



RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

One Corliss Park

Providence, RI 02908

MEETING MINUTES – General Meeting

Date: September 6, 2016

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Minutes recorded by: Helen Edwards

Minutes approved on: October 4, 2016

ASL Interpreters: Christine West and Heather Anderson

CART Reporter: Shelly Deming

Call to Order

- a. Chairperson Montgomery called the meeting of the RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees to order at 6:09 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, Mary Pendergast and Barbara Cesana
- e. **Excused:**

• Public Comment:

- No one registered for public comment.

○ Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes:

- The minute's acceptance for August 2, 2016 was not on the Agenda. They will be on next month's agenda with the September 6, 2016 minutes.

• Reports / Action Items:

- Report of the Chairperson
 - Chairperson Montgomery recommended Jodi Merryman to the Board of Education as a Board member. Ms. Merryman served on the Board from 2010 until 2015. She is interested in returning as a Board member and was a participant in the last Strategic Plan. Ms. Merryman is a highly valued individual in the community. She works as a social work case manager. Ms. Merryman has a lot of historical knowledge of the school from her lengthy previous service. Danielle Loughlin commented that she felt that it would be great to have Ms. Merryman back due to her former history and her experience with the strategic planning process.
 - The RFP for the Strategic Plan was posted last week. All submissions are due by September 26th.
 - A draft introductory letter was drawn up by Chairperson Montgomery which will be given to new Board Members when they receive the Board of Trustee Handbook and the Board of Trustee By-laws.

- Chairperson Montgomery reported she will be inviting different guest speakers each month to be drawn from the school faculty and staff. In November she is planning to have our Curriculum Coordinator present on *Thinking Maps*, one of our newest curriculum initiatives. The Transition Coordinator will present her program in November, followed by new Athletic and After School Coordinator in December.
- Report of the Director
- Director Maguire Heath introduced Barbara Cesana, who is an Aspiring Principal with us this year under the Principal Residency Network (PRN). Ms. Cesana is taking on quite a few of the roles of principal and seems to be enjoying herself. The Board extended its congratulations to Ms. Cesana.
- Director Maguire Heath spoke about the three days of Professional Institute which were attended by all classroom and support staff. Donalda Silva from Brown University Education Alliance presented on *Cross Cultural Awareness with ELL Families*. Andy Matthews from the Balance Between presented on the *Introduction to Thinking Maps*. The 2-day orientation to the new school year was held on August 29th and August 30th. Topics discussed were Creating a Culture of Thinking and Uses Questioning to Go Deeper. Mandatory trainings and policies were reviewed as well as staff guidelines.
- Director Maguire Heath stated that the school opened with 67 students on August 31st. This includes 4 new students (1 pre-school, 2 elementary and 1 high school). Several referrals are currently being considered.
- The School is continuing to advertise for two teacher vacancies which are still unfilled and the Librarian/Media position is also vacant.
- New staff welcomed this school year include:
 - Michael (Tiger) Balint – ASL Coordinator (Secondary)
 - Linda Boden – Occupational Therapist
 - Judith Dixon – Speech & Language Pathologist
 - Nathan Engel – Athletics & After School Coordinator
 - Melanie Reppucci – Physical Therapist
- Kathy Kay will serve as Teacher Leader for Data and Assessment.
We are recommending two students to attend the Deaf Latinx Conference October 7-10th at American School for the Deaf
- Director Maguire Heath also informed the Board that there packets included:
 - _____Preschool Handbook
 - _____Elementary Handbook
 - _____Flyer for the Birthday BBQ
 - _____School Year Calendar
- Our golf tournament was a great success. We had 92 golfers. Jane Canulla and Joseph Fischgrund represented the Board at this event. All funds raised will fund the Athletics activities.

Report of the Assistant Director

- Joseph Fischgrund, from the Finance Committee gave the Financial Report. He motioned to approve the Budget and Nora Meah seconded the motion.
- Assistant Director Vincenzi stated that contractual obligations have provided Teachers and TA's raises for FY 16/17. The teachers received a 3% raise effective 9/1/16 and the TA's had a 4% raise effective 7/1/16 and 1% effective 9/1/16. The Teachers will not receive any pay raise in Fy17/18 and the TA's will receive 1%.
- Current spending is on track; verification that additional grant money from the Commissioner's line is available and can be used for curriculum and technology. We are proposing to use some funds for the Chromebooks program for high school.

- The FY17 revised budget and FY18 Budget process is underway.
- The credit (negative) number listed above for the restricted account is due to outstanding invoices from FY16 that have not been paid yet. The playground expense was booked as a “payable”, which shows the new fiscal year starting with a credit; this enables us to book the expense to FY16, not FY 17. The playground has not yet been paid for as we wait for a few small “punch list” items to be addressed.
- The handicap accessible mini activity bus is due to be completed on 9/28/16! It will hold 13 passengers and one wheelchair passenger; it is larger in size than the activity bus due to this accommodation. It was unknown if the bus would be the same size with less occupants/seating available due to the wheelchair configuration.

Discussion Items

- 125th Birthday BBQ Update -
Director Maguire Heath reported that our Final 125th Birthday Party BBQ is set for Sunday, September 25, 2016 from 11:00 am until 3:00 pm. The community is expected to attend in force. It will be held in the school’s backyard.

Trustee Handbook

- Chairperson Montgomery went over the Board of Trustees Handbook with the Board to finalize sections that needed to be amended. She will make the edits and then School staff will format the handbook before sending it to the printers. This handbook is the culmination of a year’s work and is now completed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm