



## **MEETING MINUTES – General Meeting**

**Date:** October 4, 2011

**Time:** 6:00 p.m.

**Minutes recorded by:** Nancy Sousa

**Minutes approved on:** 11/1/11

**Interpreters:** Jon Henry and Maureen McEntee

**Cart:** Nicole Reis

**RIDE:** Jennifer Smith

**Attorney:** Sara Rapport (arrived 6:10 p.m.-left 7:00 p.m.)

### **Call to Order**

- a. Chairperson Travis Zellner called the meeting of the RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees to order at 6:14 p.m. in the Cafeteria of the RI School for the Deaf.

### **Roll Call of Board of Trustees**

- a. **In Attendance:** Amy Donnelly-Roche, Jodi Merryman, Westley Resendes,
- b. **Excused:** Marie Lynch, Harvey Corson, Angelo Garcia.

### **Adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5 (a) (2) – Litigation - CBA**

- a. **MOVED Amy Donnelly Roche AND SECONDED Westley Resendes:** That the Board would adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5 (a)(1) and (2) at 6:15 p.m.. Approved unanimously.
- b. **MOVED Jodi Merryman AND SECONDED Westley Resendes:** That the Board would return to Open Session at 7:05 p.m. Approved unanimously.
- c. **MOVED Jodi Merryman AND SECONDED Westley Resendes:** That the Board would seal the minutes of Executive Session. Approved unanimously.

**Motions from Executive Session: None**

**Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes:**

- July 19, 2011 – approved by consensus
- August 2, 2011– approved by consensus – alternate format
- August 23, 2011– approved by consensus
- September 13, 2011– approved by consensus
- September 20, 2100 – not finalized – tabled for next meeting

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Amy Lupica**, Preschool/Kindergarten Teacher, expressed appreciation for all that current admin team is doing, but wanted to let Board know that staff is very concerned about the delay in hiring a Transformation Specialist; feels that school needs a leader now; wants to be assured that we are all on the same page.

**Chair** responded that the Transformation Specialist will be assigned to: 1) help with Director search; 2) develop Reform Plan; and 3) write the School Improvement Grant. Chair assured Ms. Lupica that the Board will keep staff informed as to the progress of hiring such a person.

**Sean Gill**, Outreach Coordinator, announced that he is leaving RISD for another opportunity in Washington, DC. He wanted to note that the Outreach Coordinator position was a very challenging position; it was difficult to get support with outreach/districts; he suggested that the position be put on hold until a new Director is in place so that the new person could receive better support and direction. He suggested that any Outreach program needs to include family guidance and an Early Intervention program to reach goals; needs support of faculty and staff; more advanced technical support; more access to communication for the deaf; make website more user-friendly (e.g., a fact sheet or FAQ); let people know that bilingual interpreters are available; be more attentive to communication access, especially in the front of building. He also noted that transportation is a problem in the Athletic program; fears that participation will dwindle if parents do not get help with transportation; these kids really need this opportunity.

**Chair and members** commended and thanked Sean for his advocacy for the children and asked that he put the issues and recommendations in writing so that they could be included in the reform process.

## Reports:

- **Chairperson** – referred to the three letters (to parents, community, and school districts.) in the packet regarding explanation of what is going on at the school; clarification of temporary administration; and asking for response. Regarding Board vacancies: explained what the Board is looking for and set up a timeline for review and interviewing applicants. It was decided that the vacancies would be advertised and posted in as many places as possible; Board would like to see a parent of one of our students have a voice on the Board; and someone who knows the importance of deaf education; better to have more people from RI than from other states.
- **Interim Administration Report: Corsino Delgado** introduced **Ms. Lupica** to present to the Board: **Ms. Lupica** explained that staff had restarted sign classes for parents. They tweaked the past program and have been holding the classes during the day with parents and kids – results and benefits have been amazing; they are teaching sign based on stories – kids take books home with them, learn with parents, and come back to show the story to the class. Staff is grateful for the funding; and the kids are thrilled with having parents and grandparents here and signing; they are comfortable with the inter-action; teachers would like to videotape the story signing and bring to the Board. She noted that they need to address the issue of working families and will work with those parents who cannot come in during the school day. They have four out of five families involved and no one has missed a class.
  - 10/5 RISD Open House – **Mr. Delgado** – event will be held Wednesday; would love to see more parents involved; The Friends are donating goodies for Open House.  
NWEA testing is ending and NECAP is starting and will continue through next week.

## Old Business

- RFP – Transformation Team Consultant
  - Update from RIDE – **Jennifer Smith** noted that they had one response to the LOI, proposal reviewed and will be recommended to DOA for RIDE to contact vendor to begin – RIDE has no control over this part of the process; but did emphasize the urgency of the situation.  
**Chair** noted the Board’s concern about losing the consultant if the process takes too long.
- RISD Director search

- **Ms. Smith** submitted the revised version of the Director Job Description and will move forward with the posting (10/5); it will be nationally advertised to get solid resumes for review; would like it to stay open until filled.

**Members** were of the opinion that there should be a definite (one-month?) response period with an expected start date.

- Groden Center
  - **Chair:** should we consider this option dead or leave it open until after reform plan?; **Ms. Smith** noted that the opportunity may still be alive, but there were concerns about the title to the building and the Board of Regents position; will continue steps to allow the possibility of their coming to the school; will have to revisit the contract that was already approved. Andrea Castenada will follow up with Groden.
- RISD POLICIES FOR 2<sup>ND</sup> READING AND APPROVAL
  - Staff Dress and Grooming – approved as read
  - Student Dress and Grooming – approved as read
  - Electronic Devices Policy – remove “recorded” in last sentence; accept as revised
  - Fire and Safety Drill Procedure – approved as read

### **New Business**

- Per recommendation BOT Finance – approve proposed FY 2012 Revised Budget and FY2013 Budget Request – **Mr. Delgado** reported that he met via conference call with Harvey Corson who recommended that the Board approve the aforementioned budgets. (Budgets were emailed and included in packet for members’ review). Noted that budget includes the Race to the Top funds; Director and Assistant Director’s positions have been budgeted; we are allotted 60 FTEs.
  - **Chair and members** voiced concerns about the high legal fees in the budget. Mr. Delgado noted that legal fees were high due to the litigation and CBA negotiations – likely will be reduced when CBA is done.

**MOTION: Chair: Board accepts the budgets as recommended.**

### **Adjournment**

- a. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.