. John Plante said the Architectural and Engineering Committee should change going forward to the Building Committee. We would also be well advised to get a member on the committee who is a contractor or who has building experience. Lastly, someone on the department of administration would work closely with us.
  5. Trustee Florio suggested getting a timeline together regarding a study and building based upon engineering time, budget submittal, going out to bid, construction, etc.

6. John Plante mentioned as a side note when he had previously looked into a 5-8 minute hearing with the Governor there is a year's waiting period. John had sent the governor a letter and heard from Janet in his office. She said that she had spoken with Gov Carcieri and he is fully aware of the concerns regarding the school. She and Rosemary had spoken to the governor and they were very impressed by the budget meeting. They are fully aware and are exploring options.
7. The Building Committee meeting should be scheduled for Monday, November 1 pending interpreter availability.
8. **Motion** was made by Trustee Wheeler that the Architectural and Engineering Committee name be changed to the Building Committee. Seconded by Trustee Karasinski. Approved unanimously.

## V. Old Business

### a. Board of Trustees Membership

#### i. BOT Officers

1. **Motion** was made by Trustee Wheeler to send a letter to Trustee Walker asking for a decision regarding his membership on the Board with a deadline. Seconded by Trustee Zellner. Approved unanimously.
2. Trustee Karasinski asked Sharon Osborne if it is possible to give a deadline to a Board member.
  - a. Sharon said that her experience has been that they had sent a person a registered letter and told them that if they don't hear back from them by the date of the next meeting then they will replace their seat.

#### ii. BOT Vacancies

1. Trustee Florio informed the Board that he has received a letter of interest from a Deaf person who is interested in serving on the Board.
  - a. Trustee Florio suggested setting up an interview for this candidate at the next Board of Trustees meeting.
2. Trustee Wheeler suggested inviting applications from the group of involved parties in the Building Committee.
3. Trustee Florio said that there are links to organizations on the CDHH website that may be interested in the Board of Trustees vacancies.
4. Trustee Dorros said that she would contact the organizations on the website with the description and how to contact the Board regarding the positions.

### b. Strategic Planning

- i. Trustee Dorros briefly discussed how strategic planning could be funded.
    - 1. Trustee Zellner said that he felt the discussion would be overwhelming considering the lack of people here to discuss the topic.
  - ii. Trustee Dorros felt that tonight the Board should start to discuss strategic planning because of the topics which hinge on the plan such as the director search and the building of a new school.
  - iii. Trustee Dorros asked each Board member for their input:
    - 1. Trustee Karasinski said that strategic planning is intentional goal setting. It plans a certain number of years out in which an organization identifies where it wants to be and specific plans to reach that goal. It may or may not involve revolutionary change.
    - 2. Trustee Wheeler generally looking at 3-5 yr plan that involves creating a mission and vision statement and talking about where gaps are to get from where we are now to get to vision and mission. Talks need to take place about physical issues, management issues, financial issues, etc. The commitment to being on the Strategic Planning committee is greater than to that of being on the Board. It is not something you go in and out off. It is probably something that has to be done on weekends, half day sessions every other week for roughly 6 months.
    - 3. Trustee Florio said Strategic Planning includes identifying goals and opportunities we can expand on and improve on, new programs that would benefit school.
  - iv. Trustee Florio asked who will start the process:
    - 1. Trustee Dorros said MJ Kaplan would be happy to come at no cost to talk to the Board or a smaller group to talk about an outline, what strategic planning is, how to create a timeline, etc. It generally costs between \$10,000 and \$20,000.
    - 2. Trustee Dorros suggested the Friends of the RI School for the Deaf come to the meeting with MJ Kaplan.
    - 3. **Motion** was made by Trustee Dorros to have MJ Kaplan come and speak to the Board of Trustee about what strategic planning entails at the next Board meeting. Seconded by Trustee Karasinski. Approved unanimously.
    - 4. Trustee Wheeler suggested having the Board meeting from at the regular time and setting aside a portion of that time to have MJ Kaplan speak to the Board.
- c. Next Meeting Date
- i. Trustee Florio suggested planning the next monthly Board Meeting for November 4, 2004 due to Veteran's Day pending availability of interpreters.

**d. Director Search**

- i.** Trustee Florio proposed Wednesday, November 3, 2004 at 5:00PM for the Committee meeting on the National Search for a Director.

**VI. New Business**

**a.** New England Superintendent's Meeting

- i.** **Motion** was made by Trustee Zellner for John Plante to attend the New England Superintendent's Meeting. Seconded by Trustee Karasinski. Approved unanimously.

**VII. Agenda Items and Next Meeting Date**

- a.** Strategic Planning discussion with MJ Kaplan
- b.** Interview with candidate for Board vacancy

**VII. Adjournment**

- i.** The meeting was adjourned at 8:12PM.