



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS



RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION ON WOMEN

Department of Administration

One Capitol Hill, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

Providence, R.I. 02908-5850

401-222-6105 401-222-5638 (FAX)

**Rhode Island Commission on Women**

**Full Commission Meeting**

**Monday March 7, 2005, 5:30 PM**

**Department of Administration, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room C**

**Minutes**

**Present:** Jane M. Anthony, Joyce Dolbec, Carol Gibbons, Catherine Graziano, Joanne Hill, Mary Anne Miller, Kathy Nadeau, Linda Newton, Marilyn Coccozza Trillo, Cynthia Wilson.

**Excused Absent:** Helen Christy, Lela Morgan, Sarah Rockett, Neena Savage, Kathleen Spangler, Jan Torres, Anna Tucker, Camille Vollaro.

**Unexcused Absent:** Melvoid Benson, Jo Eva Gaines, Robert Watson.

**Present, non-voting:** Shanna Wells.

*Call to Order*

Chair Jane M. Anthony called the meeting to order at 5:36 PM.

*Consent Agenda*

Catherine Graziano made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda. Cynthia Wilson seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

The Chair requested a motion to move to Old Business for the Access to Health Care Position Paper as Mary Anne Miller had a speaking engagement. Catherine Graziano made a motion to move to Old Business. Joanne Hill seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

*Old Business*

Access to Health Care Position Paper – Health Committee Chair Mary Anne Miller described the target audience for the paper and how it was created. She asked the Commissioners for comments and opinions. Discussion ensued. Linda Newton suggested making the language in the Proposal section more consistent by always referring to “access to healthcare” rather than the use of the term “universal care.” Jane Anthony suggested adding a bullet item under the section the “The Commission supports” to include “the efforts of the Office of Women’s Health and the Office of Women’s Health Advisory Board to enhance and ensure quality health care for all women.” Linda Newton made a motion to accept the Access to Care Position Paper with the proposed amendments. Joyce Dolbec seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

### *Chair's Update*

Chair Jane M. Anthony welcomed new Commissioner, Carol Gibbons.

The House Budget hearing for RICW is scheduled for Thursday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, at 2:00 PM. The House Budget hearing for Transformation House is scheduled for Monday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 3:15 PM. Chair Jane Anthony received a call from Roberta Richman, Department of Corrections. Ms. Richman invited those parties interested to provide a show of support through their attendance at the hearing. The Commission was asked to provide written support for the Transformation House Program. Cynthia Wilson made a motion to support the Transformation House Program. Marilyn Coccozza Trillo seconded the motion. **Voting Aye:** Jane Anthony, Joyce Dolbec, Carol Gibbons, Catherine Graziano, Kathy Nadeau, Linda Newton, Marilyn Coccozza Trillo, Cindy Wilson. **Voting Nay:** None. **Abstained:** Joanne Hill.

Chair Jane Anthony announced that Commissioner Adelita Orefice regrettably resigned her commission due to conflicts with the meeting times. Adelita cited her continued support for the work of the Commission and her continued commitment to support our efforts on behalf of RI women.

Jane Anthony informed the Commissioners about a recent letter sent to the Governor by the Civil Right Roundtable (CRR) and expressed her concern about the process and policy set by the members of the Civil Rights Roundtable in regards to positions taken by the Roundtable. It is the Commission's understanding of the CRR process that any organization that supports CRR's position would actually have their name listed on the letter, while those organizations who do not support the position would not have their name appear. The two chairs of the CRR signed the letter sent to the governor. Supporters of the position were not listed, only a general disclaimer stating that not all organizations on the CRR support every position appeared at the bottom of the letter. Additionally, the letter was sent to the press. Jane Anthony's concerns are two-fold: (1) that the CRR did not follow procedures when submitting the letter and (2) the RICW never got to discuss this issue, see the letter or have any discussion on this issue prior to the letter going out to the Governor and the press. Mary Anne Miller expressed her concern regarding the manner in which this issue was addressed by the CRR. Joyce Dolbec described how the issue had materialized and stated that there should be a list of supporters at the CRR office. Shanna Wells had contacted Toby Ayers at the Chair's request. She was informed by Toby Ayers that there was not a list of supporters nor are there any minutes or votes recorded for the CRR meetings. The Commissioners encouraged Chair Jane Anthony to attend the next meeting of the CRR to voice the RICW concerns regarding this process. Chair Jane Anthony will report back to the Commission on the outcome of the meeting at the next full commission meeting on April 4, 2005.

Kathy Nadeau made a motion to accept the Chair's Update. Catherine Graziano seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

### *Director's Report*

Please see attached Director's Report and attachments. Shanna Wells informed the Commission that her beadwork would be displayed at CCRI as noted in the Communications listing. Cynthia

Wilson made a motion to accept the Director's Report. Joanne Hill seconded the motion.  
**Motion passed unanimously.**

## *Committee Reports*

### Woman of the Year Sub-Committee:

Linda Newton provided an overview of the Committee meeting on February 15<sup>th</sup>. Kathy Nadeau and Marilyn Coccozza Trillo will co-chair the event. At the meeting, the committee: established a timeline for running the event, selected a date and location for the event, and revised the nomination form to focus more on the volunteerism, mentoring and pioneering of the candidates. The Committee also discussed getting a professional media person to serve as a volunteer host for the event. Discussion followed. The next meeting of the Women of the Year is scheduled for meeting of April 4<sup>th</sup>. Joyce Dolbec made a motion to accept the report of the Woman of the Year Sub-Committee. Cynthia Wilson seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

### Legislative & Legal Rights Committee:

See attached Matrix and Bills. Chair Cynthia Wilson reported that 35 bills and companions were reviewed. The committee decided to take no position on 16 bills, because they were not directly related to women. The committee asked for additional information prior to making a decision on 11 bills. The committee is recommending support on 6 bills. Additionally, 3 bills were introduced after the committee's meeting which are included for the RICW's review this evening. Of these, The Commissioners asked for more information on H. 5999, (requiring health insurers to pay for two mammograms per year for women with a family history of breast cancer.)

### **Motion made by Cindy Wilson, seconded by Joyce Dolbec to support S. 0277/H. 5420:**

S. 0277/H. 5420 Would increase the minimum wage from \$6.75 to \$7.25 effective 1/1/2006; \$7.75 effective 1/1/2007; and effective 1/1/2008 and every 1/1 thereafter to be adjusted by the Northeast Region Cost of Living Index. Cynthia Wilson made a motion to adopt the Legislative Committee's recommendation to support these bills. Joyce Dolbec seconded the motion.

Discussion followed as to how this bill would impact women, small business owners, local employment opportunities as well as concerns regarding exemptions to the minimum wage requirements.

**Voting Aye:** Joyce Dolbec, Cindy Wilson. **Voting Nay:** Jane Anthony, Carol Gibbons, Catherine Graziano, Joanne Hill, Kathy Nadeau, Linda Newton, Marilyn Coccozza Trillo. **Abstained:** None. **Motion defeated.**

### **Motion made by Cindy Wilson, seconded by Catherine Graziano to support H.5186.**

H. 5186: Deletes references in RI general laws which exempt the legislative branch of state government from compliance with provisions of equal opportunity and affirmative action.

Discussion followed. **Motion passed unanimously.**

### **Motion by Cynthia Wilson, seconded by Kathy Nadeau support S. 0345/H. 5849:**

S. 0345/H. 5849 Prevents employers from secretly recording audio or video of employees in restrooms, locker rooms or changing rooms. It would also subject violating employers to damages, awards, attorney's fees, costs and injunctive relief.

Discussion followed. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**Motion by Cindy Wilson, seconded by Linda Newton to support S. 0451/H. 5697:**

S. 0451/H. 5697: Specifically includes the offenses of refusal to relinquish or to damage or obstruct a telephone; crank or obscene telephone calls; Burglary and Unlawful entry; to the list of named offenses in the “Rhode Island Domestic Violence Act.”

Discussion ensued. Jane Anthony asked Shanna Wells to confirm bill reflected the language supported by the Coalition Against Domestic Violence (RICADV). Cindy Wilson amended the motion to adopt the Legislative Committee’s recommendation to support these bills with the caveat that these bills contain the language supported by RICADV. Linda Newton seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**Motion by Cindy Wilson, seconded by Joanne Hill to support S. 0591/H. 5703:**

S. 0591/H. 5703: includes petty misdemeanors in the domestic violence prevention act sentencing guidelines.

Discussion ensued. Jane Anthony asked Shanna Wells to confirm this bill contains the language supported by the RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence (RICADV). Cynthia Wilson modified the amendment to adopt the Legislative Committee’s recommendation to support these bills with the caveat that these are the bills supported by RICADV. Joanne Hill seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**Motion by Cindy Wilson, seconded by Joyce Dolbec to support S. 0344/H. 5548:**

S. 0344/H. 5548: Would require attorneys and court to take appropriate action to ensure a speedy trial to minimize the length of time the victim or witness must be involved in the proceeding. Court would be required to consider adverse impact the delay or continuance would have on the well being of the witness or victim.

Discussion followed. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**Motion made by Linda Newton, seconded by Joyce Dolbec to support S. 0917/ H. 5812 and S. 0916/H. 5813:**

S. 0917/ H. 5812 (Family Court): Would allow the court to require a defendant to relinquish firearms pursuant to the issuance of a Domestic Abuse Protection Order.

S. 0916/H. 5813 (District Court): Would restrict the possession of firearms in cases of domestic violence pursuant to a protective order issued by court after notice is given to a respondent and a full hearing on a complainant has taken place.

All four of these bills are supported by the RICADV. Concerns were raised by Catherine Graziano as to the wording of these bills especially as it related to the term “*may*” require a defendant to relinquish vs. “*shall*.” Discussion followed. **Voting Aye:** Jane Anthony, Joyce Dolbec, Carol Gibbons, Joanne Hill, Kathy Nadeau, Linda Newton, Cindy Wilson. **Voting Nay:** Catherine Graziano, Marilyn Coccozza Trillo. **Motion passed.**

**New Business**

None.

**Announcement**

Catherine Graziano announced that the different groups working with the elderly and on elder advocacy are working together well, and the Attorney General’s presentation on Medicare- Part

D was extremely well attended. The Attorney General's office is offering a free publication called "*Navigating Your Way Through the Consumer World.*"

Joyce Dolbec announced that she had spoken to Barbara Inderlin, who has agreed to facilitate the RICW strategic planning meeting for a reasonable cost. Chair Jane Anthony appointed an Ad Hoc Committee of herself, Joyce Dolbec, and staff Shanna Wells to begin planning the strategic planning meeting.

**Adjournment**

Catherine Graziano made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joanne Hill seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 7:41 PM.

Next Meeting is scheduled for April 4, 2005, 5:30 PM, Department of Administration, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Conference Room C.

Minutes approved on \_\_\_\_\_.

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Kathy Nadeau, Secretary