

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

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**MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** August 8, 2006

**Time:** 6:00 PM

**Minutes recorded by:** Carol Dorros

**Minutes Approved on:**

**Interpreters:** Carol Fay, Jon Henry, Christine West

**Minutes**

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting of the RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees was called to order by Chairperson Marc Gursky at 6:04PM in the RI School for the Deaf Conference Room.

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

**In Attendance:** Bonnie Abols, Carol Dorros, Karen Fifer Ferry, Marc Gursky, Jennifer LeComte, Maureen McEntee

**Excused:** Kathleen Ellis, Tracy Karasinski, Neil Leahey

**III. Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes**

**a. July 11, 2006**

- i. **Motion** made by Trustee Fifer Ferry to approve the minutes of July 11, 2006 with item VII. Corrected to read “send draft to the *curriculum* committee.” Seconded by Trustee LeComte. Approved unanimously.

**IV. Public Comment**

- a. Todd Murano presented and discussed a letter developed by the current RISD Alumni Association and copies were distributed to each board member.
- b. Mr. Murano also noted that AG Bell had announced an “oral program” in their recent meeting minutes, but had not mentioned it is related to the RI.

He requested that the RISD board check into this.

- c. Trustee Fifer Ferry asked if a board committee could help inform the board about deaf education terms and issues. **Action:** Trustee McEntee offered to give a short discussion of some terms at next RISD board meeting.
- d. Trustee Gursky will add discussion of the issues presented in the letter to the agenda for the September board meeting.

## V. Reports

### a. Interim Director

- i. Interim Director John Plante highlighted items from his Interim Director's report.
  - 1. High school reform report should be ready within two weeks.
  - 2. Bob Verdun, Executive Director of the Pawtucket YMCA met with John Plante to discuss establishing after school programming for elementary and middle school students at their Fairlawn satellite. There is currently a deaf staff member and other staff are learning sign language. Board members agreed that John Plante and Trustee Dorros will meet with Bob Verdun in lue of presentation to the entire board.
  - 3. Personnel being recommended for appointment to teaching positions: Todd Murano-Physical Education, Michelle Mclaughlin-Middle School Literacy, Toby Leibowitz-Elementary Teacher,
  - 4. Search continues for Speech and Language Pathologist. Trustee McEntee offered to send out job description if John Plante could get a copy to her.

## VI. Reports

### a. Coordinators

- i. Preschool; Mary Jane Johnson:
  - 1. Described speakers for the RIHAP March 2007 Seminar.
  - 2. Outlined the RIHAP research project which focuses on the parents of children with hearing loss ages > 3 years. Project goal: To determine aspects which helped them adapt positively.
  - 3. Stated that the summer programs have been very successful

and staff is getting ready for the fall. The Oral Program staff recently had a 2 day workshop.

**b. Finance Director**

1. Jonathan Seamans discussed aspects of expenditure reports for fiscal years 2007 and 2006.
2. Mr. Seamans explained a revenue surplus from 2006 fiscal year.
3. Discussion took place as to whether wage increases had been budgeted for 2007.
4. Trustee Gursky asked in 2008, if we project a financial surplus for interpreter services, are there other ways that we can use those funds? **Action:** Jonathan Seamans stated that he would have to check on that.
5. Trustee McEntee suggested that the school access: 1) Where interpreters are used currently, 2) Other ways the school could use interpreter services.

**c. Sub-Committees**

- i. Policy-No report
- ii. Personnel

1. Discussion of Acting Director's evaluation deferred to executive session.

iii. Board Development

1. Trustee Gursky explained he been unsuccessful with meeting with the Alumni Association, but had been in contact with Todd Murano by email encouraging involvement.

iv. Budget and Finance

1. Trustee Fifer Ferry and Jonathan Seamans will set up standing meetings for the remainder of the fiscal year.

v. Building

1. Trustee Dorros outlined the current status of new building activities.

2. She informed the board that BoBrunell and Arn Lisnoff from the Dept. of Administration had met with the architectural firm, Design Partners, to discuss concerns about their prior work and discuss expectation about their future activity on the project.

3. Design Partners will be the architectural firm that is contracted for the next design and building phase.

4. The Dept. of Administration requests 1-2 representatives from RISD to participate in: 1) A Steering Committee, 2) A Working Group. Arn Lisnoff suggests that the RISD Building Committee stay in place to help decide details of design that can be taken to the working group.

5. Trustee Fifer-Ferry suggested that the board has an opportunity, in working with the Dept. of Administration, to have a dialogue about what kind of input we feel we need.

**6. Action point:** Trustee Dorros and John Plante will contact, and preferably meet with, Mr. Lisnoff to discuss expectations for who should be involved in these committees.

vi. Academic Standards and Curriculum

1. Trustee McEntee explained that she had been elected as a Co-chairperson of the committee; a faculty Co-chair was being solicited.

2. Trustee McEntee presented handouts on the job description for Curriculum Facilitator that had been reviewed by the committee.

3. There was discussion about how the position should be classified; the committee suggested, "Teacher on Special Assignment".

## V. New Business

a. Adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to RIGL 42.46-5(A)(1), (2) pending litigation, personnel and collective bargaining issues.

**1. Motion** was made by Trustee Fifer Ferry to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(A)(1), (2) at 8:08PM. Seconded by Trustee LeComte. Approved unanimously.

**2. Motion** was made by Trustee McEntee to return to open session at 8:50PM; Seconded by Trustee Abols. Approved unanimously.

**3. Motion** was made by Trustee McEntee to seal the Executive Session minutes. Seconded by Trustee Fifer Ferry. Approved unanimously.

b. **Selection of members for Director Search Committee**

1. Trustee LeComte reported that, since the board's July

meeting, letters and emails went out asking alumni, staff, non-faculty and students if they were interested in being on the Director Search Committee. No responses were received by Chairperson Gursky.

2. **Motion** made by Trustee LeComte to accept Todd Murano as the Alumni representative to the committee. Trustee Fifer Ferry seconded. After discussion regarding the fact that this candidate is both a staff member and an alumnus and that the board had done due diligence, the motion was approved unanimously.
3. Chairperson Gursky reported speaking to Mary Riley in regard to the previous recommendation of Claire Newell (President of Council 94 Union) as staff representative; non-staff are not eligible for a position on this committee.
4. Administrative and parent committee positions remain unfilled.
5. **Action:** Coordinators and board members will inquire personally with parents who may be interested and refer to Trustee LeComte.

#### **b. Approval of new positions**

##### **1. Occupational Therapy Assistant.**

- i. John Plante recommended the approval of a full time Occupational Therapy Assistant because of increasing need within the school, both current and projected. An FTE is now available for this position that had previously been paid as a consultant.
- ii. **Motion** by Trustee Dorros to post position of Ceritifed Occupation Therapy Assistant. Seconded by Trustee Abols. Approved unanimously.

##### **2. Curriculum Facilitator**

- i. Discussion took place regarding the role of Curriculum Facilitator position, as well as whether the position would be classified as coordinating teacher, or administrator.
- ii. **Motion** by Trustee Fifer Ferry to create and post the

position of Curriculum Facilitator. The board also gives the Curriculum Committee authority to revise the position description, taking into consideration the issues raised by the board at this meeting. The motion was seconded by Trustee Dorros and approved unanimously.

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

- a.** Presentation discussing some terminology used in deaf education
- b.** Election of Board Secretary
- c.** Review recommendation of Personnel Committee concerning future agenda of the committee
- d.** Appoint ad hoc committee investigate CEASD accreditation
- e.** Adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to RIGL 42.46-5(A)(1),(2) pending litigation, personnel and collective bargaining issues
  - Report feedback from Interim Director performance review
  - Review status of faculty negotiations
- e.** **Next meeting: September 12, 2006** (with the knowledge that RI public schools will be closed that day for elections).

## **VIII. Adjournment**

- a.** Meeting adjourned at 9:30PM.