



RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION ON WOMEN

**Full Commission Meeting
April 10, 2006, 5:00 PM
One Capitol Hill, 2nd Floor
Conference Room B
Providence, RI 02908**

MINUTES

Commissioners

Joyce Dolbec, M.A. *Chair*

Linda H. Newton *1st Vice-Chair*

Carol Gibbons, Ph.D., *2nd Vice
Chair*

Joanne M. Hill, *Treasurer*

Jan Torres, *Secretary*

Jane M. Anthony

Denise A. Barge

Catherine Graziano, Ph.D.

Jacqueline B. Laguerre

Mary Anne Miller, RN, MPH

Lela Morgan, M.A.

Sarah H. Rockett, M.A.

Corinne Calise Russo

Neena Savage, Esquire

Kathleen Spangler, J.D.

Marilyn Coccozza Trillo

Anna Tucker

Beverly Turner

Camille Vollaro, M.A.

The Honorable Robert Watson

Tracy E. Williams

Present: Jane M. Anthony, Denise A. Barge, Joyce J. Dolbec, Carol Gibbons, Catherine Graziano, Joanne Hill, Jacqueline LaGuerre, Mary Anne Miller, Sarah H. Rockett, Corinne Calise Russo, Jan Torres, Marilyn Coccozza Trillo, Beverly Turner, Camille Vollaro.

Excused absent: Lela Morgan, Linda H. Newton, Kathleen Spangler, Anna Tucker, Tracy Williams.

Unexcused absent: Neena Savage, Robert Watson.

Present, non-voting: Shanna Wells.

Call to Order

Chair Joyce Dolbec called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.

Introductions

Chair Joyce Dolbec introduced herself and informed the Commissioners about her history. She wants all meetings to start on time because she respects everyone's time, and will always do her best to keep meetings to 1.5 hours. She wants the Commissioners to determine their common goals and to agree to disagree without being disagreeable to each other. At each meeting, one of the officers will introduce themselves. Once all the officers have done so, Commissioners will be asked to introduce themselves to the group. Chair Joyce Dolbec asked each Commissioner to provide the office with a photo, resume and bio. The Chair thinks it is important to know the strengths of each commissioner when seeking expertise on various commission issues, in creating a speaker's bureau and in making appointments.

Consent Agenda

Catherine Graziano made as motion to accept the consent agenda as amended. Mary Anne Miller seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Chair's Update

Chair Joyce Dolbec wants the Commission to standardize office procedures. She asked all the Commissioners to send any relevant desktop procedures to the office for consideration. We now have a form in place for when a group requests a presentation by RICW. At the beginning of each month, Director Shanna Wells is submitting her monthly schedule to the Chair.

Dues to the National Association of Women's Commissions have been paid, and the next regional meeting is tentatively scheduled for June.

Currently no commissioners are attending the Civil Rights Roundtable or Affirmative Action Coalition meetings (Director Shanna Wells is attending). The Chair encouraged Commissioners to volunteer to attend.

Chair Joyce Dolbec is developing an Orientation Session for new Commissioners. A collaboration is pending between the Commission and the Girl Scouts of RI on the Women's Leadership program.

The Commission was asked to go to a rally at the State House sponsored by a new coalition called Rhode Island Priorities. The Chair declined.

The Chair was disappointed that more Commissioners did not attend the Education Award Event. Those in attendance were: Joyce Dolbec, Carol Gibbons, Lela Morgan, Linda Newton, Sarah Rockett, Corinne Calise Russo, Jan Torres, Marilyn Coccozza Trillo, Beverly Turner, Camille Vollaro, Tracy Williams.

Chair Joyce Dolbec, Director Shanna Wells and Commissioner Beverly Turner attended the Minority Legislative Summit on March 25th. Joyce Dolbec attended the breakout session on healthcare, Shanna Wells attended the breakout session on voter participation and Beverly Turner attended the session on public safety. These participants will be notified when the final report from the event is available.

Joyce Dolbec urged all the Commissioners to contact their legislators and inform them of their constituent's participation on the Commission and the Commission's mission. Chair Dolbec believes it is vital to develop relationships with the legislators PRIOR to seeking assistance from them.

The Governor has proposed an across the board cut in FTE's which would negatively impact the RICW with a loss of approximately \$4,000.

Chair Joyce Dolbec and Director Shanna Wells participated in a meeting with some healthcare representatives from Thailand, sponsored by the U.S. State Department. Minority and women's healthcare issues were discussed.

Corinne Calise Russo made a motion to accept the Chair's Update. Camille Vollaro seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Director's Report

See attached written report. Commissioners asked Director Wells to have a draft of the website completed by May 8th. Joanne Hill made a motion to accept the Director's Report. Mary Anne Miller seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously, except for Carol Gibbons, who abstained.**

Committee Reports

Health Committee: Nothing to report. Discussion ensued regarding 2001 Legislation regarding the creation of the Office of Women's Health (OWH). Some confusion exist about whether the legislation passed. Jane Anthony stated that the Senate passed the legislation and created a line item within the Department of Health (DOH) Budget for the (OWH). Mary Anne Miller stated she did not believe legislation was passed, but that a Resolution passed. Joyce Dolbec asked Jane Anthony and Shanna Wells to do further research on the issue. Mary Anne Miller stated she inform DOH about how RICW relates to OWH.

Outreach Committee: Marilyn Coccozza Trillo reported that the Committee met on March 24th and completed a post-mortem on the Education award event. The consensus of the group was that the event was very nice, but poorly attended. Suggestions for this event in the future are:

- Select a day of the week when legislators will be in town
- Hold event at the State House
- Present the awards within the same year as they are awarded
- Present the recipients with the checks at the event
- Provide recipients with free seats to the WOY event and introduce them there
- Include all attending legislator and staffer names in press information
- All RICW Commissioners need to be more involved in the event

- Publicity has to be pushed

Committee discussed how they see their role in this event. Consensus of the group is that Outreach Committee is responsible for media contacts before and after the event. The Education Committee is responsible for the planning and running of the event.

The Committee agreed to change the Woman of the Year to Women of the Year, opening the potential field of recipients to 3-5. Requests for nominations will be going out no later than April 21st. Additional membership to the selection committee will be sought from within the community.

Mary Anne Miller made a motion to accept the Outreach Committee Report. Joanne Hill seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Education Committee: Chair Sarah Rockett thanked the Outreach Committee for their fine work on the Education Award Event. The Education Committee will be meeting immediately following this meeting to discuss plans for next year's event. 2006 Recipients will be selected on June 26th, 3:30 PM, at the RI Foundation.

The next project this committee will discuss is collaborating with the RI Women in Higher Education and DCYF on a mentoring program.

Camille Vollaro made a motion to accept the Education Committee Report. Carol Gibbons seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Legislative Committee: Tabled. Marilyn Coccozza Trillo brought Bills S. 2972 and H. 7399 - A bill relating to Criminal Offenses—Public Utilities to the attention of the Commissioners. This legislation would make it unlawful to sell records containing cell phone numbers. With a quick search on the internet, one can obtain not only cell or landline phone numbers, but also a person's billing address and information about calls made. This poses an enormous threat for victims of domestic violence who are seeking protection from their abusive partners or former partners. Often, abusers will do whatever it takes to track their victims, whether to stalk them or to find and attack them, and the ability to sell such information on the Internet basically does all the work for them. These bills are being supported by the RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Corinne Calise Russo made a motion to accept this report and to send letters of support for these bills. Beverly Turner seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Finance Committee: As reported earlier, Finance Committee Chair Joanne Hill mentioned the Governor's proposed across the board cuts to FTE's. She will draft a letter to the House Finance Committee within the next few weeks regarding the negative effect this cut would have on the RICW and to ask for a waiver. A draft of the letter will be sent to the other Finance Committee members for review prior to it being sent. Mary Anne Miller made a motion to accept the Finance Committee Report. Sarah Rockett seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Old Business

None.

New Business

Chair Joyce Dolbec appointed Carol Gibbons and Jan Torres Co-Chairs of the By-Laws Sub-Committee and invited Commissioners to join this committee. Their purpose will be to review and up-date the RICW by-laws.

The strategic plan, as developed in September 2005, was reviewed and edits were made. Jane M. Anthony made a motion to accept the goals as amended. Sarah Rockett seconded the motion. **Motion passes unanimously.**

Commissioners discussed the need to develop detailed action plans and timelines related to these goals. The group decided by consensus to devote the entire May meeting to doing this.

The Commissioners reviewed a brief statement about the RICW, created by Linda Newton. It would be used as the official description of the Commission whenever speaking to others about the RICW. Marilyn Coccozza Trillo made

a motion to accept the statement as amended. Corinne Calise Russo seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

The Commissioners discussed the Director's progress on the updating of the new website. The Commissioners unanimously decided to have Secretary Jan Torres review the site.

Announcements

RICJ is hosting a meeting with the 2006 Leadership RI graduates on Tuesday, April 11th, 6-7:30 PM, at Design within Reach.

Adjournment

Camille Vollaro made a motion to adjourn. Corinne Calise Russo seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 6:51 PM.

Approved on June 12, 2006.

Secretary, Jan Torres