



MEETING MINUTES – WORK SESSION

Date: October 18, 2011

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Minutes recorded by: Nancy Sousa

Minutes approved on: 11/1/11

Interpreters: Jon Henry and Maureen McEntee

Cart: Shelley Deming

RIDE: Jennifer Smith

Attorney: Sara Rapport

Call to Order

- a. Chairperson Travis Zellner called the meeting of the RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees to order at 6:07 p.m. in the Cafeteria of the RI School for the Deaf.

Roll Call of Board of Trustees

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

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

- a. **MOVED Harvey Corson AND SECONDED Westley Resendes:** That the Board would adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5 (a)(1) and (2) at 6:08 p.m.. Approved unanimously.
- b. **MOVED Jodi Merryman AND SECONDED Westley Resendes:** That the Board would return to Open Session at 6:34 p.m. Approved unanimously.
- c. **MOVED Marie Lynch AND SECONDED Westley Resendes:** That the Board would seal the minutes of Executive Session. Approved unanimously.

Votes taken in Executive Session: None

Reports:

- **Chairperson** – noted to Marie that the letter and application was posted for new Director – no number on applicants so far, but Sharon Salisbury received two inquiries about the Director position on Friday; Sharon will do the paper screening to be sure that applicants are minimally qualified (have all education and experience requirements) before giving them to search committee. It was noted that a couple of people were concerned about the language of the posting, re deaf academics or experience; it was decided that one or two comments were not enough to respond to – board will ask for Public Comment at next regular meeting; and discuss with Jennifer Smith re the timeline and reform plan.
- **Interim Administration Report:** none

Discussion Items:

- RFP – Transformation Team Consultant
 - Update from RIDE – Jennifer Smith:
 - **Jennifer Smith (RIDE)** – Joe Fischgrund will be providing the needed assistance to the school; he has been contacted and will be utilized to screen applicants for Director position. We need to determine who will be on personnel committee and establish screening tools. Mr. Fischgrund is scheduled to start on November 1st and he can stay until September 30 of next year to help with transition of new Director.
- Reform/SIG
 - Timeline
 - **Ms. Smith:** The reform plan and SIG have to be completed before January 1st, 2012 and submitted together. Mr. Fischgrund is confident that he can get it done, using documents that are already in place: our goals, objectives, strategic plan, can all be utilized; we do not have to reinvent the wheel because a lot of the work has already been done. She advised to set two or three goals and refine over the next three years. The reform plan and SIG are similar – plug identified items from Transformation Plan into the SIG; be practical and align with budget; avoid putting new people in budget because after three years, the money goes away. RIDE will be looking for strong plans and a strong application; they will look at size, scope and quality. She suggested the board develop/create a focus group of stakeholders; no need to have a vast audience – much of that was already done with the Strategic Plan. She noted that teachers and staff are interested in

participating. There are people at RIDE that can assist Mr. Fischgrund, as well as people on our admin team. **Marie Lynch** agreed to help with the process, since she has some relief time now. It was decided that the focus group should be formed in the month of November.

- **Chair** noted that Mr. Fischgrund had developed a Language and Communication Philosophy (presented in his PD report); components are parallel with our Mission Statement – want to refer it to our Policy Committee as a Philosophy – review at 1st meeting in November and approve at 2nd meeting. We may have to call a special meeting in November to accomplish everything (there are 5 Tuesdays in November). Once RIDE receives the plan and grant application, they have 15-30 days to review.

- RISD Director search

- Update

- Search Committee

- **Ms. Smith** discussed how to handle applications and the interview process; noted that all applications come through Sharon Salisbury, date stamped, screened for minimal viability, e.g. education level; all eligible applicants' resumes will be given to the interview committee; hoping to get several qualified applicants; advised that the board develop the tools first, then establish personnel committee; noted that Joe Fischgrund will be working with the admin team and that the Transformation Team will decide when they want to start interviewing applicants for Director.

- **Chair** expressed concern about the importance of developing the reform plan and SIG, and the search for a new Director.

Chair voiced concern regarding posting for Outreach person: place on hold until new Director on board.

- **Ms. Smith** was not in agreement – reiterated that Outreach is one of the top agenda items for the Transformation Team and Joe Fischgrund.
- **Mary Pendergast** offered that an Outreach program at RISD has been on hold for a few years – not sanctioned, no extra staff, FFS litigation, funding. Sean Gill was frustrated with not being able to move forward because of the aforementioned issues; suggest that we do not hire anyone right now. While Sean did a lot of outreach to districts, reviewed files, sorted and collated information, provided support to students in the building, attended events outside of school with our banner and mission, he did not have the support that he needed to perform as well as he could have. We would not know how to support or mentor an Outreach person at this point.

- **Chair** noted that Mr. Gill had specific topics of concern and will put them in writing to the Transformation Team.

Board of Trustee Vacancies (Deaf and Hearing Seats)

- **Chair:** Two people interested – one hearing and one deaf; November 15 is date reserved to interview applicants for the board. **Chair** presented a form that was used by RICDHH to interview applicants; it was decided that the board would change and delete some of the questions and use this to develop a consistent question list for board applicants. **Members** discussed their experiences with the interview/questions they were asked by RIDE before they were recommended. Some of the questions were similar to what was on the RICDHH form. **Members** noted that applicants should be asked about their experience with deaf and hard of hearing, but looking for quality individuals who have a particular skill set, not just with deaf and hard of hearing; people may be valuable in other areas, e.g. marketing, finance, communication; negotiation. **Chair** noted that choosing new members is the board's decision, then will recommend to RIDE for approval. It was suggested that the Mission Statement be read to applicants to ask for response; applicants' response would be a good quality assessment.

Adjournment

- a. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.