



RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

One Corliss Park

Providence, RI 02908

MEETING MINUTES – General Meeting

Date: August 2, 2016

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Minutes recorded by: Mary Pendergast

Minutes approved on: October 4, 2016

ASL Interpreters: Heather Anderson, Christine West

CART Reporter: Nicole Reis

Call to Order

- a. Chairperson Montgomery called the meeting of the RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees to order at 6:15 p.m. in the Cafeteria of the RI School for the Deaf.

Roll Call of Board of Trustees

- b. **Trustees in Attendance:** Amanda Montgomery, Jane Canulla, Nora Meah, Joseph Fischgrund and Danielle Loughlin
- c. **Excused:** Octavian Robinson
- d. **Administration in Attendance:** Amy Vincenzi, Nancy Maguire Heath and Mary Pendergast
- e. **Excused:** Helen Edwards

• Public Comment:

- No one registered for public comment.

• Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes:

- Danielle Loughlin made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from June 7, 2016; seconded by Joseph Fischgrund. Motion approved with all in favor.

• Reports / Action Items:

- Report of the Chairperson
 - Chairperson Montgomery reported that she recently had the chance to converse with RI legislative representatives. She reported that everyone she encountered seemed to have very positive impressions of the current school's efforts, including US Senator Jack Reed, President of the RI Senate, M. Teresa Paiva-Weed, and Congressman David Cicilline.
 - The Board is still waiting for the long-awaited RFP to be posted by DOA for the person or firm to lead the School's strategic planning effort. Chairperson Montgomery was told the post should be active within the next two weeks. The Board cannot proceed without this posting.
 - Coordination of the Policy Committee Meeting – Chairperson Montgomery would like to encourage the board to move forward with regular policy committee meetings. Dates have been identified for meetings. Chairperson Montgomery and Danielle Loughlin are on the committee. Chairperson Montgomery will ask Octavian Robinson if he would be interested, as the committee needs a third. Director Maguire Heath will also participate.

- Joseph Fischgrund raised the need for new members to fill several vacancies. Chairperson Montgomery talked with Marie Lynch, the former chairperson, who provided names of a few who might be interested in serving. Chairperson Montgomery is trying to schedule tours and meetings with possible candidates. She encouraged members to use the website to forward Board information to individuals who might be interested.
- Report of the Director
 - 42 students attended ESY this year. It was a successful ESY program as required by student IEP's. Typically, this is a difficult program to staff, but this year teachers responded enthusiastically. The school did not have to go into the union rotating roster, which assigns a percentage of teachers, on a rotating basis, to work for the summer, because enough teachers volunteered.
 - Director Maguire Heath reported that staff is preparing for next year. There is much work to do, especially with recruiting and hiring of new staff. There are still numerous positions open. Recruitment is implemented on a national level since there are so few certified professionals in Deaf Education in Rhode Island. For some positions there are very few local candidates, especially for Deaf Ed. teaching positions. Director Maguire Heath asked the Board to spread the word that we have several job openings.
 - Director Maguire Heath and Assistant Director Vincenzi met with the State Properties Committee to seek approval of one more year for the Mariposa Preschool, our renters. Mariposa reports that it will be looking for a new space to purchase the following year, so they can house all their classrooms in one building. They have continued to be excellent tenants and serve as a resource and peer models to our own preschool children.
 - The leadership team has been preparing schedules and handbooks. This summer they created an elementary family handbook, which the school had not had in the past.
 - Director Maguire Heath and Assistant Director Vincenzi will be working on the updated safety plan during the remainder of the summer.
 - The Annual Professional Institute is being planned. (August 24-26). Day one will focus on our school goal of strengthening our cultural competence as a faculty when working with ELL families. The training will be from the Education Alliance at Brown University and presented by Donald Silva. Days 2 and 3 will kick off our Thinking Maps training. Thinking Maps is a visual "language" that models and teaches skillful thinking skills to students. This will be the start of a 12-week rollout to implement TM across the entire school, including Art, PE and Library.
 - Staff orientation is scheduled for August 29th and August 30th. The first day for students will be Wed., August 31st.
 - Director Maguire Heath gave a quick update on the annual golf tournament. She reported there are currently 50 golfers and that the tournament needs 88 golfers to reach our target of funds for athletic and afterschool programming for this year. It is expected that we will have sufficient golfers. She reported that the committee has received 15 donations for the raffles and silent auction. The tournament will be on August 23rd at Agawam-Hunt Club in Rumford, RI. Director Maguire Heath shared that the committee needs volunteers for the registration table. Jane Canulla offered to help.
 - Barbara Cesana is an Aspiring Principal candidate who is enrolled in Principal Residency Network this year. Director Maguire Heath will serve as her mentor principal for one year, and Mrs. Cesana will take responsibility for some administrative duties.
 - Chairperson Montgomery commends and appreciated Director Maguire Heath for all the hard work prepping for the new school year.
 - Director Maguire Heath thanked her team for all their hard work.
- Report of the Assistant Director
 - Chairperson Montgomery suggested moving around the agenda to add the Finance Committee update to the Assistant Director's report.

- Assistant Director Vincenzi reported that at Budget Close we have a \$68.90 surplus. The 2017 budget includes a slight increase due to personnel costs. . The spending for 2017 is on track and is within budget guidelines, with student needs at the forefront of decision-making.
 - Positions still open: Athletics and After school Coordinator, Audio Test Technician, 1 Elementary Special Ed. Teacher, 1 Secondary Special Ed Teacher, School Librarian, ASL Specialist. Positions recently filled include: Occupational Therapist, per diem Speech-Language Pathologist, part-time Physical Therapist (16 hours/week).
 - Finance Committee update – It was reported that the 2017 budget could be adjusted and the 2018 budget needs to be submitted soon. The committee made a couple of suggestions regarding the safety of students and strategic planning. The committee will meet again on August 25th at 10:00 am to approve new budget proposals. Director Maguire Heath mentioned it might be difficult to get ASL interpreters due to an all-day staff training that day. Assistant Director Vincenzi noted that and will change the date if interpreters cannot be secured.
 - At the September 7, 2016 Board meeting, the Board will need to approve the 2018 budget. Chairperson Montgomery encouraged everyone to make effort to attend to ensure a quorum.
- **Discussion Items**
 - Update and discussion regarding September 25th Chicken BBQ & Pig Roast planned for alumni and current families in honor of the school’s 125th birthday. This family event will be affordable is the final birthday event planned. It is not a fundraiser, but instead seeks to celebrate the school community. The next planning meeting will be August 3rd at 12:30 pm.
 - It was reported that the RISD Alumni Association, FRIENDS of RISD, RI Association for the Deaf, and RI Registered Interpreters for the Deaf will be asked to partner on this event to ensure full community participation. Chairperson Montgomery informed the Board that the date would be the last Saturday of September, which would be September 25, 2016 from 11:00 –3:00. Chairperson expressed her hope that Board members could volunteer for the event as a way to show support for the community.
 - Director Maguire Heath suggested sending out a Save the Date notice. It will be included in the State’s Deaf Awareness Month list of events.
 - Board Handbook update and discussion
 - In preparation for the next work session Board members were encouraged to review the handbook and consider edits needed. Chairperson Montgomery informed the Board that she would not be present for the work session and offered that Danielle Loughlin could lead the meeting. Chairperson Montgomery brought up a few things that the Board should consider. Some phrases have come up. The Board should decide how to refer to the school – RISD vs RISDeaf. Director Maguire Heath shared that in general when using ASL, people in the Deaf and School communities have historically signed R-I-S-D, but when referring to the school in written English writing RISDeaf is used to avoid confusion with RI School of Design (RISD). Jane Canulla suggested that RISDeaf should be used when writing because it reduces confusion with RISD, the college. Another question posed was whether to refer to the Board of Trustees using the full name, BOT or the Board. Joe expressed that “the Board” might be a more appropriate abbreviation, as it is more formal.
 - Personnel Committee Update
 - Chairperson Montgomery reported that the Committee met 2 weeks ago to finalize the Director’s Annual Review. They will meet again to begin a plan for the upcoming year’s goals for the Director.
 - Finance Committee Update
 - This was discussed above under the Assistant Director’s financial report as planned.

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 pm