



## RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

One Corliss Park

Providence, RI 02908

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### MEETING MINUTES – General Meeting

**Date:** October 7, 2014

**Time: Minutes recorded by:** Helen Edwards

**Minutes approved on: November 4, 2014 by Consensus with minor changes**

**Interpreters:** Maureen McEntee, Carol Fay

- **Call to Order:**
  - a. Board Chairperson Marie Lynch called the meeting of the RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees to order at 6:06 pm in the Cafeteria of the School for the Deaf.
  
- **Roll Call of Board of Trustees**
  - b. In Attendance: Marie Lynch, Jodi Merryman, Joe Fischgrund, Heather Niedbala, Danielle Loughlin, Amanda Montgomery,
  
  - c. **Excused:** Lindsey Medeiros
  
- **Public Comment: None**
  
- **Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes:** (6:15 – 6:25 pm)
  - September 9, 2014 - General Meeting Approved by consensus with minor changes.
  
- **Reports:** (7:45 - 8:30pm)
  - Report of the Board of Trustees Chair:
    - Update re: Board training
      - Chairperson Lynch stated that there is still a need for more Board members. They have interviewed someone recommended by Wayne Hannon. She also pointed out that it is a nine member board.
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      - Chairperson Lynch then motioned that she was going to move the presentation by Al Lake of the Audiology Center to be presented first.
      - Audiology Center Presentation-Chairperson Lynch introduced Al Lake from the RISD Audiology Center who spoke about what the Center does. He stated that Luz Adley and he serviced 1700 children here at the school. The child gets a full, free evaluation which starts as early as 6 months. This info is also connected to Kids.net. We have 3 Audio Technicians, who work under Mr. Lake's license, who go out to all the schools in Rhode Island (public, private, prep, parochial, etc.) Last year they saw a total of 55,000 children, which entails that they start

the end of August and continue daily to the end of the school year. This hearing screening is mandated by State law and covers children from grades K-3 and also occasionally includes Pre-K. Heather asked what hand- in-hand with the school nurse to encourage parent follow through.

- Update re: Board member recruitment

Joe Fischgrund commented that at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the RISD Alumni Association there were over 200 people with only two Board members in attendance. Perhaps potential Board members could be identified from that group of stakeholders? Heather Niedballa mentioned that we should send something out to them. There are several different groups that Chairperson Lynch will try to reach out to. It was also suggested that Board members should not be a parent who has a student in school due to potential conflicts with labor issues in such a small educational facility. A parent could be considered, however, if the child attended school years ago.

- Strategic planning

Director Maguire Heath said that she feels that it is time to begin a new strategic planning process and review our progress to-date on the current strategic plan. We have numerous stakeholders and Board members that will need to be involved in this initiative. Director Maguire Heath stated that we have to be future-driven and have goals, timelines and accountability built in, which the current plan does not. The current plan is more of a large vision statement. Heather Niedbala asked if we, the Board, would ultimately write the plan. Director Maguire Heath stated it should be collaborative and inclusive and that she feels that the school is ready for next steps and that we need to start this process within the year. The Director will start with the 1<sup>st</sup> step which is an LEA survey asking how they would like the School to serve them better.

- Letters of Recognition (RICOH, Agawam, Dr. Vitterito)

The letters of appreciation to RICOH, Agawam Hunt Club, and Dr. Vitterito were sent out. An additional letter will be sent out to Dr. Parrillo, DMD who has served faithfully as the school dentist.

- The Board took a short break at 7:12pm.
- Returned and started at 7:23pm

#### Sub-Committee Updates:

- Budget & Finance

Chairperson Lynch asked if the committee had met since the last meeting and they have not. Director Maguire Heath included a sheet showing census of students. She plans to submit one every month. Director Maguire Heath stated that our 1<sup>st</sup> Conference called *Bright from the Start* will be held on October 16, 2014 and is targeted to EI stakeholders including parents. There are 64 people registered to attend.

Please find attached the information provided by Director Maguire Heath to the Board in her report.

- Personnel:

Included in this month's packet is a list of new hires for the coming year.

- Policy: Feedback regarding Staff, Student and Coaching School Handbooks

Director Maguire Heath asked if there was any feedback from the School Handbooks. We are not approving the handbook tonight, but Director Maguire Heath feels it is good practice for all Board members to be familiar with it. Please submit any feedback you may have.

- Health/Wellness Committee: per RIGL § 16-2-9(25); § 16-21-28

Working on researching the requirements and make-up for this sub-committee

- Amended By –Laws (to be inclusive of: Health/Wellness)

Chairperson Lynch stated there are several needs that have surfaced that will require amending the by-laws.

Clear information regarding Membership and Conflict of Interest also needs to be included in the By-Laws.

- Reports of the Director and Assistant Director of Finance:

- Update re: School Activities (See attached report)

- CEASD School Viability Study to begin Nov 16. Two Directors from CEASD will be at RISDeaf for two full days interviewing staff, students, parents, Board members and someone from RIDE. There is no cost to CEASD member schools for this confidential study.

- Renewal of School Dentist, Dr. Geoffrey M. Parrillo, DMD

Approved. A renewal letter will be sent out to Dr. Parrillo the school dentist.

- School Reorganization & New Hire

Reorganization would likely include adult basic education offerings in the evenings at RISD along with different levels of ASL classes.

- Update re: Budget/Finance

- Budget for FY 2015 and FY 2016

Maureen Wu stated we have not heard anything yet from the Budget Office regarding the budget that the Board's approved last month. The Budget office is questioning if we can make the oldest 15 passenger van into a cargo van. The 15-passenger van is not the safest vehicle for our school children. It was suggested by Joe Fischgrund that we send a letter to the Budget Office indicating this concern. Board suggested that we have Sara Rapport, the school lawyer, review it.

- Garage  
The newly constructed garage is complete. We have a Certificate of Occupancy. We are still waiting for a few pieces: workbench, compressor, etc., to arrive however. We can now park three of our vehicles inside.
- Mariposa Rental  
The lease with Mariposa is still going very well. They are respectful tenants. Director Maguire Heath, Maureen Wu and Zoe McGrath, the Director from Mariposa, have set up regular schedules for their students to use the gym and library once/ week. The two preschool staffs have collaborated effectively thus far.

- Report of the Board of Trustees Policy Committee:

- Action Item: Med Delegation on Field Trips 1<sup>st</sup> Reading  
Minor changes requested.

- **Executive Session:** The Board will seek to convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing:  
**Collective Bargaining:** Teachers' Contract Negotiations (RIGL§42-46-5(a)(2));  
Personnel re: Director's Evaluation (RIGL§42-46-5(a)(1))

- **Adjournment by consensus at 8:54pm.**