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## **MEETING MINUTES – GENERAL MEETING**

**Date:** February 7, 2012

**Time:** 6:30 p.m.

**Minutes recorded by:** Nancy Sousa

**Minutes approved on:** 2-28-12

**Interpreters:** Jon Henry and Maureen McEntee

Cart: Shelley Deming

RIDE: Maura Kelly

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 6:35 p.m. in the Cafeteria of the RI School for the Deaf.

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

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

**Adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5 (a) (1) – to discuss  
Collective Bargaining-Teachers Contract and Local 2012**

**Litigation: Smithfield vs. RIDE/RISD; Okwara v RISD and RI Attorney General; Okwara v  
RISD, DOA:**

- a. **MOVED Angelo Garcia AND SECONDED Westley Resendes:** That the Board would adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5 (a)(1) and (2) at 6:35 p.m.. Approved unanimously.
- b. **MOVED Angelo Garcia AND SECONDED Westley Resendes:** That the Board would return to Open Session at 7:13 p.m. Approved unanimously.
- c. **MOVED Angelo Garcia AND SECONDED Westley Resendes:** That the Board would seal the minutes of Executive Session. Approved unanimously.

**Motions from Executive Session: Motion was made by Harvey Corson and Seconded by Westley Resendes: That Travis Zellner, as Chairman of the Board of Trustees, RISD, be authorized to sign settlement agreement re Ernest and Maria Okwara.**

## Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes

- **January 24, 2012 - Tabled**

## Public Comment - None

## Reports:

- **Chairperson:** re two candidates for BOT – Wayne Hannon and Jeannie Desmarais-Valdez, noted that the candidates were added to the BOR agenda for 2/2/12 meeting – recommended we recommend to Comm. Gist – will follow-up.
- **Maura Kelly:** noted that the last 2 meetings of BOR were very busy with the votes for a new charter school company; moving forward, should be on agenda.

## Leadership Team – Reform Sig Plan:

- **Joe Fischgrund:** continues his work on Transformation Plan; plan grows weekly; BOT is well-represented with Marie Lynch – thanked her for working with him; using new format for the combined SIG application and Reform Plan; have responded to 70% of the items; fine-tuning, working on specificity; budget – expect to have completed draft by 2/28 and something for BOT’s approval 3/6 for 3/16 deadline. Commended Mary Pendergast for her help; will want to go over the rubric; we are feeling much better about it.
- **Chair:** asked how plan is submitted to which **Maura Kelly** responded that school can submit pdf via email or a hard copy. He further noted that since we have been identified as PLA, our reform work is more challenging because we have PK through 12<sup>th</sup> grade; feels that our letter of introduction should address that – to which **Maura** responded that there is space in the application to talk about students and data (as part of rubric); really do not need anything beyond the application itself. Further, **Chair** addressed the future Outreach and EI 0-3 programs; feels that BOT should let community know that we are not ignoring these issues – we have included them in the Strategic Plan; after PLA and Transformation Plan. Mary Pendergast will report on these issues.
- **Members:** raised questions re the Outreach and 0-3 programs and working with Consultant after Transformation Plan is in effect. **Mr. Fischgrund** made it clear that everyone understands the importance of 0-3 and Outreach programs; noting that children make far better progress in EI, but in reference to the reform plan, they do not fall into it; there is some reference in the area of ASL being offered to the community. But it is the

school's decision – it's not just a matter of hiring a person and all will be coming in – it involves other agencies, e.g. health, human services and comprehensive service providers. RISD should have a role or be a subcontractor or provider for deaf and hard of hearing children; we must look at our finances, as this will not be a break-even program. A new Director will have to rebuild relationships, set-up meetings; won't happen in one or two months as the new Director will be responsible for the inception of the reform plan; there is no magic wand to make it happen.

- **Members:** questions arose re turn-around time for plan approval and if there was a revision process. **Maura** answered that there is a formal review and a decision made about allocations; there is no revision process – there is 1.8 million to be divided by 7 schools; we do not have federal stimulus funds and can't speak outside of the rubric – which lies out weighted scoring; intervention must happen in PLA reform regardless of how much we are granted. You must create a plan that is sustainable and practical; SIG is a resource to fund transformation, regardless of influx of extra funds.
- **Corsino Delgado** acknowledged that we only get one shot at this; if they give us less than what we budgeted, we are challenged to make the plan work.
- **Mr. Fischgrund:** noted that, at this point, we're not looking at new positions because of sustained funding; we need lots of PD and can't predict what will or will not be funded; if we need it, we are going to put it in, staying away from adding positions.
- **Maura Kelly:** the turn-around time for approval is 9 days – 3/25 funds will be awarded.
- **Members:** concerned about how people (staff) are posturing themselves for this; how it will affect the culture of the school.
- **Mary Pendergast:** noted that it is a challenge to implement all aspects of the plan with the budget we have; have held on to some federal funds; we will crunch the numbers.
- **Mr. Fischgrund:** noted that faculty and staff are willing to do things differently; aligning curriculum to standards; school hours is a hot-button issue; lively discussion on increasing learning time, extending school day, esp. for very young children; we should be sensitive to faculty who do their best to teach and improve academic achievement.

- **Maura Kelly:** added that the Roger Williams Middle School is in 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Transformation; they also have issues with extending the school day; there are other examples of it working well.

**Interim Administration Report: Mary Pendergast:** asked members to see two policies in packet; will identify dates for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> readings; new regulatory language in Bullying policy; the Food Allergy policy is in compliance with regulations; no decisions tonight. We continue to engage in RTTT – in ‘CLO’ we are clumped with some charter schools; good for problem-solving and sharing challenges, successes, etc. NECAP results – cannot publicly report, but a quick look showed some gains, but because there are fewer students, it’s hard to compare. NWEA – 2<sup>nd</sup> round finishing up; will use both to include in Reform Plan. We lost a couple of students, and there is one coming in – still have 68. We have a parent meeting this week – re “Parenting in the Digital World”; parents will have opportunity to complete survey online at school; our response rate is 30% - a little better than last year. We are hosting a Basketball Tournament 2/17 – 2/19 – with 8 boys’ schools. Re staffing: we had 1 resignation – School Social Worker; we have a couple of leads with experience in deaf and hard of hearing; looking at additional support in SLP; still open – English teacher and, of course, Director. Met with audiologist to put together a process to respond to requests for audiologist consultations.

**Members:** Good idea to set-up laptops for parents to use; suggest offering to raffle a prize to parents if we get 50% response on surveys; acknowledged that there are many policies to still review and approve.

**RISD Director Search - Update–** (Harvey Corson left room, 8:17 p.m.)

**Chair:** reported that the search team met this afternoon – we have 3 additional applicants for a total of 9 candidates; we have identified three candidates that we want to pursue; application process remains open until 2/24/12; will report to BOT on 3/6 where process stands.

**Sharon Salisbury:** the committee will hold initial interviews and report to the Board.

- Future Agenda Items – there will be a Work Session on 2/28/12 (school vacation week of 2/20) and the General Meeting on 3/6/12.

Adjournment at 8:20 p.m.