

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

MEETING MINUTES

Date: June 9, 2005

Time: 6:00 PM

Minutes recorded by: Jake Camara

Minutes Approved on: July 18, 2005

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 Wheeler at 6:10PM in the RI School for the Deaf Cafeteria.

II. Roll Call of Board of Trustees

In Attendance: Bonnie Abols, Carol Dorros, Tracy Karasinski, Neil Leahey, Maureen McEntee, Phil Wheeler

Excused: Steve Florio, Travis Zellner

III. Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes

a. February 10, 2005 (amended)

- i. Motion** was made by Trustee Abols to accept the minutes of February 10, 2005 (amended) as amended. Seconded by Trustee Karasinski. Approved unanimously.

b. March 10, 2005

- i. Motion** was made by Trustee Karasinski to accept the minutes of March 10, 2005 as amended. Seconded by Trustee Abols. Approved unanimously.

IV. Reports

a. Interim Director

- i.** Interim Director John Plante highlighted items from his Interim Director's report.
- ii.** Trustee Dorros volunteered to send letters to GTECH and to the employees of the school who are retiring this year.

b. Coordinators

- i.** Discussion took place regarding the status of staffing in the mainstream program.

- ii. Cheryl Hollingworth added to her report that Transition has received funding from ORS for the Summer Fee-for-Service program.
- iii. Mary Jane Johnson discussed the status of the Family Guidance/Early Intervention Program.
 - 1. Discussion took place between Mary Jane Johnson and Board members regarding the current population of the Family Guidance program and staffing issues.
 - 2. Trustee Wheeler asked Mary Jane Johnson to provide the newborn hearing screening data and information about referrals to the Family Guidance Program.
 - 3. **Motion** was made by Trustee Dorros to form a sub-committee of the Board to form a strategic plan and advocacy for the Family Guidance Program. Seconded by Trustee Karasinski. **Motion failed.**
 - 4. Trustee Dorros stated that the Board supports a school formed committee with Board representation to discuss these issues.
 - 5. Trustee Wheeler asked that even though it is not an official sub-committee, reports be made to the Board on a regular basis as to the status and progress of this.

c. Sub-Committees

i. Director Search

- 1. Discussion took place regarding who needs to approve the National Search for a Director Process.
 - a. Diane Bertozzi stated that at the last meeting of the National Search for a Director Committee it was decided to send the process to the commissioner to approve. It would then be sent back to the Board of Trustees for approval.
 - b. Trustee McEntee suggested that any sub-committees who are going to send something like this to the commissioner should first bring it to the Board.
 - c. Trustee Karasinski asked about the status of a search consultant.
 - i. Discussion took place regarding the cost of a consultant and the last time the school went through a search process.
 - ii. **Motion** was made by Trustee McEntee that Jake contact the chairs of the National Search for a Director committee to determine the status of the process and that clarification regarding what the committee would like the board to do with this be given to the Board so that it can be acted on at the

next full Board meeting. Seconded by Trustee Abols. Approved unanimously.

- iii. Trustee McEntee also requested that Jake ask the chairs what their thinking was regarding a consultant.
- iv. Trustee Wheeler suggested tabling the approval of the process to the next Board of Trustees meeting.

ii. Building

- 1. Trustee Dorros gave some highlights from the Building Committee report.
- 2. John Plante informed the board that an Architectural and Engineering firm has been selected to perform a site study. They have had experience with schools for the Deaf and are partnering with another firm that has had much experience with schools for the Deaf. It will be officially approved on June 22nd.
- 3. Trustee Dorros informed the Board that on Monday, June 13, there will be a staff meeting at the school to inform everyone as to what has been happening up until this point with the building process. Also, Wayne will talk to the firm on Monday to find out what kind of input they will need from the staff.
- 4. Trustee McEntee said that it is encouraging that other parties are interested in the RI School for the Deaf's current property.

iii. Strategic Planning

- 1. Trustee Wheeler gave an update regarding the current pursuit of funds in the new fiscal year to try to proceed with strategic planning.

V. New Business

- a. Approval of 2005-2006 School Calendar
 - i. **Motion** was made by Trustee McEntee to approve the 2005-2006 School Calendar as presented. **Seconded by Trustee Karasinski. Approved unanimously.**
- b. Board of Trustees Chairperson Position
 - i. Trustee McEntee volunteered to follow up with Peter McWalters regarding the current state of the chairperson appointment.
- c. Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule
 - i. Trustee Dorros informed the Board that starting in July, it will be very difficult to attend on Thursday night meetings. She requested that it be moved to Wednesday nights.
 - 1. **Motion** was made by Trustee McEntee that Jake poll the board and find dates other than Thursday and find out which week of the month is best. **Seconded by Trustee Dorros. Approved unanimously.**

- d. Interpreter Availability
 - i. Trustee Wheeler asked the interpreters about the current state of availability and how changing the meeting night might have an impact on them.
 - ii. Jennifer Maloney informed the Board that this is a challenging meeting for interpreters and it may help to make the meeting more “interpreter friendly”. A call center for Sorenson Video Relay Service has opened in Boston and they tend to offer optimum working environments for interpreters. There is also a national shortage of interpreters.
 - iii. John Carty asked whether interpreters don’t want to interpret this meeting or are not available to interpret.
 - 1. Mrs. Maloney responded that it is a combination of both issues. The Code of Ethics for interpreters requires that the interpreter accept only assignments that they can perform. This meeting is a complicated meeting consisting of Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Hearing individuals and only very experienced interpreters are able to interpret in environments like this. The pool of interpreters is usually diminished by the nature of the assignment. If the interpreters were able to have more input into how the meeting is run, it may make it a more interpreter friendly environment.
 - 2. Trustee Wheeler stated that the Board would be willing to entertain any recommendations from the interpreters that help to assure more interpreter availability for meetings. He asked the interpreters to provide recommendations.
 - 3. Dinaz Adenwalla asked the Board to take this issue very seriously. The interpreter issue does not only impact the Board, but her ability to do her job as a coordinator and parents of school children. She thanked the interpreters for their service.
- e. Discuss possible RIHAP Presentation
 - i. It was decided to talk to Mary Jane Johnson about presenting her data to the board before approaching RIHAP regarding their data.
- f. Board of Trustees Candidate Interview
 - i. **Motion** was made by Trustee Dorros to invite the candidate to the next Board of Trustees meeting to speak to the Board in regard to candidacy. **Seconded by Trustee Leahey. Approved unanimously.**

VI. Public Comment

- a. A father of three students explained his past participation in a parent teacher league in New York and the experience he and his children have had since moving to Rhode Island. He expressed his concerns regarding the education of his children and the lack of a Parent Teacher League.

